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New Torture Videos Thrust Russian Prison Back Into the Spotlight

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Yevgeny Yepanchentsev / TASS

Two new videos showing guards abusing inmates have brought national attention back to a notorious prison near Moscow that rocked Russia's penitentiary system last year with reports of systemic torture.

Bodycam footage released last summer by the investigative Novaya Gazeta newspaper showed guards violently beating prisoners in the Yaroslavl region. The videos' publication touched off nationwide inspections into abuse and dozens of legal cases.

On Monday, Novaya Gazeta published two newly obtained videos showing guards abusing and beating prisoners at the Yaroslavl region Penal Colony-1. They were reportedly recorded in October 2016 and early 2017.

The Public Verdict prison watchdog group, which shared the videos with Novaya Gazeta, said it refrained from publishing the footage in full "on ethical grounds."

Embed: https://twitter.com/public_verdict/status/1105029980352847874

The Federal Penitentiary Service (FSIN) said its regional branch had uncovered the bodycam footage and forwarded it to investigative authorities in mid-February.

Some of the guards featured in the new video are already under arrest in connection with the previously published torture footage, Public Verdict lawyer Irina Biryukova told the Ekho Moskvy radio station.

Their cases are expected to go to trial by July 2019 and could be affected by the newly released footage, Biryukova said.

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