
Investigators confiscate leopard attacking spectators during show in Podolsk



The investigating bodies of the Moscow Main Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee continue investigating a criminal investigation into attack of a leopard on spectators during a circus show (part 1 of article 238 of the RF Penal Code - rendering services not meeting health and life safety standards of consumers).

Investigators have searched the flat of 77-year-old Viktor Yaroslavtsev, the trainer of the leopard. To prevent attacks on people they confiscated the dangerous animal. The wild predator will be kept in the specialized zoo Exotic Park.

According to the investigators, on 3 May 2014, from 3 to 5 PM, there was a circus show featuring trainer Viktor Yaroslavtsev and a leopard in the Shapito circus at Moscow Theater of Sport and

Entertainment Shows “Kaskadyor”, state budgetary culture institution, temporarily housed for guest performance period in the Vityaz Ice Palace. During the show a collar of the leopard got broken due to lack of oversight from the trainer and the animal leapt toward spectators. A 3-year-old boy and his mother received bruises and scratches. The investigators believe that the incident happened due to trainer’s lack of due control over his equipment.

During the investigation it was also found that last year Yaroslavtsev was found guilty of reckless grievous bodily harm to a child. In October 2012, Yaroslavtsev with the same leopard took part in a children’s circus show in a concert hall in the town of Domodedovo. The trainer used a dog cage to transport and keep the leopard in. The cage did not meet the safety standards. After the show Yaroslavtsev left the cage with the animal inside behind the scenes unattended, so the leopard got out of the cage and attacked a 7-year-old boy. The child sustained grievous bodily harm.

At present the investigators are questioning the circus staff, vets and other specialists. A number of investigating operations are underway to find the responsible for the incident. The investigation is ongoing.

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