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Russia Accuses Head of Kazakh Diaspora of 'War Fakes' – Vyorstka

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Polat Dzhamalov. **screen grab / RTVI**

Russian authorities have launched a criminal investigation into "war fakes" against the head of a Kazakh diaspora in Moscow, the independent news outlet Vyorstka reported Wednesday, citing an undisclosed report by Russia's Investigative Committee.

Polat Dzhamalov, who heads an NGO called Moscow Foundation "Kazakh Diaspora," is accused of sharing a senior Russian official's alleged estimate of Russian troop deaths in a Facebook post.

According to Vyorstka, the post contained an image of Deputy Finance Minister Irina Okladnikova's letter to Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Grigorenko, which revealed that 48,759 Russian soldiers had died in Ukraine as of mid-August 2022.

"The average number of deaths per month since the start of the special military operation is 8,132," Dzhamalov was quoted as saying by Vyorstka in a Facebook post.

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Moscow-based investigators opened the case against Dzhamalov on Sept. 11, 2023, though Vyorstka said it only recently received information about it.

Dzhamalov could face up to five years in prison if found guilty of "spreading false information" about the Russian Armed Forces.

It was not immediately clear from Vyorstka's report whether Dzhamalov was held in pre-trial detention or was charged in absentia.

An anti-war image was posted on Dzhamalov's profile page on the Russian social network Vkontakte early Wednesday.

Other images on his social media page show him attending Victory Day celebrations last year, as well as other events where military personnel were present.

Russia's corporate databases and the Yandex map service currently list the Kazakh Diaspora NGO as a defunct organization.

Authorities in Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic that shares its northern border with Russia, have not publicly commented on the reported criminal investigation against Dzhamalov.

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