

Wagner Captures Russian Soldier Accused of Firing on Its Positions

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Lieutenant Colonel Roman Venevitin. **Prigozhin Press Service**

Russia's Wagner mercenary group has captured a Russian officer accused of firing at its positions during the battle for Bakhmut last month, the private military outfit said Sunday in the most dramatic account yet of internecine clashes during Russia's offensive on Ukraine.

An interrogation video [showed](#) Lieutenant Colonel Roman Venevitin, commander of the Russian Ground Forces' 72nd Independent Motorized Rifle Brigade, saying he and a group of 10-12 soldiers fired at a Wagner vehicle on orders to "disarm" its rapid response unit.

"I acted in a state of alcoholic intoxication out of personal animosity," Venevitin, seen with a nasal fracture in an underground facility, said.

Wagner leader Yevgeny Prigozhin had [published](#) a document hours earlier describing the gunfight with Russian soldiers and identifying Venevitin's brigade as the culprit.

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Dated May 17, the document said Wagner soldiers had witnessed Defense Ministry soldiers mining the mercenary group's rear positions south of the city of Bakhmut in the Donetsk region.

Defense Ministry troops then engaged Wagner sappers who had been sent to clear minefields in two villages south of Bakhmut, the document stated.

The Moscow Times could not independently verify the interrogation video or the claims contained in the document published by Prigozhin.

Prigozhin declared the capture of Bakhmut, the scene of the longest and bloodiest battle in Russia's 15-month invasion of Ukraine, less than a week after the described firefight.

An ally of President Vladimir Putin, Prigozhin has regularly clashed with Russia's Defense Ministry in recent months.

He has accused Russian generals of incompetence and complained of losing a disproportionate number of Wagner fighters due to insufficient supplies of ammunition.

It was not immediately possible to confirm whether Wagner troops have returned Venevitin to the Defense Ministry in the nearly three weeks since the alleged firefight took place.

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