The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Interior Ministry Buys 120 Portable Flame Rocket Launchers

May 05, 2016



Russia's Interior Ministry have purchased 120 Shmel portable flame rocket launchers, used by Soviet troops in Afghanistan and by Russian troops in Chechnya, the Kommersant newspaper reported on Thursday.

The model bought by the ministry suggests that the weapon is designed for use in urban areas, though it could be also used to destroy buildings, transport and lightly armored vehicles in the field and in mountainous areas, according to gazeta.ru.

Russian news agency Interfax quoted Alexander Mikhailov, a retired Russian general and a veteran of the special services as saying that the flame rocket launchers were likely purchased for the newly created Russian National Guard.

In April, President Vladimir Putin created the National Guard to fight extremism, terrorism and to participate in territorial defense. He appointed the former chief of his personal security as its head.

It includes OMON and other rapid response teams, which were previously part of Russia's

Interior Ministry.

The weapon can destroy targets within 50 square meters in open spaces and within 80 square meters inside and will be used against “biological objects,” gazeta.ru reported.

It can also hit targets located at a distance of 700 meters and is nicknamed “a sniper flamethrower” by the Russian military.

According to a draft law, submitted to the State Duma by Putin on April 5, the National Guard will be allowed to use their weapons without warning “if it would help to save lives." In other cases, the guardsmen will have to give a warning before opening fire.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/05/05/russian-interior-ministry-buys-120-portable-flame-rocket-launchers-a52794