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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Parasailing Donkey Dies of Heart Attack

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The female donkey that made headlines after its owner sent it parasailing last year over the Sea of Azov died of heart attack in a horse farm in the Moscow region, RIA-Novosti reported Friday.

Veterinarians were unable to say whether the death of the 40-year-old animal, Anapka, was caused by stress it suffered during its 30-minute flying stint in July or resulted from old age, a representative of the farm said.

The animal was in good condition when it arrived to the farm, Strely Yarily, or Arrows of Yarila, but suffered from occasional dizzy spells, eventually becoming unable to eat, the report said, adding that the creature had to be placed on life support.

The wildly braying Anapka was sent to the sky near the beach of Golubitskaya village in the Krasnodar region, apparently as an advertising stunt for a local parasailing business.

Outraged beachgoers filmed the airborne donkey and posted the video online, attracting the attention of media and police.

Animal rights activists, including ex-movie star Brigitte Bardot, slammed the owner, but police were unable to press any charges because only killing or maiming an animal is punishable under Russian laws.

British tabloid The Sun tried to buy Anapka in order to place it in an animal shelter in Britain, but the overseas trip was deemed too dangerous for its health, and the donkey was placed in a high-class Kremlin-owned stable in the Moscow region instead.

It was later transferred to Strely Yarily because it needed the company of other donkeys, which was not to be found in the Kremlin stable, Moskovsky Komsomolets said.

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