

Police in Far East Open Probe After Journalists Attacked for Reporting on Stray Dogs' Shelter

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The  **Moscow Times**

Police in Russia's Far East are investigating the alleged beating of television journalists who tried to report about conditions at a shelter for stray dogs, the Investigative Committee said Thursday.

A 46-year-old man from the village of Chigiri in the Amur region, where the animal shelter was located, is suspected of having attacked two journalists from a local television channel to prevent them from filming, according to the statement.

The statement did not specify how the man was connected to the animal shelter, if at all. But Interfax cited the Alfa-Kanal television channel's lawyer, Yevgenia Sidorenko, as saying the attack had likely been organized by the local firm that won a tender for a city contract to capture stray animals. The journalists were trying to determine whether the company, Denim-A, was fulfilling the terms of the contract when they were attacked.

The cameraman and correspondent filed a police report over the incident earlier this week, Interfax reported.

In addition to threatening to kill the journalists or cause them serious harm, the attackers also caused material damages by smashing the crew's television camera, Sidorenko was cited as saying by Interfax.

Large numbers of stray dogs throughout the Far East have reportedly been killed in a series of vigilante poisoning attacks over the past year, putting additional pressure on local authorities to develop humane animal-control measures.

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