The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Air Base in Syria Attacked by Drones – Reports

February 18, 2025



The Hmeimim airbase in Syria. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Unidentified drones attacked a Russian-controlled air base in Syria overnight, Iran-linked media reported early Tuesday, as Moscow seeks to maintain its military presence following the ouster of its closest ally in the region.

"Anti-aircraft guns inside the Russian-controlled Hmeimim air base in Syria are intercepting unidentified drones flying over the Russian base," wrote Sabereen News, a media outlet affiliated with Iran-backed militias in Iraq.

A 17-second video accompanying that report showed three explosions in the distance, followed by the sounds of air defense systems firing into the sky.

It was not immediately possible to verify the video. Sabereen News is known for spreading disinformation for various purposes, including discrediting Iraqi officials and spreading anti-U.S. sentiment.

Oleg Blokhin, a pro-war blogger who has previously reported on the Russian military's operations in Syria, claimed without evidence that the attack was carried out by the Islamist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which currently holds power in Syria.

Blokhin said the drone attack on Hmeimim began around 2:30 a.m. local time and lasted more than an hour. He claimed Russia's Pantsir missile system repelled the strike.

Neither Russian nor Syrian authorities have confirmed the reports.

Related article: Syria Leader Stresses 'Strong Strategic Ties' in Call With Russia's Putin

Moscow is seeking to secure its military installations in Syria, including its naval base in Tartus and air base in Hmeimim — both located on Syria's Mediterranean coast and Russia's only military bases outside the former Soviet Union — under the country's new leadership.

Russian President Vladimir Putin spoke by phone last week with Syria's interim leader, Ahmed al-Sharaa, for the first time since he took power in December.

Moscow is close to reaching an agreement with the new Syrian government to allow "some staff and equipment" to remain in the country, Bloomberg reported Monday, citing anonymous sources familiar with the matter. The report did not specify whether Russia would retain control of Hmeimim and Tartus.

Last month, Syrian media reported that the new leadership had terminated a treaty granting Russia a long-term military presence in Tartus.

Moscow intervened in Syria's war in 2015, launching airstrikes that helped keep Bashar al-Assad in power. When rebels swept into Damascus in December, Russia granted Assad asylum, angering many Syrians, including the country's new rulers.

AFP contributed reporting.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/02/18/russian-air-base-in-syria-attacked-by-drones-reports-a88057