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Wagner Group to Get More Ammo After Bakhmut Pull-Out Threat

By AFP

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The leader of Russia's paramilitary Wagner Group, Yevgeny Prigozhin, said that he had received "a promise" of more ammunition from the Russian army on Sunday, following his unprecedented public threat to pull his forces from the embattled Ukrainian town of Bakhmut due to a lack of ammunition.

"They promised to give us all the ammunition and armaments we need to continue the operations," Prigozhin said, following his blistering attack on military chiefs over the situation in Bakhmut, the epicenter of Ukraine's fight against Moscow's forces.

He said they had been assured "that everything necessary will be provided" to fighters around Bakhmut.

Prigozhin's Wagner Group has spearheaded the grinding, months-long Russian assault on

Bakhmut, almost capturing the city in the longest and bloodiest battle of the campaign.

However, Prigozhin threatened to leave his positions in Bakhmut on May 10 over a lack of weapons, which he blamed on Russian army chiefs.

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He warned that he would "pull Wagner units out of Bakhmut because without ammunition they are facing a senseless death".

While Prigozhin had made similar threats to pull out in the past, the crude and emotive language used in Friday's video statement and the scathing personal criticism of the leaders of Russia's campaign in Ukraine were unprecedented.

The rivalry between his private military group and the conventional army has come to the surface during the battle for Bakhmut.

On Sunday, Prigozhin said that "all decisions" regarding Wagner's operation would be taken by General Surovikin.

"He is the only decorated general who knows how to fight," Prigozhin said.

Surovikin, an army veteran with a reputation for ruthlessness and who had been praised by Prigozhin, was named Russia's military commander in Ukraine in October, only to be replaced just three months later by Valery Gerasimov, who had regularly been criticized by Prigozhin, and forced to become one of Gerasimov's deputies.

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