

Putin's Tiger Returns to Russia After Raucous China Tour

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A rare Siberian tiger released into the wild by President Vladimir Putin has decided to return to the motherland.

An Amur tiger released into the wild as part of President Vladimir Putin's animal protection program has returned to Russia after going on a killing spree in China, RIA Novosti reported Tuesday.

The tiger, named Ustin, is now staying on Bolshoi Ussuriisky Island, near the border between China and Russia, environmental official Viktor Serdyuk said in comments carried by RIA Novosti.

"According to the data from his tracker, Ustin crossed the Russian-Chinese border on Sunday evening. He is located on the Russian part of the island not far from the border. Judging by the tracker, he is not moving around much, behaving very calmly," Serdyuk was cited as saying.

Serdyuk said it would be difficult to predict where Ustin would go next, but conceded that he might end up going straight back to China, where he has been accused of slaughtering goats

and chickens.

Ustin's brother, Kuzya, has a tamer track record, having returned to Russia late last week without leaving a trail of animal carcasses behind him.

Chinese wildlife officials warned that Kuzya might not stay in Russia for long, however.

"Kuzya is very likely to visit China again as it marked the areas he visited with his urine, designating his 'territory,'" the Xinhua news agency reported, citing a deputy chief of the State Forestry Administration's Feline Research Center, Zhang Minghai.

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