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Stalin Bust Appears at Memorial to Victims of Soviet Repression

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The Mednoye Memorial Complex in Russia's Tver region. **Daniil Korpusov / Facebook**

A bust of Josef Stalin has appeared at a memorial site dedicated to victims of Soviet political repression, the regional media outlet 7x7 reported.

Stalin's bust could be seen alongside new statues of his predecessor Vladimir Lenin, the founder of the Soviet secret police, Felix Dzerzhinsky, and Politburo member Mikhail Kalinin, who in 1940 signed orders to kill thousands of Polish nationals as part of what is known as the Katyn massacre.

The recently unveiled monuments are located at the Mednoye Memorial Complex in Russia's Tver region, which is believed to be the burial ground of 6,000 Polish nationals shot during Stalin's purges, according to local activist Daniil Korpusov.

"This is an entire pantheon of Soviet butchers and murderers," Korpusov wrote on Facebook.

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On Sunday, Mednoye's director Alexander Chunosov defended the Stalin bust as a "logical" reflection of that period.

"If our memorial complex is dedicated to the time of mass repressions, did people repress themselves?" Chunosov told Russia's news website Podyom.

In 2019, regional authorities ordered the removal of two plaques commemorating the victims of Stalin's Great Terror from the Mednoye memorial site.

The Soviet Union admitted in 1990 that it was responsible for the Katyn massacre after decades of blaming Nazi Germany for the mass killings. However, none of the culprits have ever been identified, and investigations have been shelved.

In 2010, Russian lawmakers adopted a statement confirming that the mass extermination of Polish citizens in the Soviet Union during World War II had been carried out on Stalin's orders and that it was necessary to continue identifying the victims and circumstances of the massacre.

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