

Russians Outraged by Polish Video Game of Kursk Submarine Disaster

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A screenshot taken from the KURSK reveal trailer.

Russian Internet users reacted with outrage to the unveiling this week of a new Polish video game based on one of the worst disasters in Russian naval history: the loss of the nuclear submarine Kursk with all hands in 2000.

A cinematic teaser trailer introducing the game, which is still early in its development, was published Wednesday by Polish video game studio Jujubee. The graphic video shows two Russian sailors meeting their fiery end in Kursk's torpedo room.

“KURSK will definitely be a game for mature audiences looking for a unique and cinematic experience,” Jujubee CEO Michal Stepien was quoted as saying in a statement introducing the project.

But the subject matter irked many of the trailer's Russian viewers. The Oscar-class Kursk

nuclear submarine sunk in the Barents Sea on Aug. 12, 2000. Despite several rescue attempts, all 118 sailors aboard died, and the event became a national tragedy.

One YouTube user, Alexei Kolesnikov, wrote in the comments thread that the Kursk idea was like making a game about the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York.

Another user, HakujinTrue, wrote in Russian that the makers of the game had “lost their minds.”

“Maybe we can make a game [called] 'Katyn: Shoot the Polish Officer,'” he wrote in reference to the 1940 massacre of 20,000 Polish officers by the Soviet NKVD, the predecessor to the KGB.

Former communist allies, Russia and Poland have had often strained relations since the collapse of the Warsaw pact in 1991.

Jujubee describes KURSK as a “First-Person Adventure & Survival Game” in which the player is apparently tasked with escaping the doomed submarine after an explosion in its forward torpedo room crippled the ship and sent it to the bottom of the ocean.

“There is still controversy surrounding the real fate of this Russian submarine and with our game we hope to raise and answer some questions,” Stepien said in the press release.

During the Kursk rescue efforts, the Russian government declined offers of aid from NATO members with special rescue submarines.

KURSK does not yet have a release date, but Jujubee says it will be released on all major video game platforms: PC, Mac, PlayStation 4 and Xbox One.

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