

## **Israel launched missile attack on Damascus airport: Syria**

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**Damascus:** Israel attacked Damascus International Airport with missiles Saturday night, Syrian state media said, adding that air defenses shot down some of them. A war monitoring group said the attack targeted an arms depot for Iranian forces or Lebanon's Hezbollah group.

Explosions during the attack were heard across Damascus. The state news agency SANA posted pictures showing what appeared to be air defenses firing into the air.

State media quoted an unidentified military official as reporting the attack but gave no further details.

Rami Abdurrahman, who heads the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said the attack targeted an arms depot near the airport where new weapons recently arrived for the Iranians or Lebanon's Hezbollah group. The monitoring group had no immediate word on casualties, saying the strike did cause material damage. Israel rarely acknowledges attacks inside Syria, but has said it would use military action to prevent weapons transfers to its enemies.

Earlier this month, an Israeli military official said the Jewish state has struck over 200 Iranian targets in Syria over the past 18 months. Israel is widely believed to have been behind a series of airstrikes mainly targeting Iranian and Hezbollah forces in Syria that have joined the country's war fighting alongside the government. It rarely confirms the attacks.

An Israeli official said earlier this month that the targets were connected to Iran's elite Al-Quds force and included air force components, support infrastructure, and weapons storage and manufacturing facilities.

US and Israeli officials have said that Iran and Hezbollah should end their armed presence in Syria. Israel says it is alarmed by the expansion of operations by Iran and Hezbollah in Syria.

- AP