

# Criminal Case Opened After Beheaded Walruses Found in Russia's Far East

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An investigation into the mass killings is still ongoing, prosecutors said.

Prosecutors have opened a criminal investigation into the killing of 19 walruses in Russia's far eastern Chukotka, after some of the mammals were found beheaded last month, the district prosecutor general's office said Wednesday in an online statement.

Park employees stumbled upon the marine mammals' corpses during a routine inspection at the Beringiya National Park in October, the park said last month on its website.

Nine of the animals had been beheaded and their penile bones removed, the park said.

An examination of the carcasses suggested the animals died as a result of gunshot wounds, the report said.

The prosecutors overrode an earlier decision by the Interior Ministry not to initiate criminal proceedings, the prosecutor's statement said.

The baculum, or penile bone, is used in crafts and amulets as a symbol of male power, the

Gazeta.ru news website reported.

In walruses, they are exceptionally large and can reach around 60 centimeters in length.

An investigation into the mass killings is still ongoing, prosecutors said.

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