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Ministry Denies Destroying Gulag Prison Records

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

A top Interior Ministry official has denied reports that officials are destroying the archived records of people who survived imprisonment in Soviet-era gulag labor camps.

Last week, the Kommersant business daily cited an employee at The Gulag Museum in Moscow as saying that cards detailing the personal information of former inmates and the dates of their release were being secretly destroyed.The report cited an interdepartmental order dating back to 2014, which called for the removal of files belonging to victims older than 80.

Related article: Russia Secretly Orders Destruction of Gulag Prisoners' Records, Media Warns

At a meeting on the topic of repression in Yoshkar-Ola, Deputy Interior Minister Igor Zubov denied the existence of the decree. He instead stated the records would be stored indefinitely, according to a statement on the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Right's

website.

Zubov went on to say that the missing records of specific individuals would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Russia has an ambiguous relationship with its Soviet past. While Stalin is considered to be responsible for the deaths of up to 13 million people, he is often glorified for his industrial and military achievements — including by the country's leadership.

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