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Death of Up to 70 Dogs in Moscow Park Prompts Criminal Case

By The Moscow Times

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The 50th Anniversary of October park, where up to 70 dogs died, allegedly from poisoned meat, earlier this month.

A criminal case has been opened in connection with the recent deaths of 40 to 70 dogs in the 50th Anniversary of October park in western Moscow, police said Friday.

So-called dog hunters are suspected in the poisoning deaths of the animals earlier this month, Western District police spokeswoman Yulia Makartseva told Interfax.

The animal deaths were reported Thursday in an article in the Moskovsky Komsomolets daily, which said the dog owners believe their pets ate poisoned ground meat left out intentionally in the park.

Following the deaths, written warnings addressed to dog owners appeared on tree trunks near the park.

"You must understand — there will be no room for argument — if you do not follow the rules for walking your dog, it will die," one message said, the daily reported. "A dog in a muzzle cannot eat the bait, no matter how much it wants to. Tell your friends to put leashes and muzzles [on their dogs]. If the park once again looks like a giant kennel, then there will be much more bait and inside it will be tiny fish hooks and amatoxins."

Several dog owners in turn posted messages advertising rewards of up to 100,000 rubles ($3,200) for information about the culprits.

Western District police have opened a criminal case in connection with the deaths, with a charge of animal cruelty, which carries a maximum sentence of two years in prison.

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