

Video: Turkey Sponsored Militants Claim Russians Killed in Hama, Attack Hmeimim Air Base

By [South Front](#)

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On May 1, the Turkish-backed coalition of militant groups, the National Front for Liberation, claimed that its members had killed 4 Russian servicemembers with mortar shelling in the village of Braidij in northern Hama.

The reports came amid a new round of escalation in the area caused by the constant militant attacks on positions of the Syrian Arab Army (SAA). According to pro-militant sources, Syrian and Russian aircraft carried out at least 50 strikes on militant targets in northern Hama and southern Idlib.

On the same day, government reinforcements reportedly arrived in the area in order to strengthen SAA positions near the so-called demilitarized zone. Pro-government sources immediately started a new round of speculation that this is a sign of an upcoming military operation near Idlib.

On May 2, the Russian Defense Ministry rejected claims about casualties among its servicemembers in northern Hama. Separately, the Russian military revealed that militants from the Idlib de-escalation zone had attempted to attack its Hmeymim airbase with multiple-launch rocket systems and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) 12 times over the past month. 8 of the 12 attacks were carried out with UAVs. Russian forces shot down 12 UAVs. No material damage or casualties were caused.

9 Turkish soldiers were killed and fourteen others injured in a series of attacks in the southern part of Afrin on April 30, the Afrin Liberation Forces (ALF) claimed in a new statement. The Turkish soldiers were supposedly killed when Kurdish fighters destroyed with ATGMs two BMC Kirpi Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles and a 4x4 Turkish military truck in the vicinity of the town of Qatamah. On the same day Kurdish fighters also ambushed a Turkish military unit near the same village. As a result of the ambush, six Turkish soldiers were injured, according to the ALF's claims.

The Kurdish group's claims are yet to be confirmed. The Turkish military, which usually announces his losses without any delay, has not commented on these claims so far.

ISIS units killed and captured a number of Syrian service members in two hit and run attacks in the eastern Homs countryside over the last few days. The attacks took place in the areas of Aatchane and Sukhna.

According to pro-government sources, the SAA's Tiger Forces were recently sent to the Homs countryside in order to deal with the growing ISIS threat. The expected anti-ISIS operation in the desert however makes the possibility of an advance near Idlib questionable.

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