

Russian Tourists Struck by Lightning in Crete

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The group of tourists had reportedly sought refuge from the thunderstorm under a tree. **Pixabay**

A group of Russian tourists was struck by lightning on the Greek island of Crete on Friday while visiting the ruins of a palace where a mythical half-man, half-beast was once believed to dwell.

A 46-year-old woman was treated for a heart attack caused by the strike, while several others were taken to a hospital in a state of shock and treated for lighter injuries, media reports said.

The group of tourists had reportedly sought cover under a tree as a thunderstorm erupted Friday morning over the archaeological ruins of Knossos, the heart of the ancient Minoan civilization and now one of the island's key tourist attractions. One of the tourists was holding an umbrella, according to some of the Russian media reports, which may have acted as a conductor for the lightning.

Different reports gave varying figures for the number of Russians among the group visiting the legendary home of the Minotaur, ranging from five to fifteen.

Although thunderstorms are common in the Mediterranean, the Knossos site's management was cited by Moskovsky Komsomelets newspaper as describing Friday's events as "unprecedented."

It has been estimated that anywhere between 6,000 and 24,000 people a year die from lightning strikes worldwide.

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