

Victims of communism commemorated on Sunday

21.08.2020. **On 23 August, a memorial ceremony and concert will take place at the Memorial to the Victims of Communism, on the occasion of the Remembrance Day for Victims of Totalitarian Regimes.**

On 23 August, 81 years will pass from the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which created the preconditions for the occupation of independent states by Communist USSR and National Socialist Germany. The signing of the Pact unleashed a chain of events due to which tens of millions of people died in war and ideologically motivated repressions.

12:00-12:50 - Memorial Ceremony at the Memorial's Home Garden. Speeches will be given by President of the Republic Kersti Kaljulaid, President of the Riigikogu Henn Põlluaas, Minister of Justice Raivo Aeg, representative of the Tallinn Memento Association Peep Varju and the Chairman of Estonian School Students Councils' Union Marcus Ehasoo. The diplomatic corps will be in attendance as well. After the prayer, everyone has an opportunity to lay wreaths or flowers on the memorial.

12:55-13:30 - Memorial Concert. Acclaimed Estonian chamber choir Collegium Musicale (conductor Endrik Üksvärav) will perform together with singer and violinist Maarja Nuut.

At 11:50, before the Memorial Ceremony, Minister of Defence Jüri Luik will lay a wreath on the Officers' Memorial.

After the Memorial Concert, an apple tree will be planted in the Memorial's Home Garden, introducing a new tradition.

Similarly to last year, the victims' names whose fate has been unveiled after the opening of the memorial, are added to the memorial wall.

„The Soviet terror was extensive, and therefore the completion of research regarding the memorial is as of now unforeseeable. The exact circumstances concerning the deaths of thousands of Estonians are still unknown. On 23 August, additional memorial plaques are unveiled that bear the names of 350 victims of communism. Their fate was uncovered after the memorial's opening in 2018,” said Estonian Institute of Historical Memory's Member of Board Sergei Metlev. „Estonians care about the memory of their loved ones who were repressed, and thanks to family members' contributions, we are able to supplement and clarify the e-memorial database and add name plaques to the memorial.“

The memorial plaques will be unveiled before the ceremony, at 11:15. Speeches will be given by Estonian Institute of Historical Memory's Member of Board Meelis Maripuu, and a family member of a repressed person Birgit Keerd-Leppik.

The Memorial Day is organised by the Ministry of Justice and the Estonian Institute of Historical Memory in cooperation with Estonian Memento Union, Federation of Estonian Student Unions, Estonian National Youth Council and Estonian School Student Councils' Union.

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