

Wagner Commander Utkin Buried in Moscow Cemetery After Plane Crash Death

August 31, 2023



Utkin's grave at the Federal Military Memorial Cemetery in the Moscow region. **AFP**

The deceased commander and purported co-founder of the Wagner mercenary group has been buried at a Moscow cemetery, the MSK.1 news website [reported](#) Thursday.

Dmitry Utkin, who is believed to have inspired the name for the mercenary outfit under his call sign "Wagner," was killed in last week's plane crash alongside his boss Yevgeny Prigozhin, according to Russian authorities.

Local media shared images of Utkin's grave, which was at Moscow's Federal Military Memorial Cemetery, decorated with flowers and wreaths.

Wagner fighters and Russian military personnel were reportedly among those present at the funeral on Thursday, however, journalists and ordinary citizens were not allowed to attend the ceremony, MSK.1 said.

The funeral was conducted with military honors, the state-run TASS news agency [reported](#), but without providing further details.

Related article: [‘We Don’t Need Heroes Who Marched on Moscow’: How the Kremlin Silenced Prigozhin’s Funeral](#)

Utkin’s funeral took place just two days after Prigozhin was secretly buried during a private ceremony in his hometown of St. Petersburg.

The decision to keep the late mercenary chief's funeral a secret was made by the Russian presidential administration and the security services, two acting Russian officials [told](#) The Moscow Times this week.

Born in 1970, Utkin was known for his numerous Nazi tattoos, including a swastika, a Nazi eagle, and SS lightning bolts.

He was a former officer in Russia’s GRU military intelligence service and served in both Chechen wars, and in Syria.

Russian independent media had referred to Utkin as Wagner's "commander" as far back as 2015-2016, when the Kremlin still denied any links to the mercenary group, which was already operating in Ukraine and Syria.

In December 2016, Utkin was pictured alongside President Vladimir Putin at a Kremlin reception for Russian "heroes" fighting in the Syrian civil war.

Utkin is believed to have taken part in Prigozhin's short-lived mutiny in June, when Wagner fighters seized control of the Russian military's southern command center in Rostov-on-Don and launched a lightning-fast march on Moscow.

AFP contributed to this reporting.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/08/31/wagner-commander-utkin-buried-in-moscow-cemetery-after-plane-crash-death-a82312>