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Gas Explosion in Saratov Kills At Least 6, Including Child

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Yekaterina Petrova / TASS

At least five people, including a child, were killed in a gas explosion at an apartment building in the southern city of Saratov, authorities said Friday.

Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry said firefighters and rescue teams were dispatched to the site of the blast in the city's Leninsky district, confirming earlier reports of fatalities. Several others were injured.

Local media cited eyewitnesses as saying they heard an explosion just before part of the 10-story building was torn off. Photos shared on social media showed the upper section of the building severely damaged, with several apartments completely destroyed and debris piled on the ground below.

Saratov region Governor Roman Busargin visited the site, where emergency crews continued to assess the damage, according to the regional government's official news portal. He later declared a regional state of emergency for speedier coordination between government

agencies.

Investigators said they launched a criminal probe into possible safety violations.

Gas explosions in residential buildings are a recurring issue in Russia, often attributed to aging infrastructure and poor maintenance.

While many older Soviet-era buildings are especially vulnerable, public records show the apartment block that exploded on Friday was built in 2011 and is managed by the property company Sovezdye+.

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