

# Russian Conscripts Killed in Ukrainian Attack on Belgorod Region – Reports

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Artem Zherebtsov's funeral. **Daria Miloslavskaya / 74.ru**

Five Russian conscripts were killed in Ukrainian shelling in the southwestern Belgorod region last month, regional media [reported](#) Wednesday, citing the father of one of the soldiers.

“They built their own trench and moved in there on Dec. 30,” Sergei Zherebtsov, father of 20-year-old Artyom Zherebtsov, told the Chelyabinsk-based news outlet 74.ru.

“Artyom and I last spoke on Jan. 10. Then, on the morning of Jan. 11, there was an incoming strike, the trench was buried, and they were all killed,” Zherebtsov said.

The strike on the village of Nekhoteevka, located 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) from the border with Ukraine’s Kharkiv region, was not reported at the time. Belgorod region Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov regularly includes Nekhoteevka in updates about Ukrainian attacks.

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The conscripted soldiers' families received the bodies three weeks later, each with similarly worded death certificates stating they had died "while protecting the state border," according to the report. Artyom was buried in his home region on Sunday and was posthumously awarded the Order of Courage.

Zherebtsov and the other conscripts were drafted in the Chelyabinsk region last summer and transferred to Belgorod after just two weeks of sniper training, his father said.

Russian law states that conscripts can be sent to combat zones only after four months of service and basic training. After launching the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin assured the public that conscripts would not take part in combat operations.

Legal experts cited by 74.ru said only "political will" has so far prevented conscripts from being formally deployed in combat.

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