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Moskva cruiser sank while being towed in a storm - Russian Defense Ministry

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MOSCOW, April 14. /TASS/. The Moskva missile cruiser sank while being towed amid storm because of hull damage sustained during the detonation of ammunition, Russian Defense Ministry said Thursday.

"During the towing of the Moskva cruiser to the designation port, the ship lost stability due to hull damage, sustained during the detonation of ammunition because of a fire. Amid the heavy storm, the ship sank," the Ministry said.

The Ministry underscored that the crew was evacuated to nearby Black Sea Fleet ships, as was announced earlier.

Earlier on Thursday, Russian Defense Ministry reported that Black Sea Fleet missile cruiser Moskva sustained serious damage after a detonation of ammunition, caused by an onboard fire. The Ministry said that the crew was evacuated to nearby Black Sea Fleet ships, adding that the cause of the incident is being determined.

The Ministry said later that the cruiser remained buoyant, and its

main weapons were not damaged, adding that towing is being attempted.

Moskva was the flagship of the Black Sea fleet, and a lead ship of Project 1164. It was commissioned in 1983 under the name of Slava ("Glory"). In 1996, the cruiser received its current name. Its main weapon is 16 P-1000 Vulkan missile launchers.