

LUKoil Exec to Support Crash Victim's Girl

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LUKoil vice president Anatoly Barkov, cleared by police in a car crash that killed two women, including the mother of a 2-year-old girl, promised on Tuesday to use his own money to support the girl until she reaches adulthood.

Moscow police chief Vladimir Kolokoltsev said Tuesday that an investigation into the rush-hour crash in February found that the Citroen sedan carrying the two women collided with Barkov's Mercedes after losing control on the wet road, Interfax reported.

The Citroen's driver, Olga Alexandrina, 35, and her mother-in-law, Vera Sidelnikova, 72, both gynecologists, died in the crash.

Kolokoltsev said the investigation took an unprecedented amount of work, with about 100 police officers looking for witnesses of the incident, which was not captured by surveillance cameras despite taking place on the busy Leninsky Prospekt in southern Moscow.

Police blamed Alexandrina immediately after the incident and tried to close the case, drawing

sharp criticism from Muscovites who accused the police of trying to stage a cover-up to protect a prominent businessman.

Barkov said Tuesday that he would set up a program to financially support Alexandrina's daughter, Nadezhda, who is being raised by relatives after her father died of a cerebral hemorrhage in August.

He did not name specific sums, but said the program would be similar to that offered to the children of oil industry employees who die in the line of duty. Barkov said a number of his colleagues would also contribute to the program, which would assist the girl until she turns 18.

Alexandrina's relatives had no immediate comment on the situation Tuesday. Their lawyer, Igor Trunov, announced Monday that the crash investigation had been closed and promised to appeal.

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