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www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

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Press TV

Turkey gives surface-to-air missiles to Syrian rebels: Report

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A report says Turkey has supplied the foreign-sponsored armed groups in Syria with surface-to-air missiles.

According to a July 31 report by the NBC News, nearly two dozen missiles have been delivered to the rebels in Syria by Turkey. The report, however, did not provide details on the exact type of the missiles, also known as MANPADs (man-portable air-defense systems).

Over the past weeks, some anti-Syria regional countries, including Saudi Arabia and Qatar, have been calling for such arms to be sent to the terrorist Free Syrian Army.

On July 22, the Turkish Anadolu Agency reported that Ankara has deployed ground-to-air missiles on its border with Syria.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad told the Turkish *Cumhuriyet* daily in an interview in early July that Turkey “has supplied all logistic support to the terrorists who have killed our people.”

The recent NBC report comes as fighting continues between Syrian security forces and rebels in several areas across the country.

On Tuesday, the Syrian army cleared most areas of the northwestern city of Aleppo of armed groups, killing tens of rebels in the southwestern neighborhood of Salahuddin and the southern district of Sokari.

On July 27, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said, “We must do what we can together in the United Nations Security Council, and also in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League, to make sure that we can make some important progress in trying to avert this appalling situation.”

The anti-Syria Western regimes have been calling for the Syrian president to step down, but Russia and China remain strongly opposed to the Western drive to oust Assad.

On July 28, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said, “Our Western partners... together with some of Syria’s neighbors are essentially encouraging, supporting and directing an armed struggle against [the Syrian government].”