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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Putin Says Over 600K Russian Servicemen in Ukraine

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A mobilized serviceman on the front line. **Yevgeny Yepanchintsev / TASS**

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Thursday that the country had deployed 617,000 Russian military personnel in Ukraine as the Kremlin's war against Kyiv has been ongoing for almost two years.

"The front line is over 2,000 kilometers long. There are 617,000 people in the conflict zone," Putin said during the end-of-year press conference.

Putin also said Thursday that Russia had already "recruited" 486,000 people into the country's Armed Forces, with 1,500 new recruits added every day.

"To date, there is no need for a new mobilization," Putin said, adding that at least 244,000 mobilized servicemen were deployed to the front.

Some 300,000 reservists were called up to boost Russia's troop numbers in Ukraine as part of Putin's "partial" mobilization drive announced in September 2022.

Russia’s Defense Ministry has not disclosed Moscow’s losses in the conflict since that month.

According to the independent Mediazona news website, the Russian military's verifiable death toll in Ukraine now stands at over 38,200.

This week, a U.S. Congress source, citing a declassified intelligence report, told media that so me 315,000 Russian troops have been killed or wounded in Ukraine since the war began in February 2022 — nearly 90% of its pre-war force.

AFP contributed reporting.

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