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## **Criminal investigation into a fatal road accident involving a passenger bus continues in the Republic of Kalmykia**



The Kalmykia Republic Investigative Department of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation continues investigating a probe into the road accident that occurred at the 246th kilometre of the R-216 road Astrakhan - Elista - Stavropol in the Yashkul district of the Republic of Kalmykia under Part 3 of Article 238 of the Criminal Code (rendering services not meeting safety requirements resulting in the death of two or more persons by negligence).

On October 24, 2021 a head-on collision of Neoplan passenger bus en route from Makhachkala to Saint Petersburg and a KAMAZ truck occurred on the R-216 road Astrakhan - Elista - Stavropol in the Yashkul district of the Republic of Kalmykia. At the time of the collision, there were 28 people in the bus. Five passengers, including one minor, sustained life-threatening injuries, while 14 passengers sustained injuries of varying severity. One victim died in a medical facility. An investigation team of experienced members of the investigative department was set up in this

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criminal case on the instructions of the head of the Kalmykia Republic Investigative Department of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation. During an inspection of the scene of the accident, investigators recorded the location of the accident, the position of the vehicles and technical damage, forensic examinations were ordered and the victims and witnesses of the incident were questioned. Further investigation of the probe established that the offence was committed by a group of persons who organised a criminal scheme aimed at making a profit.

According to the investigation, on August 06, 2020 a 52-year-old individual entrepreneur of Makhachkala with a license for passenger transportation agreed with a 35-year-old resident of Makhachkala, who had a Neoplan 116 bus, manufactured in 1988 and registered in the name of another person, to provide paid long-distance passenger transportation services to the population, distributing the profit between them.

On August 06, 2020, in order to realise his intention, the aforementioned entrepreneur, without any legal basis, entered the said vehicle in the register of his licence, stating false information about the lease agreement with its owner, illegally obtaining the right to carry out passenger transportation on it. The 35-year-old owner of the bus did not check the technical condition of the vehicle and hired two people from Makhachkala, who had been repeatedly prosecuted for administrative offences relating to traffic offences, to drive it. One of the persons in question is a relative of the bus owner.

On October 23, 2021 52-year-old individual businessman, aiming at deriving profit of material character in the sum of 60 thousand rubles, not having the license for transportation of passengers on the specified bus because of expiration of the contract on lease of that transport, illegally concluded the charter contract with a resident of Makhachkala on transportation of passengers from Makhachkala to St. Petersburg. Without ensuring proper medical examination of the drivers by his spouse paramedic for their state of intoxication and general state of health, and without pre-trip inspection of the technical condition of the vehicle he released the Neoplan 116 bus in the route Makhachkala - St. Petersburg at 15-00 of the same day, with seat belts unfit for their use.

The bus driver drove into the oncoming traffic lane and collided with an oncoming KAMAZ truck with a trailer. As a result of the accident, bus passengers who were not wearing seat belts sustained varying degrees of injury, resulting in the death of 6 people.

The 52-year-old businessman of Makhachkala and the 35-year-old bus owner have been detained under Articles 91 and 92 of the Criminal Procedural Code of the Russian Federation. The issue of their placement into custody is being decided upon. Searches were also carried out in the offices and home of the individual businessman and in offices of the Makhachkala bus station in the Republic of Dagestan, during which the necessary documentation and mobile phones were seized.

The criminal case is still being investigated. During the investigation the legal assessment of the actions of officials of the Road Traffic Supervision Service of the Federal Service for Transport Supervision of the Republic of Dagestan will be made, as well as the legality of the issuance of

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driving licences to the bus drivers.

The investigation is supervised by the Chairman of the Investigative Committee of Russia.

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