

Chechen Leader's Special Forces Deployed in Ukraine's Bakhmut

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Fighters of the Chechen volunteer battalion Akhmat. **Sergei Bobylev / TASS**

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov [said](#) Sunday that his Akhmat military unit has been deployed to the site of “difficult” fighting in the embattled eastern Ukrainian city of Bakhmut.

Fighting has [picked up](#) near Bakhmut, the site of the longest battle of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in recent days despite the Wagner mercenary group claiming to have captured the city in late May.

“The special operation’s command redeployed the Akhmat special forces under the command of Apti Alaudinov to the difficult Bakhmut area,” Kadyrov said.

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“This rotation speaks of the General Staff’s trust and the unit’s high combat effectiveness,”

Kadyrov wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

Ukraine's Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Maliar corroborated Kadyrov's account of [heavy fighting](#) around Bakhmut.

Ukraine's military [said](#) Monday it had liberated 24 square kilometers of territory surrounding Bakhmut since launching its counteroffensive in June.

Akhmat last month became the [first](#) Russian volunteer detachment to have signed a contract coming under the Defense Ministry's formal command — contrasting with the Wagner Group, which balked at the ministry's order.

Kadyrov [said](#) in May that the annexed and partially occupied regions of Donetsk and Luhansk fell under Akhmat's area of responsibility.

The exact number of Chechen troops who make up Kadyrov's Akhmat special forces is unknown.

Kadyrov, a Kremlin loyalist who has ruled over Chechnya with an iron fist since 2007, [said](#) last month that Akhmat is made up of three divisions.

Kadyrov has [claimed](#) that Chechnya had sent 26,000 fighters to Ukraine, 7,000 of whom were on the frontlines as of May 2023.

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