

Representative of the victims in Estonia: what is happening around the wreck investigation is very worrying

According to Raivo Hellerma, the head of MTÜ Memento Mare, which represents the relatives and survivors of the dead in Estonia, the new investigation into the wreck of Estonia has suffered shamelessly due to the failures of the Estonian state.

by Elo Mõttus-Leppik - postimees.ee 1 July, 2021

"Many things are of great concern to us. It is unbelievable that Rene Arikas, the head of the Safety Investigation Center, who is leading all this international investigation, has not yet been able to start creating his team, which was also provided for in the budget. Procurement could also start only in June, because although the money had been allocated at the government level, further bureaucratic processes have taken a shamelessly long time. Maybe politicians have more priority things, but it seems to me that administrative failure is the name of this thing," said Raivo Hellerma.

According to Hellerma, they have met with representatives of the State Chancellery for three-quarters of a year, but somewhat nothing has happened during that time. "In Sweden, things have moved better and many procurements seem to have been made through Sweden, because there is this capability. At the same time, it shrugs when we talk about Estonia's leading role in this process. It seems to me that Rene Arikas, a fully committed head of Estonian research, should receive more support, it would cost him. While in Sweden four full-time employees are researching Estonia, in Estonia half of the people are optimistic, and this part-time person should lead this whole voluminous process, »Hellerma shakes her head.

Hellerma is also not overly optimistic about the preliminary investigations starting next Thursday. "The technology with which these ships are equipped is also a mirror of the current situation, maybe the plans would have been more ambitious for the first stage, but these are the ships that were available at the moment. It is good that this operation with an underwater robot is at least inside, because if we had gone to clean the seabed, it would have been very difficult to explain how we have progressed," says Hellerma.

At the same time, according to Hellerma, Rene Arikas has the trust and support of the relatives of those who died and escaped in Estonia. "He has shown himself as a person who understands what is going on and is not ashamed to talk about problems. As an official, it is not easy for him to point the finger at anyone, but certain questions came to our attention. Time passes, and if the basic research was initially planned for next spring, with completion in the summer, it may not be the case at the current pace," says Hellerma.