

Russia intensifies air strikes against ISIS in Syria

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Moscow: Russian air force intensified military operation against Islamic State (IS) targets in Syria, shortly after the Kremlin said that a passenger plane that crashed in Egypt last month was brought down by a bomb.

Russian Federal Security Service said on Tuesday that the downing of the plane in Sinai was the result of a terrorist attack. President Vladimir Putin vowed vengeance and massive anti-terror campaign in Syria, Xinhua reported.

"The number of flights has doubled in the air operation in Syria to carry out powerful strikes against IS targets across Syria with pinpoint accuracy," Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu told Putin in a meeting on the military operation in Syria.

A total of 127 sorties were planned on Tuesday against 206 terrorist targets in Syria, with 82 sorties being flown, hitting 140 targets so far, an online Kremlin release quoted Shoigu as saying.

Tuesday's operation involves 12 Tu-22M3 long-range strategic bombers targeting terrorist facilities in Syrian provinces of Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor, as well as 34 cruise missiles against targets in the Aleppo and Idlib provinces, the release said.

Russia also prepared a new round of military operations against IS in Syria, said Chief of the General Staff of Russian Armed Forces Valery Gerasimov at the meeting on Tuesday.

Gerasimov said that over the past 48 days, Russian air force has undertaken 2,289 sorties to carry out 4,111 strikes, destroying 562 control centres, 64 training camps and 54 ammunition plants of the IS targets.

Russia launched air strikes against IS and other terrorist groups on September 30 following a request by Syria's President Bashar al-Assad.

On October 30, a Russian plane crashed in Egypt's Sinai peninsula, killing all 224 people aboard.

IS claimed responsibility for downing the plane.

It also claimed responsibility for the terrorist attacks in Paris on Friday, which claimed at least 129 lives and injured over 350 people.

On Tuesday, Putin instructed relevant agencies to establish contacts with the French side, after a phone conversation with President Francois Hollande.

The Kremlin added that the two leaders will meet on November 26, when Hollande is expected to visit Moscow.

The two decided to ensure closer contact and improve coordination of military actions between agencies and security services of the two countries as part of anti-terror operations carried out by Russia and France in Syria.

"It would be necessary to develop an action plan with them for operations at sea and in mid-air," Putin said.

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