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Moscow Claims Ukraine Lost 111K Troops So Far in 2024

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Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu claimed Friday that Ukraine's military losses topped 111,000 people since the start of 2024, as Russian forces continued advancing along the eastern front line amid delays in critical Western aid for Kyiv.

"Russian troops continue breaking the enemy's system of strongholds along the entire line of contact," Shoigu said at a meeting with the army's top brass.

He accused Washington of pressuring Kyiv to "prevent the collapse of its defenses and hold back the advance of Russian troops at all costs," which he said has led to Ukraine's military casualties.

"In total, they exceed 111,000 people," Shoigu said, adding that the Ukrainian military was losing up to 1,000 servicemen every day in April.

It was not immediately possible to verify his claims and the Russian military has not provided

updates on its own death toll since September 2022.

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Shoigu added that Russian forces had captured 547 square kilometers of Ukrainian territory so far this year, up from the 403 square kilometers figure he named in April.

Russia's Defense Ministry in recent weeks has announced the capture of several settlements around the town of Avdiivka, which Russian forces seized after heavy fighting in February.

Those advances came as a $60 billion military aid package for Ukraine was held up for months in the U.S. Congress due to opposition from Republicans, while deliveries of artillery shells from European countries were also delayed.

Russian forces are rushing to claim as much Ukrainian territory as possible ahead of the arrival of U.S. weapons and equipment to Kyiv's forces after the long-awaited military aid package was finally passed in Congress and signed by U.S. President Joe Biden.

The U.S.-based think tank Institute for the Study of War estimates Russia controls more than 100,000 square kilometers — or almost a fifth — of Ukrainian territory.

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