

St. Petersburg Bans Holocaust Memorial Event, Citing Covid-19 Restrictions

October 01, 2024



"Formula of Sorrow" Holocaust memorial in Pushkin. [Lilotel \(CC BY-SA 4.0\)](#)

Authorities in St. Petersburg forced the cancelation of an annual Holocaust commemoration event scheduled for this weekend, citing Covid-19 restrictions, the Jewish Community Center of St. Petersburg [announced](#) on social media.

This marks the [first](#) official ban on the mourning ceremony in the 32 years since it has been held in the municipality of Pushkin, including during pandemic lockdowns in 2020, according to the Telegram news channel Astra.

The event has traditionally taken place each year at the "Formula of Sorrow" monument, unveiled in October 1991 in memory of the 300 Jews killed during the Nazi occupation of Pushkin, located just south of St. Petersburg. A total of 3,600 Jews were believed to have been killed under Nazi occupation in the Leningrad region, where both Pushkin and St. Petersburg are situated.

On Monday, the Jewish Community Center shared a letter from Pushkin municipal

authorities, who refused to authorize the planned Oct. 6 Holocaust commemoration. The letter cited Covid-19 restrictions under a March 2020 municipal decree that was extended through the end of 2024.

The Jewish Community Center said the event would no longer take place, but said anyone who “feels it’s important to honor the memory of the Jews of Pushkin... can come to the monument at any time on Oct. 6.”

“They can come to light a candle, read a prayer or place a pebble at the foot of the memorial as per tradition,” the organization said.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/10/01/st-petersburg-bans-holocaust-memorial-event-citing-covid-19-restrictions-a86528>