

'Peat Tsar' Found Dead Near Helicopter Crash Site

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A group of hunters discovered the crash site of a Robinson R-44 helicopter that disappeared in the Tver region last week with a controversial businessman on board.

Investigators and rescue workers were dispatched to the Moscow region's Solnechnogorsky district, where the crash site was found, while the Investigative Committee began a preliminary inquiry into the incident, Interfax reported Thursday.

One of three bodies discovered nearby belonged to 35-year-old Fyodor Tsarev, a controversial businessman also known as the "peat tsar" who was under investigation for illegal logging and excavating peat and sand in the Moscow region.

Tsarev, who apparently piloted the unregistered helicopter during its last flight on Saturday, was known for his reckless behavior and disregard for flight-safety regulations, according to local police.

The two other passengers on board were Oleg Skopintsev, 49, and Vasily Petrov, son of Yuri

Petrov, a United Russia lawmaker and former head of the Federal Property Management Agency, the report said.

Six hundred and twenty people and 134 pieces of heavy equipment, including two helicopters, took part in the five-day search operation, RIA-Novosti reported.

(MT)

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