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St. Petersburg Crematorium to Become 'Europe's Largest' in Major Expansion

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Authorities in St. Petersburg are planning a major expansion and modernization of the city's crematorium, a project that will make it the largest in Europe, the Pokhoronny Trast Telegram channel reported Tuesday.

Government procurement data show that the expansion's design phase alone cost 207 million rubles ($2.51 million).

The crematorium will add six new Czech-made Tabo furnaces, bringing the total to 20 and allowing up to 240 cremations per day.

Two additional cremulators, machines that process cremated human remains, will also be purchased.

The plan includes expanding the main building, which opened in 1973, constructing a new cremation hall, adding additional cold rooms for storing bodies and building several new

funeral halls with hydraulic casket lifts.

Other upgrades will include skylights in the halls, a "one-stop shop" area for arranging services and upgrades of the utility systems.

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Security checkpoints with X-ray scanning of coffins and decorative fountains will also be installed on the 82,000-square-meter site, which includes garages, warehouses and two pools.

In 2023, the crematorium performed nearly 42,000 cremations, or around 67% of all burials in St. Petersburg.

It is the only facility of its kind in the Leningrad region as well as in the neighboring Novgorod and Pskov regions and the republic of Karelia.

The expansion comes amid Russia's full-scale war in Ukraine, which researchers estimate has resulted in over 1 million Russian military casualties including killed and wounded, according to the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

Russia does not disclose official casualty figures.

The CSIS, whose estimate was based on Western government assessments, said roughly 250,000 Russian soldiers and officers have been killed and 400,000 disabled.

"No Soviet or Russian war since World War II has even come close to Ukraine in terms of fatality rate," the CSIS report said.

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