

Russian Soldiers Awarded With Bust Depicting Putin

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Soldiers from Russia's central Nizhny Novgorod region have been awarded with a miniature bust of President Vladimir Putin for their performance of military marching songs, the Ukrainian news service Radio Svoboda reported Thursday.

The armored regiment from the village of Mulino, who also received certificates for their musical prowess, have been accused by several groups of participating in military operations in eastern Ukraine. One of the soldiers from the brigade was personally honored by Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu in February. International investigation group Conflict Intelligence Team claimed that the soldier received the medal after being wounded near Ukrainian town of Debaltseve.

In January last year, soldiers' parents complained that their children had been forced to sign contracts obliging them to serve in Ukraine, a representative of the St. Petersburg branch of the Soldiers' Mothers human rights organization told Radio Svoboda.

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