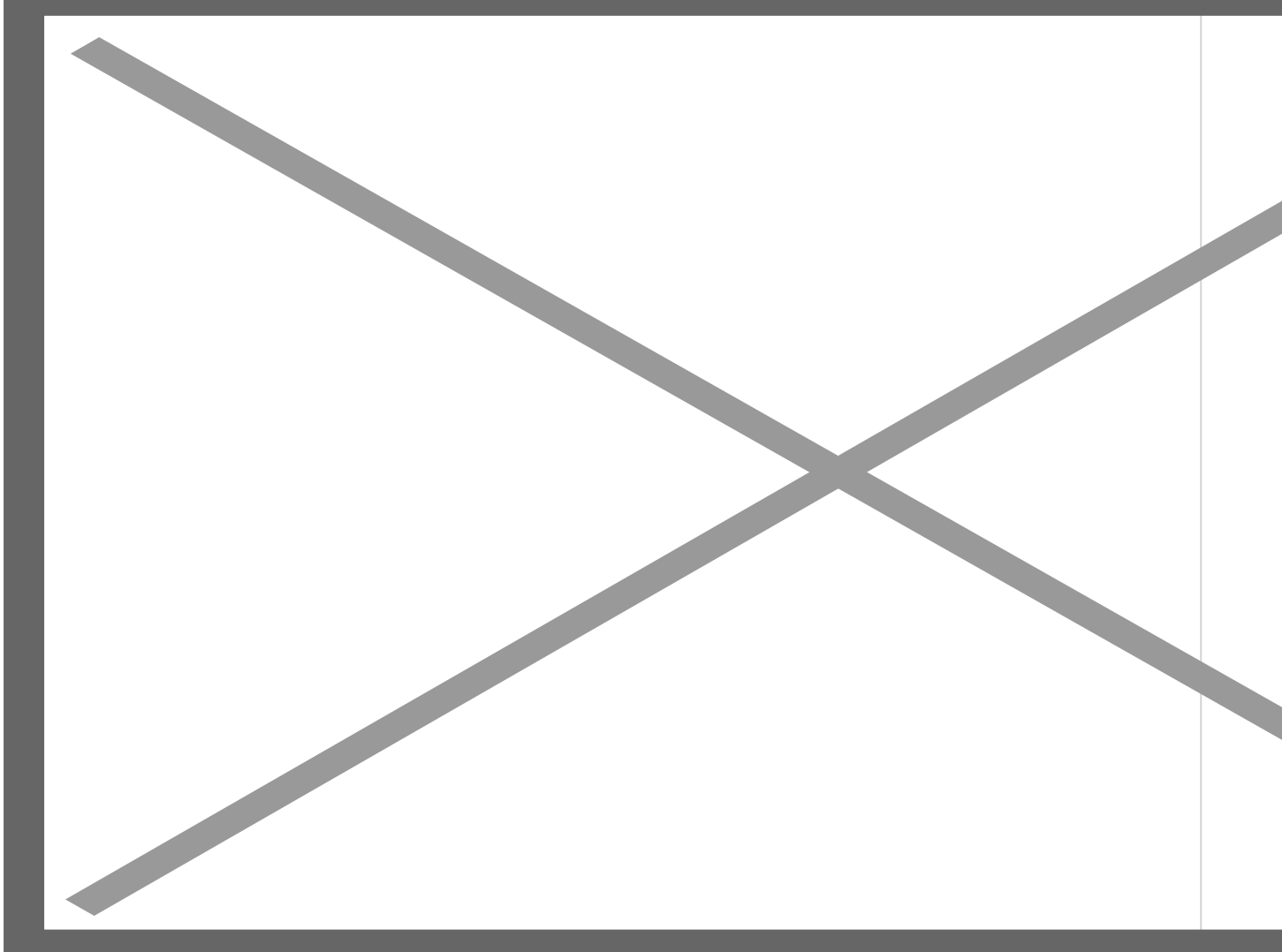


2,000 terrorists killed in northern Syria amid military cooperation with Russia

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File photo of a Syrian military aircraft

Damascus, December 5 (RHC)-- Syrian sources say around 2,000 foreign-backed Takfiri terrorists have been killed in the Arab country's north over the past week in joint strikes carried out by the Syrian military and its Russian allies.

The sources announced the fatalities on Wednesday amid a concerted counterterrorism push involving the Syrian military, including the air force, and Russian military aircraft.

The latest deaths were caused after the strikes hit terrorist gathering points and hideouts around the north, killing as many as 120 terrorists, the Russian Coordination Center in Syria reported.

The fatalities included dozens of Takfiris, who were killed during heavy operations targeting their gatherings in the countryside of the city of Hama, where clashes are reportedly underway northwest of the city. The retaliation also destroyed many of the terrorists' vehicles.

Earlier, it was reported that the Syrian army had launched a series of successful operations in northern Hama, expanding the security perimeter around the city by 20 kilometers (12 miles).

The operations led to the deaths of 300 terrorists belonging to the so-called Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) Takfiri outfit, including several foreign fighters. The army also destroyed 25 drones belonging to terrorists in northern Hama, besides cutting off their key supply rounds.

Additionally, heavy missile strikes targeted the sites used by the HTS in the city of Idlib.

In southern Idlib, the Syrian army intensified its bombardments, leading to significant casualties among the Takfiris' ranks.

Hospitals in Idlib are, meanwhile, reportedly overwhelmed with wounded terrorists, with the HTS trying to strictly limit hospital admissions to terrorist casualties.

Reacting to the gains, the Takfiris and media outlets across the Western and regional countries supporting them, including the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a so-called monitor, have launched an intense propaganda campaign, alleging that the terrorists had entered Hama.

Amid the campaign, the HTS reportedly imposed an internet blackout on the city to "mask the lies about the entry of terrorists" into the city, Syrian sources noted.

Syrian security sources have, however, confirmed that "Hama is completely safe, with armed forces stationed around the city."

Reporting on the situation on the ground in northern Syria, Lebanon's al-Mayadeen television network said, "Countries supporting the terrorists have deployed their full weight" there. It added, though, that "there is more military support from Syria's allies in the [regional] Axis of Resistance, and additionally reinforcements beyond what is currently present will arrive in the coming hours."

Earlier this week, members of the HTS were reported to have overrun many government-controlled areas and killed dozens of soldiers in northern Syria.

The Syrian military and its allied Russian forces then began extensive counterterrorism operations, prompting terrorist outfits and their Western supporters to launch a full-scale media campaign aimed at tarnishing the Syrian forces' successful anti-terror drive. The campaign has been dismissed by Damascus as a mere "media war."



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