The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Transport Plane Crashes in Syria Killing All 32 on Board

By Reuters

March 06, 2018



Pavel Rebrov / Reuters

A Russian military transport plane crashed in Syria on Tuesday, killing all 32 people on board, Russian news agencies quoted the Russian Defense Ministry as saying, an incident that sharply raises the death toll from the Kremlin's Syria operation.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is running for re-election later this month, ordered "a significant part" of Moscow's military contingent there to start withdrawing in December, declaring their work largely done.

But casualties continue to mount.

The Defense Ministry was cited as saying that the plane, an An-26, crashed at Russia's Hmeymim air base in Latakia Province and that initial information suggested the crash may have been caused by a technical fault.

Related article: Russia Is Offering an Olive Branch, Not Nuclear War (Op-ed)

Twenty-six passengers and six crew members were on board, and all were killed in the crash, the news agencies quoted the ministry as saying.

In December 2016, a plane carrying a Russian military orchestra to Syria crashed in the Black Sea, killing all 92 people on board.

There have also been deaths and injuries among Russian forces in Syria. In one incident, in February this year, Syrian rebels shot down a Russian warplane and killed its pilot on the ground after he ejected.

About 300 men working for a Kremlin-linked Russian private military firm were either killed or injured in Syria last month when their column was attacked by U.S.-led coalition forces, according to three sources familiar with the matter.

Russian officials said a handful of Russian citizens may have been killed in that incident, but said they were not members of Russia's armed forces.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/03/06/russian-transport-plane-crashes-in-syria-killing-all-32-on-board-a60724