

Electrical Glitch Caused Fire on Surgut Plane

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The  **Moscow Times**

An electrical glitch sparked an engine fire that engulfed a Tu-154 plane taxiing for take off at the Surgut airport in January, killing three of the 124 people on board, investigators said Wednesday.

The triple-engined jet operated by Kogalymavia, a small local carrier, was preparing to fly from the western Siberian airport to Moscow when the fire broke out on Jan. 1.

The fire started in one of the plane's generators and spread rapidly to the passenger cabin, the Interstate Aviation Committee said in a statement.

The passengers were quickly evacuated from the plane, but three died and another 44 sought medical treatment.

Meanwhile, another small carrier Kavminvodyavia, based in Mineralniye Vody in the Stavropol region, ceased operations Wednesday after its license expired, Interfax reported. The airline failed to provide documentation to renew its license in August and was given

a one-month grace period, which ended Wednesday. The Domavia airline will honor the 2,572 outstanding tickets sold by Kavminvodyavia through February 2012. Kavminvodyavia, also known as KMV Avia, had a fleet of six planes and offered scheduled flights to 18 destinations in Russia, Ukraine and Armenia.

The country has about 130 small carriers, but many of them are expected to close after President Dmitry Medvedev ordered their number reduced following a series of deadly crashes last summer.

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