

Russian Doctors Treating Uzbek President Islam Karimov - Reports

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The  **Moscow Times**

Russian doctors have flown to Uzbekistan to treat the country's ailing president Islam Karimov, the RBC newspaper reported Wednesday.

Unconfirmed media reports on Monday claimed that the 78-year old-Karimov, a strongman who has ruled Uzbekistan since 1989, had died of a brain hemorrhage. The Uzbek government have denied the reports, describing Karimov's condition as "stable."

The doctors treating Karimov are from Russia's N.N. Burdenko Neurosurgery Institute, RBC reported, citing the institute's scientific director, Alexander Konovalov.

"Our doctors have been there from the very first moment," Konovalov said, claiming the Institute's director and head of neurotraumatology, Alexander Potapov, was overseeing Karimov's treatment.

Neither the Kremlin or the Russian embassy in Tashkent have commented on Karimov's

condition. Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Olga Golodets announced earlier that Russia had not received any official requests to treat the Uzbek leader.

Writing on social media Wednesday, the president's youngest daughter thanked her father's well-wishers for their support, stoking further speculation that Karimov was alive.

"I would also like to use this opportunity and thank everyone for your kind words of support and best wishes for the speedy recovery of our President," Lola Karimova-Tilyayeva wrote on Instagram. "It means the world to us, and I am sure that your heartfelt good wishes are helping in his recovery. Thank you very much!"

While no official announcements have been made regarding Karimov's condition, the country has reduced its program of Independence Day festivities on Sept. 1. The day will mark 25 years of independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Uzbekistan's Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyayev, considered by many to be Karimov's likely successor, will perform the head of state's duties at the events, RBC reported.

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