

Iran gambles, Moscow Pays in Syria

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OPINION — That Iran seeks to diffuse advanced weaponry to its proxies in Syria and Lebanon is no surprise, though recent Israeli efforts to stanch the flow of precise weaponry to its neighbors have had unexpected consequences. An Israeli strike on a site connected to the Iranian weapons program in Syria led Assad's trigger happy air defense to fire indiscriminately and accidentally down a plane belonging to its partners from the Russian military along with 15 military personnel in a friendly fire incident.

The Russian Ministry of Defense rushed to blame Israel for not accommodating deconfliction efforts and even went so far as to reserve the right to respond, so the Israeli Air Force (IAF) brought unequivocal proof that its planes were no longer in Syrian airspace and were certainly not “hiding” behind Russian planes when the Syrians shot down the Ilyushin Il-20 reconnaissance plane. President Putin then walked back his defense official's statements and chalked the deaths up to a tragic accident.

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