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Russian Advances Toward Sumy Continue – WSJ

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Alexander Reka/TASS

Russia's military has advanced to within 12 miles of the northeastern Ukrainian city of Sumy, intensifying operations around the regional capital, the Wall Street Journal reported Sunday.

After Ukrainian units withdrew from Russia's Kursk region in late April, the Russian army entered Ukrainian territory and has since assembled 50,000 troops in the region, WSJ said.

According to Ukrainian soldiers who spoke to WSJ, Russian forces outnumber Ukrainian units three to one.

This month, Ukraine deployed the "Timur" Special Forces Unit to positions near Sumy, attempting to slow Russian advances.

Kappa, a commander in the unit, said in an interview with WSJ that Russian "numbers are a big problem for us, though not enough to overrun us."

"The enemy is losing 300 to 400 people per day across the region. But they can deal with that

level of casualties…They keep bringing in reserves."

Large-scale assaults, described within the Russian military as "meat assaults," have become a primary tactic, independent military analyst Yan Matveev told The Washington Post.

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"These [mass assault] tactics are the only thing the Russian military is capable of at the moment. And it's very inhumane because in fact dead people are being traded for territory. What we have in the Russian army now is a lot of soldiers, but they have no training," Matveev told The Washington Post

Apart from troop numbers, Russia holds an advantage in ammunition supplies and missiles, according to the Washington Post.

However, according to Matveev, Russian forces still struggle to conduct complex operations in Ukraine due to shortcomings in intelligence, insufficient weapons and equipment, corruption, logistical disruptions and inadequate training.

As a result, Matveev believes that, while the summer offensive is unlikely to yield a breakthrough for Russia, it could still seize several thousand square kilometers of Ukrainian territory.

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