Russian Strikes in Syria Killed More Civilians Than Fighters: Monitor

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Recent Russian strikes in Syria have killed more civilians than fighters, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The monitoring group released a report on Friday that included thorough analysis of all airstrikes conducted in Syria during the last 13 months.

Overall, the SOHR documented 42,234 airstrikes in Syria in the span of 13 months, from October 20, 2014 to November 20 of this year.

The Russian Air Force conducted its first airstrike in Syrian at the end of September, and since then, "hundreds of airstrikes carried out by the Russian air force have killed 403 civilians, including 97 children and 69 women, and 381 fighters from Jabhat al- Nusra, IS, the rebel and Islamist factions," according to the Observatory.

At least 36 people were killed Friday in air strikes by Russian and Syrian jets on Islamic State-controlled Deir Ezzor province, the monitoring group said, describing them as the heaviest in the region since the start of the war.

Russia pounded the jihadist group in Syria, firing cruise missiles from warships in the Caspian Sea after President Vladimir Putin vowed retaliation for a bombing that brought down a Russian airliner in Egypt last month.

In the United Nations, member states backed a motion calling for action against Islamic State a week after the Paris attacks, the worst on French soil also claimed by the jihadist group based in Syria and Iraq.

"At least 36 people were killed and dozens more injured in more than 70 raids carried out by Russian and Syrian planes against several districts in Deir Ezzor," Rami Abdel Rahman of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group told AFP.

He described the raids, which targeted several large cities and smaller towns in the province and three oil fields, as "the worst bombardment of the region since the start of the uprising in 2011".

The province and most of the provincial capital is held by Islamic State militants, with the exception of the military airport and a few areas controlled by the regime.

Russia began bombing in Syria in September at the request of its longstanding ally President Bashar al-Assad, while a US-led coalition is conducting its own air campaign against IS.

President Putin this week pledged to hunt down and "punish" those behind a bombing that brought down a passenger jet in Egypt last month, killing all 224 people on board in an attack claimed by IS.

Moscow claimed to have killed more than 600 fighters after hitting seven targets in the Raqa, Idlib and Aleppo provinces, Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu was quoted as saying by Russian news agencies.

It was the second time that warships have been used since the start of the bombing campaign on September 30.

- 'For Paris!' -

Russian television showed a man scrawling "For our people!" and "For Paris!" in black pen on bombs minutes before a warplane was set to take off from the country's airbase in Syria.

Lebanon said Friday it was preparing to re-route flights from Beirut airport after Russia requested they avoid an area over the eastern Mediterranean because of three days of military manoeuvres.

The UN Security Council on Friday backed a French-drafted measure calling on member states to "take all necessary measures" to fight IS, a week after IS jihadists killed 130 people in Paris in France's worst such attack.

The resolution, which does not provide a legal basis for military action, urges those countries who can to "take all necessary measures, in compliance with international law... on the territory under the control of ISIL... in Syria and Iraq".

The US-led coalition fighting IS said Monday it had destroyed 116 fuel trucks used by the jihadists in eastern Syria, in one of the largest raids in weeks.

IS reportedly makes millions of dollars in revenue from oil fields under its control, and the coalition has regularly targeted oil infrastructure held by the group.

An investigation by British newspaper The Financial Times last month estimated the jihadists reap some $1.5 million a day from oil, based on the price of $45 a barrel.