

Russia Unprepared and Entrapped in Ukraine

The horrific developments in Ukraine further indicate Russia's complete unpreparedness for actual war despite President Vladimir Putin's pre-war grandstanding. On Tuesday, the US Director of National Intelligence said in testimony to Congress, "We assess Moscow underestimated the strength of Ukraine's resistance and the degree of internal military challenges we are observing, which include an ill-constructed plan, morale issues and considerable logistical issues." According to CBS News, 'Between 5,000 and 6,000 Russian troops may have been killed in just the first two weeks of the invasion of Ukraine, a U.S. official estimated Wednesday.' Commenting on this possibility *The Hill* says it would mean that, 'Russia has lost nearly as many soldiers in the first two weeks of its fight with Ukraine as the U.S. did in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001.' In reporting at *Business Insider*, 'Russian soldiers carrying out the invasion of Ukraine were not told they were going to war and were lied to about what they would face, according to an increasing number of firsthand accounts.' In previous reporting, *The Guardian* quotes a captured Russian officer as saying, "Everything we were told was a fake. I would tell my guys to leave Ukrainian territory. We've got families and children. I think 90% of us would agree to go home." According to an intelligence update tweeted on Friday by the UK's Defence Ministry, 'Russian ground forces continue to make limited progress. Logistical issues that have hampered the Russian advance persist, as does strong Ukrainian resistance.' *The Independent* reports a third Russian major general killed in Ukraine on Friday and quotes an official as saying that the estimated presence of around 20 Russian major generals at the front lines indicates that the Russians are struggling with the invasion, "You would expect to see that at a point when troops are unable to make decisions of their own and lack situational awareness or are fearful of moving forward, at which point more senior officers come forward to lead from the front." The report adds, 'Mr Putin's troops have reportedly been hit with a significant morale decline, partly due to the freezing weather, with temperatures having dropped to around minus nine. Some units are also running low on supplies of food, fuel and munitions, having been in the field for more than two weeks.' In an interview with *Fox News* on Wednesday, a retired US general says that Russia is losing the war in Ukraine, "Every day that goes by, and we're now getting a day 15, they're losing this war. They're... losing in the information space where the entire world to see what's going on... They're losing in the military space." In reporting at *Newsweek*, 'Russia has lost hundreds of tanks and fighting vehicles in Ukraine since it invaded the country on February 24, according to Ukraine's Foreign Ministry and a war monitoring website.' The reports further states, 'The Kremlin has claimed that Russia's "special military operation" is going well, but the available numbers tell a different story. The fact that Kherson is the only major city captured by Russia so far and that it is yet to claim Kyiv, the capital, also suggests that the war so far has not been successful for Putin's forces.' The Ukrainian Defence Secretary claimed on Wednesday that Putin "had about 8 generals removed from their posts because they did not complete the task. New ones have been appointed." According to *The Washington Post*, 'There have been numerous reports that Russia has been trying to recruit Syrians for its assault on Ukraine, and a senior U.S. defense official said this week that it is "noteworthy that [Putin] believes he needs to rely on foreign fighters.'" A Ukrainian presidential advisor commented on this in a televised briefing saying, "Where's the powerful Russian army if they can't get by without Syrians?"

Despite evident Russian weakness, the West is clear about not becoming itself directly involved in Ukraine. This week, US President Joe Biden even rejected an offer from Poland to transfer 28 Mig-29 fighter jets to Ukraine, warning on Friday that attempting such actions could lead to a new world war: *“The idea that we’re going to send in offensive equipment and have planes and tanks and trains going in with American pilots and American crews — just understand, don’t kid yourself, no matter what y’all say, that’s called World War III.”* Russia also has held back its heavy weaponry and air force to prevent escalating the war. *The Economist* says, *‘It is clear, though, that the Russian air force has held back its full capabilities’* and quotes an expert saying, *“Fast jets have conducted only limited sorties in Ukrainian airspace, in singles or pairs, always at low altitudes and mostly at night.”* Nevertheless, despite not wanting to escalate, Putin cannot terminate this war without some result that he is able to claim as a victory. According to reporting at *Al Jazeera* updated on Saturday morning, Russian forces are closing in on the Ukrainian capital: *‘As part of a multi-front attack on the capital, the Russians’ push from the northeast appeared to be advancing, a US defence official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Combat units were moved up from the rear as the forces advanced to within 30km (18.6 miles) of Kyiv.’* Meanwhile, the West will attempt to continue Russia’s entrapment in Ukraine. Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in an interview this week about the war that *“this is not going to end quickly”*, after in the previous week comparing the Russians being entrapped in Ukraine to the former Soviet Union being entrapped in Afghanistan in the 1980’s which was a key factor in its downfall, saying *“Let’s be clear that Russia has overwhelming military force, but of course, they did in Afghanistan, as well.”*

The unfolding machinations of the great powers hold important lessons for the Muslim Ummah. Despite Westphalian nation state rhetoric, the world accepts that great powers have full authority within their immediate sphere of influence. Ukraine directly borders the European Union, yet Europe is powerless to prevent the Russian invasion. America, despite being the sole superpower, is not ready to directly engage Russia in war, even though Russian power is a fraction of what it was during the existence of the Soviet Union. If America and the West are unable to stop Russia, then how can they oppose the Muslim Ummah from taking charge of their own affairs? With Allah’s permission, the Muslim Ummah shall soon re-establish the **Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) State on the method of the Prophet (saw)** that shall reunify Muslim land, liberate its occupied territories, implement the Islamic Shariah, restore the Islamic way of life and carry the message of Islam to the entire world. The **Khilafah State** shall, almost from its inception, enter the ranks of the great powers on account of its great size, vast population, immense resources, unparalleled geography and unique Islamic ideology. The **Khilafah State** shall engage internationally to balance, restrain and calm the other great powers and return the world to the general peace and prosperity that existed for the thousand years that Islam was previously dominant in world affairs. Allah (swt) says in the Noble Qur’an: ﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ﴾ **“And never think that Allah is unaware of what the wrongdoers do. He only delays them for a Day when eyes will stare.”** [Ibrahim: 42].