

Defense Ministry: Reports of Russian Mi-24 Destroyed in Syria Are 'IS Propaganda'

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The Russian Defense Ministry has denied reports of the destruction of Russian Mi-24 combat helicopters on a Syrian airbase, the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday.

“All Russian helicopters located in Syria are performing planned tasks to destroy the terrorists. There were no losses among the personnel of the Russian airbase,” representative of the ministry Major General Igor Konashenkov was quoted as saying by Interfax.

“Rumors about a destroyed division of Russian helicopters and 20 trucks are being spread by the Islamic State,” Konashenkov said, adding that the terrorist organization made an attempt “to sell this alleged news about 10 days ago.”

Earlier on Tuesday, the BBC Russian-language service, with reference to experts from the American intelligence firm Stratfor, published pictures of the airbase supposedly showing the debris of Mi-24 helicopters. According to the experts, the base was damaged during attacks by the Islamic State.

“These burnt vehicles have been located on the base for months,” Konashenkov commented on the pictures. “It is the result of the hard battles for the base,” he said.

Konashenkov criticized those who spread the reports, ironically describing them as a “feasible contribution to the fight against international terrorism from Russia’s partners,” Interfax reported.

The Islamic State is a terrorist organization banned in Russia.

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