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FSB Claims It Thwarted Ukrainian Plot to Hijack Military Jet

By AFP

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A Russian MiG-31 fighter jet. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said Tuesday that it foiled an alleged Anglo-Ukrainian plot to hijack a Russian military jet and fly it to Romania.

The law enforcement agency claimed it had "uncovered and thwarted an operation by the... Ukrainian Defense Ministry and its British supervisors to steal a Russian MiG-31 high-altitude supersonic fighter jet, which carries the Kinzhal hypersonic air-launched missile."

It accused Kyiv of trying to "recruit Russian pilots" by promising them $3 million and citizenship in an unspecified Western country.

According to the FSB, Ukraine planned to have the plane flown toward a NATO base in Constanta, Romania, located on the Black Sea coast, where it would have been "shot down" by air defense systems.

The agency said it had "thwarted the plans of the Ukrainian and British services to organize the large-scale provocation."

State media published an FSB video showing a Russian soldier, whose face was concealed, saying that he had received an email from a Ukrainian intelligence agent trying to recruit him for the plot.

In retaliation, the FSB said Russian military forces struck a Ukrainian military intelligence center and airfield in the Kyiv and Khmelnitsky regions.

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In August 2023, a Russian military helicopter pilot defected to Ukraine after flying his aircraft to the country in an operation organized by Kyiv's security services.

His crew members were unaware of his intentions and were killed as they tried to escape, both Kyiv and Moscow had said at the time.

The helicopter pilot, Maxim Kuzminov, was found dead in Spain in February 2024.

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