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Man Arrested in Yekaterinburg After Assault on Russian Scientist Who Later Died

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Scientist Nikita Zezin. **urfanic.ru**

Law enforcement authorities in the city of Yekaterinburg have arrested a man on suspicion of fatally beating a prominent Russian agricultural scientist, officials said Wednesday.

The Investigative Committee, Russia's top investigative body, said the unidentified 38-year-old man faces up to seven years in prison on charges of aggravated assault. The agency released a brief video showing investigators interrogating him.

The confrontation occurred on July 13 when 67-year-old Nikita Zezin and his assistant confronted several children riding ATVs across crops at an experimental research field. The father of one of the children allegedly arrived at the scene and punched Zezin in the head.

Zezin's death was confirmed by Vyacheslav Vegner, a member of the Sverdlovsk regional legislature, who announced the scientist's funeral on Tuesday. "Nikita Nikolayevich's heart

gave out, and today we laid to rest our friend, an outstanding scientist and a wonderful person," Vegner wrote.

Neither Vegner nor the Investigative Committee, which confirmed Zezin died of heart failure, specified the exact date of his death.

Baza, a Telegram news channel with ties to Russian law enforcement, published security camera footage showing a man presumed to be Zezin being punched in the head during an altercation. Vegner included a screenshot of the video in his post about the funeral.

Regional police told state media that both parties involved in the confrontation filed reports against each other following the incident.

The Investigative Committee said investigators are questioning witnesses and have ordered forensic medical examinations to determine whether the assault directly caused Zezin's fatal heart failure.

Zezin was a doctor of agricultural sciences and a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, where he led its Urals Agricultural Research Center.

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