The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Ukraine Says It Shot Down 3 Russian Su-34 Fighters

By AFP

December 23, 2023



An Su-34 jet. **Dmitry Terekhov (CC BY-SA 2.0)**

Ukraine's military said it has shot down three Russian fighter-bombers in the south of the country.

Air force commander Mykola Oleshchuk said the Su-34 jets were downed around noon on Friday.

In his announcement he noted a message found on a downed Russian drone which read "Die, bitches."

"Great idea! Here is our response!" he said on Telegram.

In his nightly address on Friday, President Volodymyr Zelensky thanked the soldiers who shot down the Russian fighters in the Kherson region.

"It's the gain of our Air Force and the direct action of the Odesa Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade. Thank you, guys!" he said.

"And may every Russian pilot be well aware of our response to every Russian killer — none of them will go unpunished."

The Kremlin has not commented on the Ukrainian claims but Russian war blogger Fighterbomber said there had been losses, likely due to the Patriot missile air-defense system.

Another war blogger, the Voenniy Osvedomitel ("Military Informant") channel on Telegram, also reported "losses among Su-34 bombers" which they said were being used to drop glide bombs on the Ukrainian bridgehead in Krynky on the Russian-controlled east bank of the Dnipro River.

Zelensky also said he spoke with Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte on the delivery of F-16 jets to Ukraine and discussed the approval of a new, 50-billion-euro ($55 billion) EU support package for Ukraine.

"The Netherlands is preparing to send the first F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine. From political decisions regarding the provision of aircraft, we have moved on to training pilots and engineers, and now we are implementing the technical part — the actual delivery of F-16 jets," he said.

The Netherlands announced Friday it was preparing delivery of 18 of the US-made F-16 combat jets pledged to Ukraine, at a moment when Kyiv is under pressure on all fronts.

With U.S. approval, Denmark and the Netherlands announced in August they would provide up to 61 jets, once Ukrainian pilots had been trained.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/12/23/ukraine-says-it-shot-down-3-russian-su-34-fighters-a83545