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Indonesian Embassy in Moscow Says Unaware of Citizens Recruited for Ukraine War

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Social media

Indonesian authorities have "no information" to confirm earlier reports alleging that their citizens are being recruited to fight in Ukraine, the Southeast Asia country's embassy in Russia said in a statement sent to the Moscow Times.

"So far, the Embassy has no information that may corroborate the alleged involvement of Indonesian nationals fighting for either side in the conflict in Ukraine," the embassy said in a statement sent by email.

"The position of Indonesia remains steadfast. Indonesia does not take side[s] in the conflict and consistently advocat[es] for a peaceful resolution to the conflict," the statement added.

Earlier, the Arbat Battalion — a Russian irregular unit reportedly made up of ethnic

Armenians — claimed to be recruiting volunteers from Indonesia for training in the partially occupied Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine.

“There are already local residents [of Indonesia] ready to come to the Donetsk People’s Republic, receive training from our instructors and fight Ukrainian neo-Nazism,” the battalion said on its Telegram channel.

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A video shared with the message showed what was alleged to be three Indonesian men who signed up to join the Arbat Battalion.

While Russia’s military is known to recruit foreign nationals from former Soviet republics in Central Asia, its recruitment efforts have expanded over the past year to include citizens from countries like India, Cuba and Nepal, among others.

In May, Indian authorities arrested four people accused of “trafficking” Indian citizens to fight for the Russian military in Ukraine. Those arrests came after investigators carried out raids across 13 locations in India and detained several people for questioning.

That same month, similar arrests took place in Sri Lanka, where the defense ministry reported that at least 16 of its citizens had been killed while fighting in Ukraine. Authorities there said those who had joined the Russian military were duped with promises of high salaries and falsely told they would be given non-combat roles.

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