

In Tatarstan, accused of death and injuring people in fire in Admiral shopping mall to stand trial



The Tatarstan office of the Investigative Committee has finished criminal proceedings against director of OOO Zarya – the leaseholder of the Admiral shopping mall Gusein Gakhramanov, his deputies Nikolai Kayekin and Gyulgusein Nadzhafov, CEO of OAO Investing Construction Company and ZAO Building Management Company AS management Robert Khairullin, head of the inter-district bailiffs department for special enforcement proceedings of the Tatarstan Office of the Federal Bailiffs Service Zhanna Alparova, former judicial executive officer Minsilya Safina, specialist of the regional inspectorate of the State Construction Inspectorate Galiya Isayeva and 5 workers Nail and Niyaz Gabdulohayev, Fidirat Uldanov, Albert Khalikov and Fanis Mukhametkhanov.

Depending on the role of each one they are charged with crimes under 219 (violation of fire safety), Article 238 (fulfillment of work that do not meet safety standards), Article 315 (failure to execute a court decision or any other court's ruling), Article 199 (evasion of paying corporate taxes), Article 216 (violation of safety rules during construction), Article 201 (abuse of power), Article 327 (forgery of documents), Article 286 (exceeding of powers) and Article 293 of the RF Penal Code (negligence).

A Fire started in the Admiral shopping mall and then brought it down in the city of Kazan at about 12:50 PM, 11 March 2015, killing 19 people and injuring 61 more. More than 600 people suffered pecuniary damage.

According to investigators, the cause of the tragedy was the fact that the building was not fit for having been used as a shopping mall and had been operated for a long time without permit and with gross violations of fire safety rules.

According to a fire inquiry, the source of the fire was on the roof of an annex near gate No 1. The technical reason for the fire was ignition of polyurethane foam in a sandwich-panel or (and) bitumen-based dampproofers from an outside source. Heating of the materials until they ignited was caused by the heating of dampproofers while treating the roof of the annex for airtight packing and protection against precipitation where it adjoined the wall of the main building. The reason for the constructions of the shopping mall to collapse and kill people was their heating by the fire. The conditions that helped the quick collapse of the constructions were lack of required fire-proofing finish on metalware; lack of calculations for bearing capacity of roof truss and footing rafters which should have been done considering that the building had been reconstruction and its engineering communications had been refitted.

According to a construction inquiry, the Admiral shopping mall could not have been in compliance with requirements laid down to trading facilities: construction had not been finished; equipment and the layout of the building had not met the requirements laid out by the Construction Norms and Rules to shopping facilities; bearing structures of metal rafters should have had special fireproof finish.

In addition, not all integral buildings had had automatic fire extinguishing systems, fire alarms and fire evacuation systems. The automatic fire extinguishing system had not worked. The integral and main building of the shopping mall had been built from combustible materials.

By now there are 703 injured parties: 19 people died; 61 suffered bodily harm; 618 suffered pecuniary damage; 4 legal entities suffered pecuniary damage, 609 of those injured parties filed civil actions. The pecuniary damage done to physical persons amounts to 1.5 billion rubles and 2.9 million rubles to legal entities.

The injured parties filed actions for 11.27 billion rubles of moral damages.

In addition, according to the information got from the local directorate of the Ministry for Emergency Situations and the Tatarstan cabinet of ministers, they spent 11.9 million rubles to put out the fire, while enterprises spent 64.6 million rubles to clear up the debris after the fire.

An interregional team of investigators from Ulyanovsk Region, republics of Mari-El, Bashkortostan, Udmurtia, Chuvashia and others was formed on the first stage of the investigation due a need of a lot

of investigative operations.

The investigators did a huge amount of work. They interrogated more than 700 injured parties and 900 witnesses; ran more than 170 forensic inquiries; carried out seizures, searches and examined objects and documents; ordered a tax inspection of the business ran by OOO Zarya, carried out other investigative and procedural operation for full and thorough investigation. The case has 344 files, including 77 of them containing the indictment. It took the accused a year – from January to December 2016 – to read all of them.

Khalikov and Mukhametkhanov pleaded guilty. The rest either confessed to some point or denied the charges. A court ruled to take Nadzhafov, Gakhramanov, Kayekin and Uldanov in custody pending trial. The rest except Alparova were put under house arrest.

The investigation was personally controlled by the Chairman of the Investigative Committee.

The investigators have enough evidence so the criminal case with the signed indictment will soon be referred to court.

Acting Head of Media Relations S.L. Petrenko

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