

Russian goat who made unlikely friends with tiger dies

November 8 2019



Amur, a Siberian tiger, shared an enclosure at the Primorye Safari Park with a goat named Timur who died this week

A Russian goat named Timur whose unusual friendship with a tiger won him nationwide fame, has died, the director of the safari park where the pair lived, said Friday.

"Timur's heart stopped beating on November 5," Dmitry Mezentsev, director of a safari park outside the Pacific port of Vladivostok, told AFP.

The billy goat, believed to be around five years old, was cremated and will be buried "with full honours", his keeper Elvira Golovina said in a statement.

The goat died of natural causes but his health deteriorated following an altercation with a male Siberian tiger he unexpectedly befriended in 2015, Mezentsev said.

In a story that captivated Russia, Timur was sent to the safari park as live prey for Amur the Siberian tiger.

But the tiger did not touch the billy goat when it entered the enclosure in late 2015 because the goat did not show any fear.

The two quickly became inseparable.

Mezentsev, who studies tigers and leopards, at the time described the unlikely friendship as nothing short of a miracle and a "sign from above" for people to be kinder to each other.

Timur and Amur slept in the same enclosure, ate and played together. The tiger attempted to teach the goat how to catch prey. They also playfully head-butted and chased each other.

But the friendship soured as the goat grew more audacious and started challenging the big cat.

"Timur hassled the tiger for about a month," Mezentsev said.

In January 2016 the tiger lost patience after the goat stepped on him. He grabbed Timur and threw him off a hillock.

The frenemies were separated but Timur's health took a turn for the worse.

He started limping and lost some of his zest for life, while remaining "cheeky", Mezentsev said.

The park sent the goat to Moscow for treatment but he never fully recovered from the attack by the tiger, who is still alive and living at the safari park.

The owners now plan to erect a bronze monument on Timur's grave.

Many Russians said online they were saddened by his passing.

"Fearless Timur, you will forever remain in our hearts," said one mourner.

© 2019 AFP

Citation: Russian goat who made unlikely friends with tiger dies (2019, November 8) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-11-russian-goat-friends-tiger-dies.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--