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Tehran Says Russia 'Showing Off' With Air Base Publicity

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Iranian officials said Monday that Russia was no longing using an air base in Iran for bombing raids in support of Syrian President Bashar Assad and criticized Moscow for publicizing the military collaboration between the two countries.

"Russia has no base in Iran and is not stationed here. They performed this [operation] and it is finished for now," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qasemi was quoted as saying by Tasnim news agency Monday, according to the Reuters news agency.

The Iranian statements come after Russia announced last week that long-range bombers used Iran's Nojeh air base in the north-west of the country to launch strikes in Syria. The move was widely interpreted as a sign of warming ties between Tehran and Moscow.

Both Iran and Russia back Assad in Syria's bloody civil war, which has lasted for over five years. Russia began military intervention in support of Assad last year.

The remarks by the Iranian Foreign Ministry follow comments by the Iranian Defense Minister General
Hossein Dehghan over the weekend when he reportedly accused Russia of
being a “show-off and ungentlemanly” during a questioning in parliament.

"The Russians are interested showing that they are a superpower to guarantee their share in political future of Syria,” Dehghan said, the AP news agency reported Monday.

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