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Nepal Suspends Work Permits for Russia and Ukraine Amid Soldiers' Deaths – Reuters

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Nepali New Year in Kathmandu, Nepal. **Sunil Sharma / ZUMA Press Wire**

Nepal has stopped issuing permits for its citizens to work in Russia and Ukraine following the deaths of Nepalis who have gone to fight in the war, Reuters reported Friday, citing a government official.

The Nepali government issues work permits to its citizens for civilian jobs abroad. More than 800 Nepalis were issued permits for non-military work in Russia over the past two years, according to Reuters, while the figures for Ukraine were not immediately available.

Kabiraj Upreti, a director at Nepal's Department of Foreign Employment, told the news agency that Nepal has suspended issuing labor permits for Russia and Ukraine until further notice to minimize the loss of life.

"This is for the safety of our citizens," Upreti was quoted as saying.

Related article: Nepal Detains 12 for Illegal Recruitment of Citizens Into Russian Army

At least 10 Nepali citizens out of the 200 serving as soldiers in the Russian army were reportedly killed during Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, which has been raging for nearly two years.

Another 100 Nepalis are reported to be missing.

In December, Reuters reported that Nepal had asked Russia to stop recruiting its citizens into the military and to send back the remaining soldiers.

Police in Nepal had reportedly detained 10 people suspected of sending unemployed youths to be recruited into the Russian army in exchange for large payments to buy travel visas.

Russia's Embassy in Kathmandu did not respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

Moscow is known to recruit foreign nationals, mostly from ex-Soviet Central Asian countries, into the military.

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