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Russian Soldier Killed in Syrian Patrol Blast

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Andrei Gryaznov / TASS

A Russian soldier was killed after his vehicle hit an explosive device in Syria, the Russian military said Thursday in a statement carried by state media.

The Russian Defense Ministry said a roadside bomb detonated in the central province of Homs during a Russian military police reconnaissance on a humanitarian route.

"A Russian serviceman traveling in a car was seriously injured in the explosion and died despite the medical assistance provided," Interfax quoted the military as saying.

Russia has deployed thousands of troops across Syria to fight on the side of its close ally Damascus in its decade-long civil war against rebel groups and Islamist insurgents.

Several Russian servicemen have been killed and injured in patrol blasts in recent months.

A 2020 Turkish-Russian deal provides for joint patrols in Syria to hold up an uneasy ceasefire after government forces reclaimed most of the country.

NATO member Turkey and Russia back opposing sides in the Syrian civil war.

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