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Russia Intercepts Norwegian Jet Near Arctic – Interfax

April 07, 2021



A Russian Mig-31 fighter jet. **topwar.ru**

A Russian warplane has intercepted a Norwegian electronic warfare aircraft over the Barents Sea near the Arctic, state media cited the military as saying Wednesday.

Citing Russia's National Defense Management Center, Interfax said the Russian military detected an "air target" approaching the Russian border from Norway.

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"The [Russian Navy's] Northern Fleet air defense forces' MiG-31 fighter was scrambled to identify the air target and prevent violations of the Russian state border," the military said.

"The crew of the Russian fighter identified the air target as a Norwegian air force Falcon-20 signals intelligence and electronic warfare aircraft and escorted it over the Barents Sea," it added.

The Russian defense center noted that the Norwegian Falcon-20 adhered to international flight rules and did not violate the Russian border.

Russia and the West have been building up their military presence in the Arctic as melting ice driven by climate change opens up strategic shipping routes and natural resources.

NATO member Norway and Russia share a common border in the Arctic and have generally enjoyed good relations despite Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 placing strain on them.

The countries' ties have been rocked by a recent series of spy and cyberattack scandals, as well as accusations of restricting each others' activities in the Arctic.

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