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## **Experienced investigators of Investigative Committee Central Office join probe into disappearance of 18-month-old girl in Sverdlovsk Region**

Late in September 2015, the Sverdlovsk Region investigating bodies of the Russia's Investigative Committee opened an investigation in a crime under paragraph "c" of part 2 of article 105 of the RF Penal Code (murder of a child) in connection with the disappearance of an 18-month-old girl who lived with her parents and elder sister in Titov street in the town of Mikhailovsk. The case was opened because there had been no information about the girl who was reported missing on 29 September 2015 for a long time and in order to mobilize all forces and resources for search operations.

According to the records, on 29 September, about 4 PM, the girl's mother let the girl walk about the house because she was whimsical, but fell asleep. Her husband (girl's father) and his friend were drinking alcohol in an outhouse located in the yard of the house. The elder daughter, 13-years-old, was at school. When she came home, she was the first to notice that the 18-year-old child had gone missing.

On the order of the senior officials of the Sverdlovsk Region Investigations Directorate the case was accepted for investigation by a major investigator of the directorate. An investigative team of about 30 investigators from the major investigations office, Nizhniye Sergi inter-district investigations office, nearby territorial investigative departments and 2 criminalists of the regional Investigative Committee was set up to look into the case. In addition, two officials of the Main Criminalistics Department of the Russia's Investigative Committee also joined the investigation.

As of now, 90 residents of Mikhailovsk, including the girl's relatives and the family's acquaintances have been questioned. 4 people have been put on polygraph. A number of forensic inquiries have been assigned: three DNA tests and two biological ones. To rule out the version that the girl might have gotten into the nearby river, the investigators have held an experiment to see her possible way along the river.

Along with the accident version (that the girl might possible have drowned in the river), the investigative team is carefully checking other versions. Namely, there are theories that the crime against the child was committed by somebody of her relatives or complete strangers. To check those theories the investigators are checking former criminals, including those convicted of sex crimes; citizens who have had administrative penalties and women (families) who for some reason can't have

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children. Besides, the investigators are identifying motorists, who might have gone by the area where the girl went missing around the time when she went missing, so that they can get some coverage from dash cams.

Around 90 police officers (including 12 search dog handlers with search dogs), around 50 employees of the Emergencies Ministry (3 scuba divers), over 20 volunteers and local residents, about 200 people in all are searching for the girl. Equipment is being actively used to find the girl. There are 5 launches, 9 inflatable boats, a Mi-8 helicopter and a plane. 40 km of the Ufa river has been examined down the current in the direction of the village of Arti, however, the search operation has given no results so far. The search is continued, the participants of the search party will do their best to find the girl. The investigation and search operation are ongoing.

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