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Russian Police Launch Criminal Investigation After School Shooting in Arctic

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Law enforcement authorities in the Russian Arctic's Yamal-Nenets autonomous district announced Tuesday that they launched a criminal investigation into a school shooting in the city of Novy Urengoy.

"A student at a technical school fired an air pistol during classes. There were no victims," the regional branch of Russia's Investigative Committee said in a statement.

Investigators said they are working to establish the circumstances of the incident and have opened a criminal case into negligence and safety violations. The probe will examine the actions of the school's administration and its security provider.

The Telegram news channel Baza, which has purported links to Russian law enforcement, claimed that the shooting occurred at a vocational school run by the energy giant Gazprom.

According to Baza, a 17-year-old student borrowed an air pistol from a classmate and fired it at an interactive whiteboard.

Novy Urengoy is located around 2,300 kilometers (1,429 miles) northeast of Moscow. The shooting incident marks the second reported school attack in the city in as many days.

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On Monday, a schoolboy stabbed a security guard in the neck after he intervened in the boy's dispute with a female student. The guard did not require hospitalization, but the Investigative Committee said it opened a negligence case over that incident.

According to Baza, the alleged attacker was a 12-year-old fifth-grader who had been bullied over his weight. He reportedly brought a small kitchen knife from home, bypassing a metal detector. He first attacked the schoolgirl, whose thick jacket protected her from injury, before turning the knife on the guard, Baza said.

Police on Tuesday dismissed any link between the two incidents.

"These are different people, different institutions. This is just a coincidence," the regional Interior Ministry branch told the news website Podyom.

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