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Russia Likely Lost Half its Heavy Tanks in Ukraine: U.S.

By AFP

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Tank crews training in Russia's Zabaikalsky region. **Yevgeny Yepanchintsev / TASS**

Half of Russia's main battle tanks have likely been destroyed or captured by Ukraine, a senior United States defense official said Friday.

Russia "has probably lost half of its main battle tank stock in combat and through Ukrainian capture," Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Celeste Wallander said during a Center for a New American Security virtual event.

The estimate by Wallander, who did not provide an exact figure for the number of tanks lost since Russia invaded in February 2022, comes as Ukraine is set to receive an influx of heavy Western tanks from its supporters.

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Britain has said its Challenger 2 tanks will be deployed in Ukraine in March, while Germany and its allies aim to get a battalion of Leopard 2 tanks to Kyiv by April.

The U.S. has also promised a 31-strong battalion of its M1 Abrams tanks, but they are expected to take significantly longer to arrive.

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