

Avalanche Kills Three at Russian Arctic Ski Resort

By [AFP](#)

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A search and rescue mission was completed early Saturday morning at a ski resort near Norilsk.

Ministry of Emergency Situations

Three people were killed after an avalanche swept through a ski resort outside the Arctic city of Norilsk overnight, Russian investigators said Saturday.

The Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said it was notified at 00:30 local time that an avalanche had buried four buildings under snow at the Otdelnaya Gora ski complex.

Rescuers had recovered the bodies of a 38-year-old woman, her 18-month-old child and 45-year-old husband. A 14-year-old was found alive and hospitalized with frostbite.

The Investigative Committee added that it had opened a criminal case into deaths by negligence as a result of safety violations.

The Norilsk mayor's office announced a day of mourning in the city and said that authorities "express sorrow and deep condolences to the families and friends of the victims."

Rescuers wearing headlamps in the night and heavy coats against the bitter cold shovelled snow out of a building packed to its roof.

On Saturday morning the emergencies ministry branch in Siberia's Krasnoyarsk region, which includes Norilsk, said all of the missing people had been found and it was ending the search and rescue mission.

Rescue volunteer Maxim Inikhov told journalists all of the buildings were unoccupied at the time of the avalanche except for one housing the director of the resort's ski lift, Vlad Popov, his wife and their two children.

"We have a very strong blizzard so there were very few people vacationing today at the ski resort," Inikhov told Rossiya-24 television.

Norilsk, Russia's northernmost city, 2,878 kilometers (1,788 miles) northeast of Moscow, often experiences huge snowstorms, including blizzards last month that featured wind gusting up to 27 metres per second.

Avalanche accidents are not uncommon in Russia.

In spring 2019, seven climbers died in an avalanche in Siberia's Altai mountains.

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