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3 Dead, 17 Injured After Bus Carrying Russian Kids' Karate Team Crashes

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The accident took place in the town of Kstovo, near to Nizhny Novgorod.

A criminal case has been launched after a bus transporting a children's karate team collided with a truck on Thursday morning, killing three people and leaving a child comatose outside the city of Nizhny Novgorod, Russian media reported.

A 12-year old girl was among those killed in the accident, which occurred after the bus crossed into the opposite lane, crashing into the oncoming vehicle, the Interfax news agency cited a regional traffic police spokesperson as saying.

A further 17 people were injured, including 11 children. The crash took place early Thursday morning — between 4 and 5 a.m., according to various media reports — near the town of Kstovo.

Nine children were hospitalized, one of whom remains in a coma, and one of whom is in serious condition, a spokesperson for the regional Investigative Committee told Interfax.

The bus was carrying a children's karate team, which was traveling from the Tatarstan region to a competition in St. Petersburg, the report cited an unidentified law enforcement source as saying. The children were all between 11 and 14 years old, news site Gazeta.ru reported.

“Why the driver veered into oncoming traffic — whether he was asleep, or distracted, etc. — will be determined during the investigation,” Nizhny Novgorod region traffic police official Igor Mikhailushkin said in comments carried by Gazeta.ru.

Nizhny Novgorod's regional branch of the Investigative Committee has launched a criminal case on the basis of negligence.

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