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60 Russian Paratroopers Refuse to Fight In Ukraine — Reports

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Russian paratroopers. **Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency**

Approximately 60 paratroopers from Russia's Pskov region have refused to be deployed to Ukraine, newspaper Pskovskaya Gubernia has reported.

Paratroopers from the area were sent to Belarus days after Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, the outlet wrote Wednesday. They reported that a large number of soldiers were returned to Pskov and fired after refusing to fight — with some also threatened with criminal prosecution for desertion.

Local activist Nikolay Kuzmin said that he had spoken with a driver who helped transport troops back to Pskov, and that he had corroborated the story.

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Pskovskaya Gubernia later wrote that military sources expect the number of servicemen

refusing to fight in Ukraine to rise significantly. “Our sources tell that commanders now won’t accept any resignation reports,” the paper said. “Many servicemen send them to the military prosecutor’s office instead.”

Pskovskaya Gubernia was the first media outlet to report on the involvement — and deaths — of Russian soldiers in eastern Ukraine in 2014. Riot police raided the newspaper’s offices on March 5 2022, before raiding the home of editor-in-chief Denis Kamalyagin two weeks later.

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