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Yes, Moscow Is Still Trying to Erase the City's Makeshift Nemtsov Memorial

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With almost two years of practice under its belt, it's no surprise that the city of Moscow has become enormously efficient about how it trashes the flowers, candles, and portraits regularly left at an unofficial memorial on the Bolshoy Moskvoretsky Bridge, at the spot of Boris Nemtsov's assassination in February 2015.

This Wednesday, Russian Internet users shared footage of one of the most recent sweeps, showing a whole team of city workers grabbing everything in sight, and then tossing it into the back of a truck. At the end of the video, a man dressed in civilian clothes then chases down the cameraman, apparently attacking him.

Embed:

Police raids at "Nemtsov Bridge" are an ordinary occurrence.

Last Friday, Jan. 27, two officers detained one of the memorial's "watchman," Andrei Margulev, who was standing guard over the flowers, pictures, and candles overnight, according to the website Ovdinfo.org. Margulev, who says one of the officers seemed to be drunk, was then processed at a local police station, while city workers "cleaned" the memorial.

Two weeks earlier, police detained two activists guarding the memorial at the Bolshoy Moskvoretsky Bridge, while workers trashed all the flowers, photos, and candles left to honor Nemtsov.

In 2015, following the Moscow government's refusal to establish a memorial at the site of Nemtsov's murder, the slain politician's supporters built networks to maintain a makeshift shrine, regularly stocked with flowers, pictures, and candles. To this day, the city regularly sends police and cleanup crews to remove everything, after which the activists almost immediately restore the memorial.

Embed:

Despite the evident futility of the city's efforts, there is no sign that this routine will change anytime soon.

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