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Russian Army Claims Sweeping Battlefield Gains So Far in 2024

By AFP

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A Russian flag in the captured Ukrainian town of Avdiivka. **Dmitry Yagodkin / TASS**

Russian forces are advancing on all fronts in Ukraine and have seized some 880 square kilometers of territory this year alone, Defense Minister Andrei Belousov said on Friday.

If confirmed, Russia would have made more gains in the past five months than in all of 2023, when the front line remained largely static despite a Ukrainian counter-offensive in the summer.

"The advance is underway in all tactical areas. In general, 880 square kilometers of territory have come under the control of the Russian army this year," Belousov said at a meeting of the Moscow-led CSTO security alliance in Almaty, according to Russian news agencies.

Russian forces have also pushed Ukraine eight to nine kilometers back in the northeastern Kharkiv region, where they poured across the border on May 10 in a surprise land offensive,

Belousov said.

"Thanks to the courageous and professional actions of our servicemen, 28 settlements have been liberated this month," he added.

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Ukraine has come under intense pressure since Russia launched its new offensive on Kharkiv, rushing reinforcements to the region while ceding ground on other areas of the front line.

Moscow is seeking to take advantage of manpower shortages and delays in U.S. military aid to Kyiv.

Ukraine's top general said last week that Russian troops were "bogged down" trying to capture the northeastern border town of Vovchansk, but added that they were putting intense pressure on Ukraine's army in the east.

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