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Russia Says Captured Two Villages in East Ukraine

By AFP

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Russian Defense Ministry/TASS

Russia said Sunday that its forces had captured two frontline villages in Ukraine, Andriivka in the eastern Luhansk region and Pishchane in the northeast Kharkiv region.

The two villages are less than 20 kilometers from each other on a section of the frontline where Moscow has made grinding advances in recent weeks.

Russian army units "liberated" the settlements of Andriivka and Pishchane "as well as occupied more favorable lines and positions," Russia's Defense Ministry said in a statement.

Andriivka, a village of less than 20 people, was one of the last settlements in the eastern Luhansk region that Kyiv still controlled and had been a key target for Moscow.

Pishchane has also been in the Kremlin's sights because its capture could pave the way for Russia to reach the Oskil river that lies about 10 kilometres away, according to the Institute for

the Study of War.

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Moscow claims to have taken a string of villages and settlements, many consisting of no more than a few streets and a handful of abandoned buildings, in recent weeks.

Neither side has been able to achieve a decisive breakthrough and both Moscow and Kyiv say they are inflicting heavy casualties on the other, almost two and a half years after Russia launched its offensive.

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