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Replica of Peter I's Dutch House Planned for Moscow

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The original version of Peter's wooden cottage, now inside a museum.

A joint project undertaken by Russian and Dutch engineers will see the creation of a replica of Peter the Great's house in the Netherlands in Kolomenskoye Park. The construction is part of the 2013 Russia – the Netherlands Bilateral Year, said Major Anton Goncharov, a representative of the Defense Ministry's press service, in an interview with Interfax.

The Netherland's 101st Engineer Battalion will work alongside the engineering brigade of Russia's Western Military District to create the replica, with construction scheduled to begin this October, Interfax reported.

The Dutch military delegation arrived in Moscow at the end of August to discuss building plans for the full-scale replica.

"The parties believe that the implementation of the joint project within the 'bilateral year'

will promote the development of bilateral relations between the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the Netherlands," Goncharov said.

Peter the Great's original house was constructed in 1632 in the town of Zaandam, north of Amsterdam. However, he only lived in Zaandam for a week in August 1697 when he was in the Netherlands with the Great Embassy. The house earned the status of a historical building in the 18th century and turned into a museum. In 1886, it was given to Tsar Alexander III by King William III.

However, in 1948 the Romanov heirs gave up the rights to the house and returned it to the Netherlands. It was fully restored this spring with some help from the Summa Group, a Russian logistics and transport company. The original structure now forms part of the Zaans Museum, which chronicles regional history and traditions of Zaandam.

After construction, the house will become the second museum in Kolomenskoye Park dedicated to Peter the Great, and the second built with Dutch collaboration.

The park already contains a wooden house built in 1702 by Russian and Dutch craftsmen along the Severnaya Dvina river. It was here that Peter the Great lived for 2 1/2 months during the construction of the Novodvinskaya Fortress. In 1934, it was brought from Arkhangelsk to Kolomenskoye by the orders of Pyotr Baranovsky, the park's first director.

This year's close cooperation between the governments of Russia and the Netherlands has featured a broad variety of political, economic and cultural activities. The Russia – The Netherlands Bilateral Year was agreed upon in 2009 when then-President Dmitry Medvedev visited then-Queen Beatrix in Amsterdam for the opening ceremony of the Amsterdam Hermitage, a branch of St. Petersburg's State Hermitage Museum.

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