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4 People Arrested Amid Corruption Allegations Following Deadly Russian Mall Fire

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Emergency Situations Ministry

Russian investigators have detained four people as part of a criminal investigation into Sunday's deadly fire at a shopping mall in the Siberian city of Kemerovo.

At least 64 people were killed when a fire swept through the upper floors of the Winter Cherry mall, which housed a cinema complex and children's play area. Russia's Investigative Committee has opened a criminal case into death through negligence, fire safety violations and the provision of services in violation of safety requirements.

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"Four people were detained and interrogated within the framework of the criminal case,

including the tenant of the premises where the epicenter of the fire was allegedly located," the committee said in a statement Monday.

Nadezhda Suddenok, the director of the company that rents the mall's top two floors, is among those being interrogated, Interfax cited a law enforcement source as saying.

Anton Gorelkin, a State Duma deputy from Kemerovo, wrote a Facebook post Monday accusing the city's deputy mayor of accepting a bribe for providing the signature for the mall's opening in 2013.

"The only way that he could have overlooked the blatant safety issues, I think, is in one scenario: His eyes were closed by money."

The lawmaker claimed that the Winter Cherry mall, along with others in the city, had been built from "s--- and sticks: Cheap plastic, a labyrinth of corridors and a hellish mess of ownership documents."

"No amount of corrupt money can make up for the lives of children," he said, vowing an investigation.

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