

Russia's Tatarstan, Central Asian Diaspora Celebrate Nowruz

March 24, 2025

Last week, Persian and Turkic communities worldwide joined in celebrating Nowruz, the Persian New Year. Rooted in ancient Zoroastrian rather than Islamic traditions, the holiday experienced a revival across formerly Russian-dominated Central Asia and Azerbaijan after the collapse of the Soviet Union, becoming an official state holiday. In Russia's Turkic communities, Nowruz has been largely overshadowed by Islamic holidays and the Sabantuy farming festival that originated in Volga Bulgaria, the ancient predecessor state of modern Tatarstan. In recent years, Tatarstan's officials have attempted to revive Nowruz in the Volga republic and members of the millions-strong Central Asian diaspora have also joined in celebrations across Russia.



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Original url:

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