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Russian Deploys Bastion Missile System in Kaliningrad Region

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Scenes from a military recruitment festival in Kaliningrad in September 2015. **Russian Defense Ministry Press Service**

Russia has deployed the Bastion coastal defense missile system in the Kaliningrad region, the Interfax news agency reported Monday. The system will be part of Russia's Baltic Fleet.

Earlier the Baltic Fleet's press service announced that it was preparing the infrastructure to deploy a new "coastal tactical missile complex," though the press service did not specify which complex would be used.

The Bastion system is a unified coastal defense complex which employs the supersonic homing Onyx anti-ship missile. It is designed to defend more than 600 kilometers of coastline against surface ships whether they are engaged in landing operations, in convoys, or as part of an aircraft carrier battlegroup. It is designed to be able to operate under conditions of intense fire and radio-electronic countermeasures.

One fully-loaded unit carries 36 Onyx anti-ship missiles, which can engage targets beyond

the visual horizon. The missiles are also "fire-and-forget," meaning that they home in on their targets independently without any additional input from the firing crew.

On Nov. 15, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu reported that thanks to the deployment of the Bastion system in Syria, where Onyx missiles have been employed against ground targets, the entire coastline was "effectively closed."

According to experts, the Bastion system in Kaliningrad would allow Russia to close the exit to the Baltic Sea via Denmark. Additionally, all strategic targets in Poland would be within range of the system's missiles.

Earlier in 2016, Shoigu promised that the Russian navy would receive five more coastal defense systems.

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