The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Officials Deny Reports of Servicemen Deaths in Syria

October 21, 2015



Free Syrian Army fighters fire rockets towards forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad.

Russian officials have denied reports that at least three of the country's servicemen were killed while fighting alongside Syrian government forces.

A Russian Defense Ministry spokesman said "there have been no casualties among Russian military servicemen in Syria," the state-run TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

A spokeswoman for the Russian embassy in Damascus, Asiyat Turuchneva, denied casualty reports and said Russian forces were only conducting air strikes in Syria, without engaging in fighting on the ground, the Interfax news agency reported.

Three Russians fighting alongside Syrian government forces were killed and several more wounded when a shell hit their position in the coastal province of Latakia, said a senior pro-government military source, Reuters news agency reported earlier on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's military intelligence issued a statement Tuesday claiming that more than two dozen Russian troops have been killed in Syria.

The bodies of 26 Russian marines of the Black Sea Fleet have been brought back from Syria to the fleet's home base in Crimea's Sevastopol, according to military intelligence cited in a statement on the agency's website.

The head of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights which monitors the conflict, Rami Abdulrahman, said his sources in the area had confirmed the deaths of Russians, but said the men were believed to have been volunteers, not regular military servicemen, Reuters reported. He did not give a figure of the alleged Russian casualties, the report said.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/10/21/russian-officials-deny-reports-of-servicemen-deaths-in-syria-a50387