

Russia fires seven cruise missiles at ISIS targets in Syria

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Moscow: Russia's military said that has fired seven cruise missiles at Islamic State targets in the eastern Syrian province of Deir el-Zour. The Defense Ministry said the Kalibr cruise missiles were launched from two submarines in the Mediterranean on Thursday.

Trainees of a bomb disposal unit prepare to practice a bomb search near Homs

Russia has provided military backing for Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces since 2015. It has repeatedly fired salvos of such missiles, from both the sea and mainland Russia.

In this strike, the missiles were aimed at ISIS command points, communication hubs and arms dumps southeast of the city of Deir el-Zour, where Syrian troops and allied militias are battling the extremists. The ministry said all the targets were destroyed.

A Syria monitoring group said that a convoy of Islamic State militants and their relatives transferred from the border with Lebanon has finally crossed into an extremist stronghold in eastern Syria, ending a standoff with the US-led coalition over their evacuation deal.

The convoy had been stuck in the desert following airstrikes by the US-led coalition to prevent its advance. The Hezbollah-negotiated deal allowed the evacuation in exchange for locating the remains of Lebanese soldiers and the release of fighters. On Thursday, a captive Hezbollah fighter was released.

The head of the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said buses and vehicles crossed into Deir el-Zour province Wednesday. Last week, the US-led coalition said it ended surveillance of the convoy after a Russian request.

- AP