

Tiger Attacks Girl in Russia's Barnaul Zoo

April 11, 2016



A 13-year-old schoolgirl was attacked by a tiger in a zoo in the Siberian city of Barnaul, the RIA Novosti news agency reported Monday.

At around 10 p.m. on Sunday, when the Lesnaya Skazka (Forest Fairytale) Zoo was closed, the girl and her friend broke into the zoo and started pounding the fence of the tiger cage and screaming in an attempt to provoke the animal, zoo director Sergei Pisarev told RIA Novosti.

The tiger was distracted by the noise and attacked one of the girls. "First, the animal caught her jacket and then tried to drag the girl into the cage by her leg, but the fence was too narrow. [The tiger] tore muscles in the child's leg," according to Pisarev.

The girl's screams were heard by a security guard who called an ambulance.

According to local resident Anastasia Ptichkina, both girls were drunk when they decided to "tease" the animal. For 40 minutes, zoo employees, policemen and doctors struggled to pull the girl away from the tiger, distracting the animal with flashlights and pieces of meat, Ptichkina wrote on the VKontakte social network.

The girl was hospitalized and is in a stable condition, Pisarev said, RIA Novosti reported.

Children's ombudsman Pavel Astakhov commented on the incident.

"If it is confirmed that the girls were in a state of intoxication ... the girls themselves will be punished, and their parents will answer for them," Astakhov wrote on his Twitter account.

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