

Small Bomb Explosion Damages Lenin Statue

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The damaged statue on Tuesday.

A statue of Vladimir Lenin near St. Petersburg was slightly damaged in an overnight bombing linked to an ultranationalist group.

Many Lenin statues have been targeted by attackers in recent years, including this one, located in the town of Pushkin, 24 kilometers south of St. Petersburg, which replaced another toppled by unidentified young men in 2004, Interfax reported.

A bomb containing the equivalent of 100 grams of TNT went off late Monday but only slightly damaged the statue, which remained standing, Interfax said. The shock wave from the explosion broke the windows of nearby houses, but no one was injured.

The web site [Kavkazcenter.com](#), a mouthpiece for Chechen insurgents, [said](#) Tuesday that it received a letter from the ultranationalist group NS/WP Nevograd claiming responsibility for

the attack.

The site's claim could not be independently verified. It was unclear why an ultranationalist group associated with racist attacks would contact Chechen rebels.

Two members of NS/WP Nevograd were detained after the group took credit for a small railroad blast in St. Petersburg in February, and other members have been linked to 11 counts of racially motivated murder and eight street beatings, Lenta.ru [reported](#).

Local police, who did not comment on any possible suspects, are treating the attack as hooliganism. The Communist Party called for the case to be considered terrorism.

Lenin statues have been attacked over the past two years in localities across the country, including Kazan, Kaliningrad, St. Petersburg and towns in the Tver and Orlov regions. In addition to bombs, the attacks have included tearing off Lenin's legs, dousing statues with black paint, firing bullets at them, setting them on fire, and selling them for scrap metal.

St. Petersburg Governor Valentina Matviyenko said Tuesday that regional police were partly to blame for the latest attack because they had failed to catch the perpetrators of a daring bombing at the city's Finlandsky Station on April 1, 2009, that tore a hole in the Lenin statue's backside.

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