
First hearing on Bulgaria case started today in Kazan



Today the court has started hearing the criminal case over wreck of Bulgaria cruise vessel. The first hearing started at 11:00 AM at culture house Yunost in Kazan.

It should be reminded that the Republic of Tatarstan investigating bodies of the Russia's Investigative Committee are prosecuting captain mate Ramil Khametov, subtenant of Bulgaria Svetlana Inyakina, expert of Russian River Register Yakov Ivashov and two staffers of Federal Service of Transport Supervision Vladislav Semyonov and Irek Timergazeyev. Depending on the role of each one, they are charged with crimes under articles 238 of the RF Criminal Code (rendering services which do not meet standards of safety to lives or health of consumers), 263 (violation of rules for operating inner water transport), 143 (violation of labor protection rules), 285 (abuse of official powers).

It took investigators almost a year to find circumstances and causes of the Bulgaria tragedy, which shocked the whole country. It was a very difficult investigation. Investigators have carried out a huge amount of work – about 1 thousand questions alone. Besides they have carried out about 30 seizures and searches and over 200 expert examinations, the most difficult of which was a comprehensive navigation and engineering-technical forensic examination which was run from August 2011 to March 2012. It was this examination that defined the suspects. By this meticulous work investigators found cause-effect relation between the unlawful actions of the defendants and death of more than a hundred people. 5 people are put on trial – all of them were involved in the operation of the vessel. Investigators believe that the immediate reason of the wreck was that the vessel was technically unfit for sailing and its crew lacked proper training; navigation requirements and safety rules were not met or observed and the ship owner, command staff of the crew, officials of controlling bodies failed to fulfill or fulfilled improperly their duties both during preparing the ship to sail and during its operation. Only 79 passengers and crew members survived the wreck, while 122 were killed. Most likely there could have been more survivors if not for the actions of captains of dry cargo ship Arbat and tugboat Dunaysky 66, which sailed past not helping the drowning people. According to the survivors that crushed their will, many of them felt that they weren't needed to anybody. By now both of the captains have already been brought to justice. I would like to note that investigators have not only found the reasons of the tragedy, but taken measures to prevent alike in the future. We should not tolerate that dishonest merchants and corrupt officials with their greed to make money on health and lives of our citizens stay unpunished.

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