

# At Least 100 North Korean Soldiers Killed Fighting for Russia, Seoul Says

By [AFP](#)

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At least 100 North Koreans fighting alongside Russian forces against Ukrainian troops have been killed since the start of December, a South Korean lawmaker told reporters on Thursday.

Following a briefing by South Korea's spy agency, lawmaker Lee Seong-kweun said North Korean soldiers were sent into combat this month, "during which at least 100 fatalities occurred."

"The National Intelligence Service also reported that the number of injured is expected to reach nearly 1,000," he added.

Despite those losses, South Korea's spy agency said it had detected signs North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was preparing to train a new special operations force potentially as part of new deployments in Russia. Lee noted that the North's elite Storm Corps — from which the initial

deployment was drawn — had "the capacity to send reinforcements."

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Moscow may offer "reciprocal benefits" for a new deployment, Lee added, including "modernizing North Korea's conventional weaponry."

The lawmaker said "several North Korean casualties" had already been attributed to Ukrainian missile and drone attacks as well as training accidents, with the highest ranking "at least at the level of a general."

South Korean intelligence officials reported that the high number of casualties could be attributed to the "unfamiliar battlefield environment, where North Korean forces are being utilized as expendable frontline assault units, and their lack of capability to counter drone attacks," said Lee.

His remarks came after a senior U.S. military official said Tuesday that North Korean forces had suffered "several hundred" casualties fighting Ukrainian troops in southwestern Russia's Kursk region.

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