The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Around 2K North Korean Soldiers Killed Fighting for Russia, Seoul Claims

By AFP

September 02, 2025



SONG KYONG-SEOK / POOL / TASS

Around 2,000 North Korean soldiers deployed to help Russia fight against Ukrainian forces are believed to have been killed, South Korean lawmaker Lee Seong-kweun told reporters on Tuesday after a briefing from the National Intelligence Service (NIS).

South Korean and Western intelligence agencies say Pyongyang sent more than 10,000 troops to Russia in 2024 — mostly to the southwestern Kursk region — along with artillery shells, missiles and long-range rocket systems.

Lee said the NIS believes North Korea plans to deploy another 6,000 soldiers and engineers, with about 1,000 combat engineers already in Russia. Moscow earlier confirmed that North Korean builders and deminers were working in the Kursk region.

Pyongyang acknowledged in April that it had sent troops to Russia and that some had been

killed. Since then, state media has shown leader Kim Jong Un consoling bereaved families, embracing returning soldiers, and kneeling before portraits of the dead.

Russia and North Korea signed a defense pact last year during President Vladimir Putin's visit to Pyongyang.

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