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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Woman Dies Following Snowstorm Traffic Jam

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A Russian woman has died after being rescued from a severe traffic jam on a snow-covered highway in the southern Urals, the Interfax news agency reported Thursday.

She was one of the people evacuated from cars that were stuck amid a snowstorm in the Orenburg region. The 68-year-old had suffered a fatal stroke, a source from the Kuvandyk city hospital confirmed to the RIA Novosti news agency on Thursday.

During an interview for local Orenburg television, her grandson Artyom Sidorenkov blamed the stress of the snowstorm and resultant evacuation for the woman's stroke and death. “Grandmother was feeling fine ... but when we were in the traffic jam for many hours, she became nervous and that led to the stroke,” Sidorenkov said.

On Jan. 2, strong winds and heavy snowfall blocked several major roads in the Orenburg region, stranding more than 50 cars amid impassable drifts of snow, the RIA Novosti reported.

Eighty-four people were evacuated after being trapped for over 16 hours in the snow — some

of them required medical assistance, RIA Novosti said.

The Orenburg regional branch of Russia's Investigative Committee has opened a criminal investigation into the incident after one man was found frozen to death on a local highway on Jan. 3.

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