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Russian helicopter attacked in eastern Afghanistan

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Suspected Taliban militants have opened fire on a Russian military helicopter in Afghanistan's eastern province of Paktia, but the crew and passengers got away unscathed

"The Mi-8 helicopter belonging to UTair airline was fired 35 kilometers (22 miles) off the town of Gardez. No one was hurt," the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Friday.

The statement added that the helicopter with seven passengers onboard was on its way from the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad -- located about 170 kilometers (105 miles) southeast of the national capital Kabul -- to Paktia capital, Gardez.

According to the Russian Foreign Ministry, all passengers were members of the US-led International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF), and that there were also 300 kilograms of cargo onboard the aircraft.

The three Russian crews changed route after the shooting, and could land safely from a 900-meter altitude in the Kabul airport.

Four bullet holes were found in the helicopter's hull after the landing.

The United States invaded Afghanistan in 2001 on the pretext of combating terrorism.

The offensive removed the Taliban from power, but years into the invasion, insecurity continues to rise across the country.