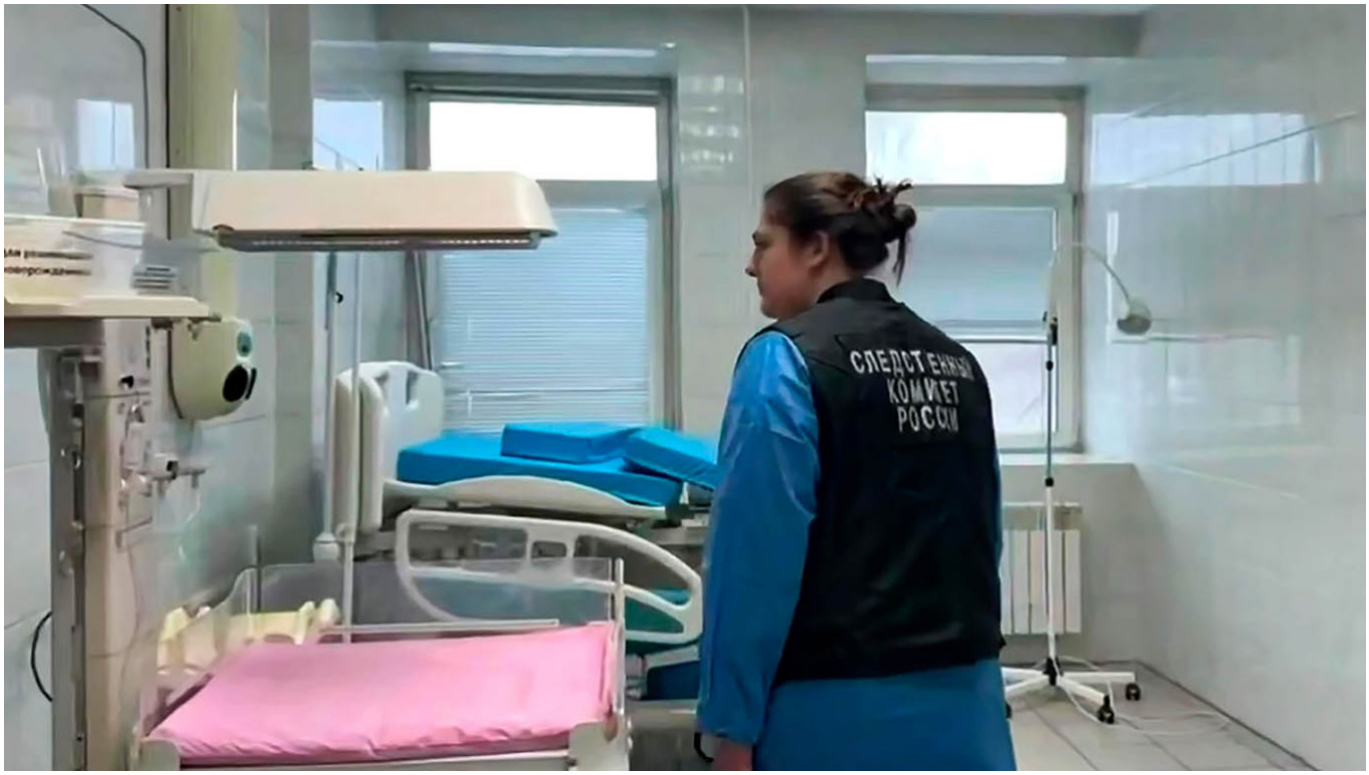
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Police Arrest Chief Physician and Intensive Care Head at Siberian Hospital Where Newborns Died

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A police investigator at Novokuznetsk Maternity Hospital No. 1. **sledcom.ru**

Russian police have arrested the chief physician and the acting head of intensive care at a maternity hospital in the Siberian city of Novokuznetsk after nine newborns died there earlier this month, authorities said Wednesday.

Prosecutors charged the two hospital employees with negligence resulting in death, Russia's Investigative Committee said in a statement.

"Between Jan. 4 and Jan. 12, 2026, nine newborns died at Novokuznetsk Maternity Hospital No. 1 as a result of the suspects performing their official and professional medical duties in a substandard way," the agency said.

A forensic examination into the cause of each infant's death is underway, investigators added.

Regional health officials previously said the newborns had all suffered from a range of

illnesses transmitted during childbirth or pregnancy.

Novokuznetsk Maternity Hospital No. 1, one of only two in the city of around half a million people, announced Tuesday that it had stopped accepting patients due to a high rate of respiratory infection.

The pro-Kremlin Komsomolskaya Pravda tabloid reported that the hospital was short dozens of staff, a claim the hospital denied.

Related article: Russia Probes Death of 9 Newborns at Siberian Hospital

The deaths in Novokuznetsk, a city in the Kemerovo region, have sparked public outrage and drawn condemnation from Russian officials.

In a statement, Federation Council speaker Valentina Matvienko called the incident a "tragedy" and said it "must never be repeated."

State Duma lawmaker Yana Lantratova, a member of the social conservative A Just Russia party, wrote on Telegram that "allowing several infants to die in one maternity hospital in such a short period is a crime against the country," given the demographic crisis that Russia faces.

On Tuesday, Kemerovo region Governor Ilya Seredyuk announced that regional Health Minister Andrei Tarasov will inspect all of Kemerovo's maternity hospitals and perinatal centers "to ensure their readiness for the most complex cases."

AFP contributed reporting.

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