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Starovoit Buried at Historic St. Petersburg Cemetery Days After Suspected Suicide

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The funeral of former Russian Transport Minister Roman Starovoit. **Peter Kovalev / TASS**

A funeral for former Transportation Minister Roman Starovoit was held in St. Petersburg on Friday, days after he died in an apparent suicide outside Moscow following his surprise dismissal by President Vladimir Putin.

Leningrad region Governor Alexander Drozdenko, as well as other federal and regional officials who had worked with Starovoit over the years, attended the morning ceremony, according to the local news outlet Fontanka.

Video published by the Kommersant business newspaper showed a small crowd gathered at Smolensky Cemetery on the city's Vasilyevsky Island, where a hearse flanked by four pallbearers waited to carry the ex-minister to his burial site.

Fontanka reported that Starovoit was buried near the Chapel of St. Ksenia, an area of the

historic cemetery reserved by authorities for cultural and government figures.

Related article: Starovoit's Apparent Suicide Could Shock the Kremlin's System

Born in the city of Kursk 53 years ago, Starovoit spent much of his childhood in the Leningrad region.

His funeral took place one day after a memorial service in Moscow, which several senior Kremlin officials attended. Putin did not attend but sent a wreath, according to the Kremlin.

Starovoit was found dead with a gunshot wound near a parking lot outside of Moscow on Monday, just hours after the Russian president dismissed him without explanation. Police investigators are treating the case as a suspected suicide.

Starovoit had reportedly left a two-word farewell message in a Transportation Ministry work chat before his death, saying "It was an honor," Kommersant reported Thursday, citing an unnamed deputy of the ex-minister.

The late official was dismissed over a year after being appointed transportation minister. Before that appointment, he served as the governor of the southwestern Kursk region from 2018 to May 2024.

Starovoit's removal and subsequent death have fueled speculation that he may have been facing criminal prosecution as part of an ongoing investigation into alleged corruption in the construction of border defenses in the Kursk region, which saw a major Ukrainian incursion last August.

While he had not been formally implicated in that investigation, Russian media cited unnamed sources as saying that suspects in the case, including his predecessor in the Kursk region, Alexei Smirnov, had recently testified against him.

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