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121 sorties in 48 hours: Russia eliminates 'several commanders' in Syria anti-ISIS air op

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**Trends** [Islamic State](#), [Russian anti-terror op in Syria](#), [Syria unrest](#)

The bombing raids were undertaken by Su-24, Su-25 and Su-34 warplanes on with Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL) strongholds of Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor, the ministry reported on its [//function.mil.ru/news\\_page/country/more.htm?id=12073140@egNews](http://function.mil.ru/news_page/country/more.htm?id=12073140@egNews)">website.

Moscow says it is receiving intelligence from Syrian government opposition groups, which is helping it to conduct its bombing missions against jihadist forces. This cooperation enabled Russian warplanes to bomb a building that was used for a meeting of IS commanders.

Read more [Russian strikes help Syrian rebels free 20 areas from ISIS control](#)



*"The reported area was constantly surveyed from air for two days. After the arrival of commanders was confirmed, a Su-34 targeted the building used as the venue of the meeting. The building was totally eliminated by a guided bomb," the ministry said.*

Syrian troops also made significant gains in the Deraa province on Wednesday, aided by Russian air support. Soldiers entered the town of Sheikh Maskin, which is on a key supply route between the capital, Damascus, and the city of Deraa. A commander in a rebel group said that there had been at least 100 Russian raids over the last two days, which had given troops loyal to Syrian President Bashar Assad the upper hand, Reuters reports.

Meanwhile, in the Aleppo province, Su-25 planes conducted a number of airstrikes against terrorist targets. As a result, a tank and three vehicles were destroyed. Attacks in the Idlib province also targeted Al-Nusra Front forces, while an IS arms depot, which contained weapons and machinery, was destroyed around Homs.

Moscow has also been aiding the Syrian Democratic Forces opposition group with air power. Established in October, it unites Kurdish, Arab, Assyrian, Armenian and Turkmen militias.

*"The troops of the Syrian Democratic Forces, commanded by Ayman Flyat el-Ganim, with the support of the Russian Air Force, conducted an offensive toward the ISIS capital, Raqqa. As a result of this offensive, approximately 20 residential areas were liberated from extremists. Strategic control was established over the important dam on the river Euphrates at al-Ahmar," Lieutenant-General Sergey Rudskoy said at a Russian Defense Ministry press briefing in Moscow on Tuesday.*

**#SYRIA** Since Dec 28, Russian aircraft performed 121 sorties engaging 424 **#ISIS** objects <http://on.fb.me/1kt50eC>



Russia has come under fire from the West and human rights groups for killing civilians and medical infrastructure during its airstrikes. However, this is a charge that Moscow vehemently denies.

*"I want to say this with dignity. Not a single time did my pilots hit any 'no-go' sensitive targets such as schools,*

*hospitals, mosques or holy sites,"* Colonel General Viktor Bondarenko, the head of the Russian Air and Space Forces, said in an interview with the Rossiya 24 news channel on Sunday.

Russia launched its military air campaign in Syria against terrorist groups on September 30 after Damascus officially requested its aid due to the critical situation in the country resulting from its civil war. Russia has conducted over 5,200 combat sorties since then.

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