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Russian Media Reports 3 Deaths in Syria, Including Russian Soldier

September 21, 2017



Rodi Said / Reuters

At least one Russian soldier died in an ambush in Syria last week, a Siberian news outlet reported late on Wednesday.

An estimated 36 Russian servicemen have died since Moscow launched its campaign in Syria in late September 2015, according to a tally by Kommersant based on official figures.

But a Reuters report last month said that at least 40 Russians have died fighting in Syria this year alone, a claim which the Russian Defense Ministry denies.

Vladimir Tarasyuk, a resident of the city of Bratsk in the Irkutsk region, was ambushed upon returning to a military base on the morning of Sept. 16, his sister told the newirkutsk.ru website. He died from a shrapnel wound, she said.

The report also claimed an unnamed colonel and a general had died in the attack. It was unclear whether they were Russian citizens.

The Bratsk-based television channel, which major Russian outlets cited in their reports of Tarasyuk's death, appeared to have deleted the original report on their website on Thursday morning.

Russia's Defense Ministry has not commented on the reported deaths.

The General Staff's Colonel-General Sergei Rudskoi was quoted as saying on Wednesday by the state-run RIA Novosti that three Russian special forces troops were wounded in a militant attack in northwestern Syria. He did not specify the date of the ambush in the province of Idlib.

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2017/09/21/syria-59005-a59005