

Rebel Leader Umarov Is Dead, Islamist Website Says

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The  **Moscow Times**

A website sympathetic to Islamist militants fighting Russian rule in the North Caucasus said Tuesday that the insurgency's leader, Doku Umarov, had been killed.

The death of Russia's most wanted man, who called for attacks on last month's Winter Olympics in Sochi, has been reported before by the Kremlin-backed leader of the Chechnya republic but not by Umarov's sympathizers.

A spokesman for Russia's National Anti-Terrorism Committee said he could not confirm Umarov was dead, RIA Novosti reported.

The Kavkaz Center website did not say when or how Umarov had been killed. It called him a martyr who had "given 20 years of his life to the Jihad."

Umarov has defied Russian security forces for years as the head of the insurgency seeking to carve an emirate out of Russia's mostly Muslim regions in the North Caucasus.

His death would be a breakthrough for President Vladimir Putin in the fight against the militants.

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