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Relatives of Russian Hockey Team Crash Get Fraction of Compensation Sought

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Lokomotiv Yaroslavl fans mourn after a plane crash killed the team's players.

Families of 11 Lokomotiv Yaroslavl hockey team players killed in a 2011 plane crash are to be paid a fraction of what their attorneys had asked for in compensation, their defense lawyers said Monday.

A Moscow court ordered insurance company Lexgarant to pay each of the families 25,000 rubles ($460) in compensation, plus 1,000 rubles for legal fees, the Trunov, Aivar and Partners law firm said in a statement.

"The court's ruling is unlawful and baseless," defense lawyer Igor Trunov said in the statement, adding that an appeal against the ruling had been filed. Lawyers had sought a total payment of around 10 million rubles ($183,000) for the 11 families.

The Meduza.io news website reported that an insurance company had previously paid out

a total of 2 million rubles ($36,700) in compensation to the hockey players' families. Some of the relatives were unsatisfied with that amount and sought additional payment.

The vast majority of the 10 million rubles demanded by the Lokomotiv players' families was as compensation for luggage destroyed in the crash, the lawyers' statement said.

Substantial compensation for moral damages is a rarity in Russia, prominent lawyer Dmitry Agranovsky told the Gazeta.ru news website last year, assessing the likelihood of payouts to the Lokomotiv crash victims' family members.

On Sept. 7, 2011, a Yak-42 plane carrying the Lokomotiv Yaroslavl hockey team from its home base to Belarus, where the team was to play against Dynamo Minsk, crashed shortly after takeoff, killing 43 of the 45 people onboard.

Of the 26 Lokomotiv players on the plane, 25 were killed immediately. The other player, Alexander Galimov, died of his injuries several days later in hospital. The only person to survive the accident was a member of the crew.

Aviation investigators blamed the crash on multiple pilot errors, including sedatives in a pilot's blood and inadequate training that led to a crucial instrument mix-up.

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