

# The Pro-War Russians and Ukrainian Defectors Killed Amid Moscow's Invasion

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Aftermath of the bomb attack that killed General Igor Kirillov. **Mikhail Metzel / TASS**

The head of the Russian army's chemical weapons division was killed Tuesday in a blast outside an apartment building in Moscow, becoming the highest-ranking military official to be killed in such a blast during the Kremlin's full-scale invasion.

Sources in Ukraine's SBU security service told news agencies that it was behind the early morning explosion in what it called a "special operation," calling Igor Kirillov a "war criminal."

Here's a list of some of the Russian pro-war figures and Ukrainian officials who switched sides after the invasion who have been killed in assassination attacks:

## **Daria Dugina**

Daria Dugina, the 29-year-old daughter of Russian ideologue Alexander Dugin, was killed in

August 2022 when an explosive device detonated on the Toyota Land Cruiser she was driving.

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) pointed the finger at Ukraine and said the person responsible was a Ukrainian woman born in 1979 who had rented an apartment in the same building where Dugina lived. Kyiv neither confirmed nor denied a role in the car bombing.

Dugin, 62, is an outspoken Russian ultranationalist intellectual who enthusiastically backs Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as did his daughter. Russian media reports suggested Dugina had borrowed her father's car at the last minute.

### **Vladlen Tatarsky**

Russian military blogger Vladlen Tatarsky, 40, died when a statue handed to him as a gift exploded in a St. Petersburg cafe where he was giving a speech in April 2023.

Tatarsky, whose real name was Maxim Fomin, was an enthusiastic supporter of the invasion of Ukraine but was also critical of the Russian military.

Daria Trepova, 27, who gave Tatarsky the golden figurine of himself, was found guilty of terrorism and other charges over the attack and [sentenced](#) to 27 years in a prison colony. It is the longest sentence Russia has handed to a woman since the Soviet collapse, according to state media and rights groups.

Russian investigators claimed Trepova acted on the instructions of individuals located in Ukraine. Trepova denied purposefully killing Tatarsky.

### **Alexei Kovalev**

Kovalev, a former Ukrainian deputy who switched allegiance to Russian occupying forces in the southern region of Kherson, was [shot dead](#) in August 2022.

Kovalev, 33, was elected a deputy in 2019 in Kherson and joined President Volodymyr Zelensky's party in the Ukrainian parliament.

After the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, Kovalev joined the invading forces and became a senior official.

Some media suggested he might have been killed for working with Russia.

### **Vitaly Gura**

Vitaly Gura, a member of Russia's occupying administration in Ukraine's Kherson region died in an assassination attempt in August 2022.

Unknown assailants opened fire on Gura near his home in the occupied city of Nova Kakhovka.

Gura was taken to the hospital with multiple gunshot wounds and died during a transfer to another hospital in the occupied Crimean peninsula.

*AFP contributed reporting.*

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