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Senior Russia Lawmaker Denies End to Mobilization Deferment For Fathers

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A mobilized Russian man poses for a photograph with family during a seeing-off ceremony for mobilized servicemen. **Maxim Slutsky / TASS**

A senior Russian lawmaker on Friday denied that the Russian military had canceled the right to mobilization deferment for fathers of three or more children amid ongoing speculation that Moscow could launch a second round of mobilization for the war in Ukraine.

The Defense Ministry in October granted men with three or more children under the age of 16 the right to deferment from Russia's "partial" mobilization. On Thursday, State Duma deputy Nina Ostanina said that the General Staff of the Armed Forces canceled this deferment at the end of December.

"The deferment from mobilization for fathers of three or more children remains," Senator Andrei Turchak, general secretary of the ruling United Russia party, said on his Telegram channel following Ostanina's claim. "The corresponding directive of the General Staff, issued in October, continues and will continue to operate."

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The military commissar of Russia's Zabaikalsky region Yuri Shuvalov had also told the local Chita.ru news website on Friday that the deferment for fathers with many children was canceled in December.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told the Ostorozhno Media Telegram channel Friday that the Kremlin "is not aware" of the exemption's cancellation.

The Defense Ministry said last October that it had met the goal of mobilizing 300,000 reservists set by President Vladimir Putin during the five-week "partial" mobilization.

The "partial" mobilization was fraught with logistical problems and sparked a mass exodus of thousands of Russians hoping to evade deployment.

Ukrainian military intelligence claimed last week that Moscow was planning to mobilize as many as 500,000 conscripts in a second mobilization campaign, which Russia has denied.

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