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Outbreak Sickens Soldiers

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One soldier has died and 42 more were hospitalized with pneumonia in the Krasnoyarsk region, prompting speculation that the temperature inside the soldiers' barracks was kept too low.

Ivan Permitin, an 18-year-old private stationed in the Krasnoyarsk region town of Uzhur, died of septic shock Tuesday after being hospitalized, RIA-Novosti reported. Forty-two others in the unit were also hospitalized, Kommersant-FM reported Wednesday.

A Defense Ministry spokesperson told Kommersant-FM that the outbreak is due to a virus, citing doctors' evaluations of the afflicted military men.

But a Krasnoyarsk region deputy told the radio station that there was reason to believe the conditions in the soldiers' barracks were to blame for the flare-up.

"I have a friend, and his son recently left that military unit and says the temperature in the barracks where he served was 13 to 15 degrees Celsius. The fact remains: one serviceman has died, unfortunately," Krasnoyarsk assemblyman Yury Shvytkin said.

In September, 40 conscripts fell ill with pneumonia in the Voronezh region, and in January 2011 one soldier died of meningitis and 63 were hospitalized with pneumonia in the Chelyabinsk region. In the Chelyabinsk region case, an investigation discovered that a barracks' boiler had broken down, causing the inside temperature to drop to outdoor levels, Kommersant reported.

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