The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Bombed 2 Syrian Displacement Camps – NYT

December 02, 2019



Journalists pieced together photographic evidence, planespotters' accounts and intercepted Russian Aerospace Forces radio transmissions to pinpoint blame on Russia for the airstrikes. **Mustafa Dahnon / dpa / TASS**

Russian warplanes dropped bombs on two compounds for displaced Syrians over the summer, killing up to 59 people in total, The New York Times reported in a video investigation Sunday.

NYT journalists pieced together photo evidence, planespotters' accounts and intercepted Russian Aerospace Forces radio transmissions to pinpoint blame on Russia for the airstrikes. The newspaper used similar methodology to report in October that Russia had bombed four Syrian hospitals within 12 hours in May, a report denied by the Russian military, which said it attacked terrorist bunkers.

Related article: Russia Is Bombing Syrian Hospitals – NYT

Syrian or Russian jets were suspected of carrying out the July 22 airstrike that killed up to 40

civilians in the densely populated city of Maarat Al-Numan in Idlib province. Russia denied that attack, but the NYT reported Sunday that its flight logs and radio intercepts showed that a Russian pilot conducted four strikes in the city that morning.

“I sent the candy,” the pilot identified as “Pilot 17” can be heard telling air control in an intercepted recording.

A Russian strike killed 19 other displaced civilians on Aug. 16 in Hass, another town in Idlib, NYT reported, citing the same investigative techniques that included pilot communications. In that instance, the Russian pilot could be heard saying “Sent.”

“It’s all part of a strategy to break the will of the people, force them to flee and to help the Syrian government retake the last opposition stronghold,” an NYT reporter said in the video report.

Graphic videos of the destruction and rescue operations accompany detailed flight logs and audio of the pilots’ communications in Russian.

Western states have accused Russia and its ally Syria of targeting civilians in rebel-held areas of northwest Syria, a charge that Moscow and Damascus deny, saying they are targeting militants.

Thousands of Russian Aerospace Forces radio transmissions obtained from an unnamed network of observers served as a key piece of evidence that the NYT said corroborated the videos and witness accounts.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/12/02/russia-bombed-2-syrian-displacement-camps-nyt-a68427