

United Russia Aide Falls to Death From 18th Story of Moscow High-Rise

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An aide to the leader of United Russia's faction in the State Duma died after falling 18 floors from an apartment building in unclear circumstances, the TASS news agency reported Thursday, citing sources in law enforcement.

Pavel Abakumov, an aide to Vladimir Vasilyev, likely fell from an open window in the building's stairwell Wednesday afternoon, an unidentified source in law enforcement was cited as saying.

Police are looking into the incident to determine whether it was an accident or suicide, the report said.

Vasilyev, a member of the State Duma's Security Committee, refrained Thursday from speculating on how Abakumov could have fallen from the window.

"I will not say anything right now — [police] are conducting an investigation. I spoke to [Abakumov's] father, we've known each other for a long time. He also thinks that we

should not interfere with law enforcement right now," Vasilyev said in comments carried by TASS.

Abakumov was the director of the National Civic Committee for Cooperation with Law Enforcement, Legislative and Judicial Authorities and head of the Public Recognition foundation, Business FM radio reported on its website.

"He was a very kind-hearted person. He was always ready to help when it was needed," Vasilyev said of Abakumov, TASS reported.

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