
Criminal case launched into fire in psychiatric hospital in Moscow region



The Main Investigation Directorate of the Investigative Committee in the Moscow region opened a criminal case into the fire occurred on April 26 in a psychiatric hospital №14 in Ramenskoye, the Dmitrovsky district for an offense under Part 3 of Article 219 of the Criminal Code (violation of fire safety requirements, resulting in the death of two or more persons). According to investigators, a fire killed 38 people.

Experienced investigators and forensic experts of the Investigative Committee Directorate in the Central Federal District and the Main Criminology Directorate were sent to the scene to provide practical assistance in the investigation of a criminal case.

The investigators of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation are interrogating chief physician of the psychiatric hospital №14, his deputies, the duty doctor who was in a different building at the time of the fire, and the survivors - a nurse and two patients.

According to preliminary data, the fire source was located near the sofa in the break room. A nurse claimed that she did the round at 01.00, then, at about 2:00, fire alarm rang, there was heavy smoke, she managed to bring out a patient and shouted others to get out.

Also, investigators have questioned one of the patients, who managed to escape. He explained that the day before, a drug-addicted patient was placed to their building, he was suffering withdrawal symptoms and he always smoked, despite the prohibitions of medical staff.

In August 2012 and January 2013 Emergency Ministry experts examined the hospital, they revealed three violations and brought one person to responsibility.

The investigators have also established a commercial organization that mounted the fire alarm in the premises of the psychiatric hospital. The management and employees of the organization will be questioned in the near future.

At the time of the fire, one nurse, two ward attendants, and patients (28 men and 10 women) were in the room of one of the buildings of the mental hospital.

Investigators are checking all possible versions of the fire cause, including careless use of fire, electrical failure, arson and others.

The scene examination is ongoing. By now, 38 bodies have been removed, 29 of them are damaged by flame.

Investigators have scheduled the following expert examinations: forensic examination of bodies to determine the cause of death, fire-technical examination to determine the cause of the fire, criminalistics examination to determine the presence or absence of fuels and lubricants, DNA testing to identify the genetic identity of the deceased. The seizure of documents from the psychiatric hospital was carried out.

As part of a criminal investigation, a legal assessment of the actions (inaction) of the senior staff of the hospital and officials of regulatory authorities responsible for fire safety in a medical facility will be given.

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