

Media Disinformation: East Ukrainian Rebels Allegedly Down Two Warplanes

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In Bloomberg's article, "[Two Ukrainian Jets Shot Down, Three Dangerous Explanations](#)," it claims two Ukrainian SU-25 ground attack warplanes were shot down by rebels over Donetsk in eastern Ukraine, stating:

Ukrainian Defense Ministry spokesman told reporters in Kiev that two of its Sukhoi SU-25 fighter jets were shot down while flying at 5,200 meters (17,000 feet) over the Donetsk region in eastern Ukraine. The pilots ejected, and their whereabouts are unknown.

At 17,000 feet, the planes would have been outside the range of the shoulder-fired missiles that the rebels contend are their only air-defense weapons. The planes would, however, be in range of a surface-to-air missile such as the Buk, which is suspected to have been used to shoot down Malaysian Airlines flight MH-17 on July 17.

Bloomberg's "three dangerous explanations" are patently false. They first assert that the rebels have been lying about the weapons they have access to, claiming (emphasis added):

This possibility would mean that the rebels do, in fact, have missiles capable of hitting a plane at high altitude. The evidence mustered so far that the Malaysia Air plane was shot down at 33,000 feet over rebel-held territory has proven a major problem. "The rebels are clearly having a very difficult time denying having access to such equipment," says Reed Foster, a defense analyst at IHS Jane's in London. The rebels have said they have shoulder-fired weapons known as MANPADS, but Foster says shooting down a plane at 17,000 would be "far outside the capacity" of those weapons.

However, Jane's itself published an article titled, "[Ukraine claims Malaysian airliner was shot down in its territory](#)," in which it claimed (emphasis added):

The shooting down of a Ukrainian air force An-26 transport plane in Luhansk province on 14 July has also raised questions about more advanced systems potentially being operated by the separatists. The An-26 military aircraft was hit while flying at cruising altitude (6,500 m), out of the range of most MANPADS. This suggests the separatists have either gained access to more advanced systems – such as the 9K38 Igla-S (SA-24) MANPADS, 96K6 Pantsyr-S1 self-propelled air defence systems, or 9K37 Buk (SA-11) self-propelled surface-to-air missile systems – or that the aircraft was downed by a missile fired by a Russian system over the border. Moscow denied any involvement in

that incident.

In other words, there are MANPADS capable of hitting Ukrainian SU-25 warplanes and even higher flying military transport planes (up to 6,500 m) – without possessing weapons like Buk missile systems that could reach 33,000 feet where MH17 was flying, or higher.

Bloomberg's other two "explanations," include Russia firing the missiles from within their territory – which like all claims by the Western media lack any evidence at all to back them up – and that the Ukrainian government is lying, which is of course plausible since the Ukrainian government already irrationally claims "Russia" shot down MH17 on purpose as an act of malice state-sponsored terrorism. But while Ukraine lying about the incident is possible, the fact that man-portable missile systems rebels may possess could target and take down the SU-25s at the altitudes they were allegedly flying at, provides the most credible "explanation," and not surprisingly, the explanation Bloomberg intentionally omitted from its propaganda.

With all that is at stake amid the [current politically-motivated climate](#) surrounding the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17, would Ukrainian separatists still be using Buk missile systems if they indeed had them to begin with?

Would the Russians still be assisting them in their use – a necessity the West has unanimously declared would be required for separatists to deploy the Buk missile system in the first place? Or were Ukrainian separatists using the highly capable MANPAD systems Jane's alluded to in their recent analysis of aircraft shot down at higher altitudes than the two SU-25s were flying at? Without actual evidence provided by Bloomberg or the less than credible Ukrainian regime they are citing, commonsense suggests the latter.

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