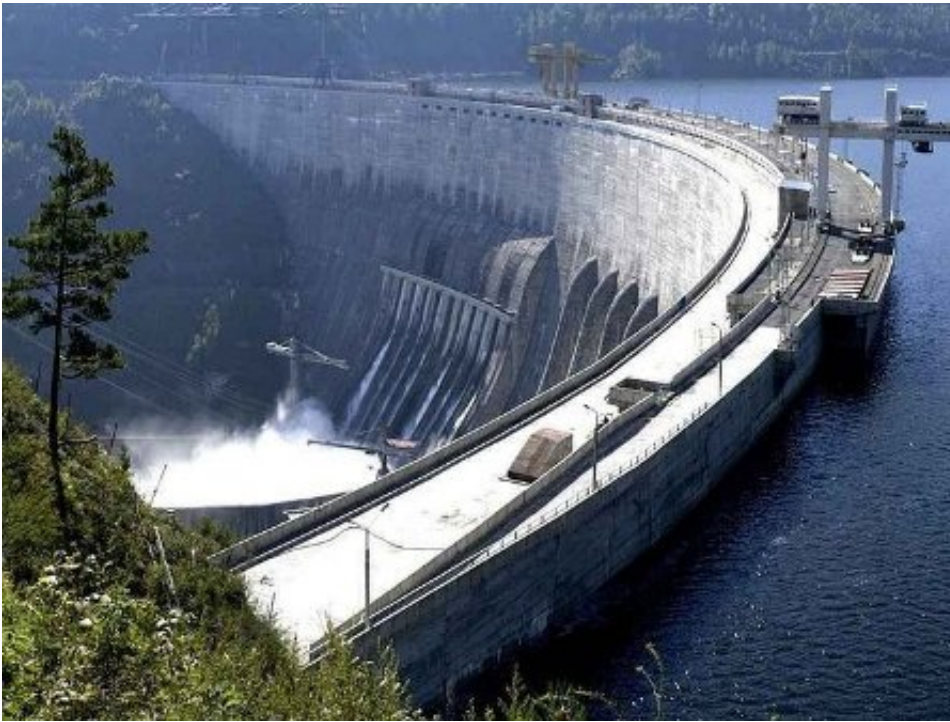


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## **In Khakassia sentence passed in Sayano-Shushenskaya HPP accident**



A court has recognized the evidence gathered by the Main Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee sufficient to pass a sentence of a criminal case opened in an accident that happened at Sayano-Shushenskaya Hydro Power Plant in August 2009. Director of branch of OAO RusGidro – P.S. Neporozhny SayanoShushenskaya Hydropower Station Nikolai Nevolko, chief engineer of the plant Andrei Mitrofanov, his deputies Yevgeny Shervarli and Gennady Nikitenko and employees of Equipment Monitoring Service Alexander Matviyenko, Vladimir Beloborodov and Alexander Klyukach were found guilty of a crime under part 3 of article 216 of the RF Criminal Code (violation of safety rules during activities entailing the death of two or more persons and major damage).

The court and investigators have found that the cause of the accident was a set of circumstances allowed by the said employees of P.S. Yeporozhny Sayan-Shushenskaya Hydro Power Station. This way Director of the plant Nevolko failed to carry out timely and quality assembly, adjusting and repairs of facilities and equipment and approved the Disaster Management Plan that did not provide measures in case of the Plant was flooded and training of the staff to be ready for such a situation.

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Therefore, the staff were not ready when water started coming in the generator hall and were unable to take any measures to save themselves. Mitrofanov aware that hydraulic unit No. 2 was working with vibration exceeding the maximum allowable level went on organizing its operation. Shervarli and Nikitenko failed to ensure constant control over the state of the lid on a hydro turbine or hold the tests to eliminate the reasons for vibration. Nikitenko signed the completion certificate of a planned repairs held in January-March 2009 assessing the vibration as “satisfactory”. Employees of Equipment Monitoring Service Beloborodov and Klyukach deliberately heightened the assessment of the vibration in hydraulic unit No 2 allowing it to be operated while their head Matviyenko ignored when the vibration grew over three times faster. As a result on 17 August 2009, when a turbine bearing vibration amplitude reached 840 microns with the maximum allowable 160 microns, the turbine led fastening collapsed, got detached and lead to flooding of the machine room, destruction and damage of constructions, devices and equipment of the HPP and death of 75 employees of the plant and contract companies.

In addition, the investigators have carefully studied reasons and conditions that contributed to the accident and filed requests with Rusgidro. As a result necessary measures have been taken to prevent such accidents at dozens of other hydropower plants that have been in operation for more than 25 years.

I would like to remind that the investigation was finished in June 2012. Despite a huge amount of work done by the investigators to find out all the reasons for the accident and the evidence against each of the accused, the trial began only a year later, but the sole reason for that was that lawyers together with their clients had actively used the tactics of procrastination of reading the case records. Realizing that the investigators requested court to limit the time of reading the records so the first hearing took place in July 2013. The plant was working, but the hearing still took over a year and again thanks to tricks and ruses of the lawyers. As there were several of them, when one of them took a sick leave, the process stopped. As soon one lawyer got better, another fell ill, sometimes even without taking a sick leave. This could have been dragged until expiration of statute of limitations, if not for the determined position of the investigators and court, who broke this combination, which lawyers apparently deemed as ingenious one.

The court has sentenced Nevolko and Mitrofanov to 6 years to be served in a minimum-security penal colony, Shervarly to 5.5 years, Nikitenko to 5 years and 9 months, Matviyenko and Klyukach to 4.5 years as suspended sentences and Beloborodov was amnestied.

Head of Media Relations V.I. Markin

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