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## **Investigators see gas explosion as main version of tragedy in high-rise house in Moscow Region**

The investigating bodies of the Russia's Investigative Committee in Moscow Region continue investigating a criminal case into an explosion in a 9-storey block of flats in the village of Zagorskiye Dali in Sergiyev-Posadsky district opened over a crime under part 3 of article 219 of the RF Penal Code (violation of fire safety requirements, entailing death of two or more people).

As a result of the explosion the roof and ceiling between 8 and 9 floors partly collapsed between 3 and 4 sections of the house, 4 flats were completely destroyed and 7 were badly damaged.

At present investigators consider gas explosion as the main version of the accident.

Dead bodies of 4 members of one family (a six-month-old baby, his 33-year-old mother, 71-year-old grandmother and 81-year-old grandfather) have been found during the investigation of the scene and have been sent for forensic medical examination. The ruins are still being removed. Another dead body of an elderly woman has been discovered trapped in the rubble, but at present it is impossible to get to it as there is a threat of further collapse.

Today investigators and criminologists of the Moscow Region Main Investigations Directorate are keeping on working at the scene, seizing fragments of the building and gas supply system, washouts, which then go to explosive technical examination to find the epicenter and exact cause of the explosion.

Forensic medical expert examinations have been assigned during the investigation, witnesses from the residents of this house and the neighboring one and the injured are being questioned. The investigators have seized documents from the local office of repairs and operation service of Mosoblgaz in regard to applications on possible defects and repairs conducted in the house on the requests of the residents starting from 1978 and other technical documents. The documents have also been seized from the communal housing managing company. Other investigating operations are underway to find all the circumstances of the incident.

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