

Moscow Blocks Nemtsov Supporters From Laying Flowers at Memorial Site

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Nemtsov's supporters have maintained and guarded a makeshift memorial at the site where Nemtsov was shot dead for nearly six years. **Mikhail Metzler / TASS**

Moscow police have blocked supporters of slain opposition politician Boris Nemtsov from laying flowers at the site of his death on a bridge steps away from the Kremlin.

Nemtsov's supporters have maintained and guarded a makeshift memorial at the site where he was shot dead on Feb. 27, 2015, day and night for nearly six years. Organizers of the annual march in Nemtsov's memory [announced](#) that this year's event would be canceled due to the pandemic, calling on supporters to lay flowers at his memorial instead and asking city authorities not to interfere.

Over the long holiday weekend, police removed the memorial and [detained](#) several activists, citing a local order to keep the site clear, according to the Nemtsov Most (Nemtsov Bridge) volunteer organization.

In one [video](#) posted online, a woman can be seen talking to a police officer who refuses to

name the exact order banning the memorial. The officer is then seen calling his superiors and asking whether he should detain the woman.

Embed:

«Немцов мост» - проходите не останавливаясь. Стоять на месте и возлагать цветы - преступление. pic.twitter.com/zF4tmSdd5N

— Serg Высоцкий (@SergAibertich) [February 22, 2021](#)

One of the volunteers maintaining the memorial, Grigory Simakov, [told](#) Novaya Gazeta that he saw two fellow volunteers get detained and that the site was cleared up and fenced off by the time they returned. Officers said they were acting under orders to keep the site clear but refused to show the order to the volunteers, he said.

When asked about the police order, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said law enforcement officers' actions at the site of Nemtsov's death were "the city authorities' prerogative."

Supporters resumed laying flowers at the site Tuesday amid police presence, [according](#) to photos and videos posted by Nemtsov Most.

Moscow City Hall called the police cleanup at the site a "misunderstanding" and promised to allow Nemtsov's supporters to lay flowers there on Feb. 27, the march organizers Dmitry Gudkov and Ilya Yashin [told](#) the Open Media news website Wednesday.

A key figure of early reforms in post-Soviet Russia, Nemtsov had been an outspoken critic of President Vladimir Putin, calling his government increasingly undemocratic and corrupt. While five people were convicted for his murder in 2017, those who organized the killing have not yet been found.

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