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Russian Court Extends Arrest of 3 Suspects Held Over Total Plane Crash

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The wreckage of what is believed to be Christophe de Margerie's Dassault Falcon jet is seen at Moscow's Vnukovo airport, Oct. 21, 2014.

A Russian court on Friday ruled to extend the arrest of three suspects held over the plane crash that killed Christophe de Margerie, the CEO of French oil major Total.

According to the order handed down by Moscow's Basmanny District Court, traffic controller Alexander Kruglov, senior engineer Vladimir Ledenev, and traffic control trainee Svetlana Krivsun can be held until Dec. 21, the Interfax news agency reported.

While the two men will remain in police custody, Krivsun has been placed under house arrest, with the court rejecting a plea by her defense to post bail, Interfax reported.

The three suspects stand accused of neglecting safety standards ahead of the Monday crash, which saw De Margerie's private jet collide with a snowplow as it was attempting to take off

from the city's Vnukovo Aiport.

On Thursday, the same court extended the arrest of the snowplow driver Vladimir Martynenko until Dec. 21, with prosecutors saying in an online statement they had found traces of alcohol in a blood sample taken on the night of the crash.

Meanwhile, Russia's Prosecutor General's Office said Friday that it had granted permission to French investigators to observe its probe into the deadly crash.

"[We have] accepted the request of our French colleagues ... to be present during the investigation of the criminal case, opened into the crash on Oct. 20 at Vnukovo Airport," spokeswoman Marina Gridneva was quoted as saying by the TASS news agency.

A fifth man, Roman Dunayev, has also been questioned in connection to the crash, which resulted in the deaths of three members of crew aboard De Margerie's private jet.

The deceased CEO is due to be buried Tuesday at a private funeral in Normandy, northern France, said an unidentified source citing information from a funeral home in Normandy, the AFP news agency reported.

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