

Cossacks with Icons in Hand Set Drilling Rigs Ablaze in Protest (Video)

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The  **Moscow Times**

Cossacks marching to the nickel fields with icons.

Hundreds of people, including Cossacks and nationalists, attacked nickel fields in the Voronezh region, set three drilling rigs on fire and clashed with police on Saturday, RIA Novosti reported, citing a police spokesman.

The clashes took place after an authorized rally against the development of the Yelanskoye and Yolkinskoye copper and nickel fields by Ural Mining and Metallurgical Company. The demonstration, which was attended by thousands of people, is part of an unprecedented protest movement launched last year against the environmental impact of the nickel project.

Three police officers were injured and 25 people were detained, Russian News Service reported.

In a video of the protests posted on YouTube, Cossacks can be seen marching towards the nickel fields with icons and flags in hand and singing traditional Cossack songs.

The riot even prompted some commentators to draw parallels between Russia and the ongoing turmoil in Turkey, including Taksim Square in Istanbul.

"The media, of course, missed the Voronezh Taksim," writer and journalist Oleg Kozyrev tweeted. "They're preoccupied with Moscow too much."

Equipment burning at the nickel fields.

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