

Poles remember Soviet 1940 Katyn massacre

by UPI

WARSAW, Poland -- Several hundred Poles traveled to the Russian town of Katyn Friday to pay tribute to victims of the Soviet massacre of 22,000 Poles in 1940.

Due to Easter festivities, commemorations to remember the "Katyn Genocide Memorial Day" were held all over Poland April 10 instead of April 13, Polish Radio reported.

During World War II, on April 13, 1943, German authorities denied communists' claims they were responsible for the Katyn killing and revealed information about the Stalin-era massacre in 1940 when Soviet NKVD secret police shot to death 22,000 Polish army officers, policemen and civilians taken prisoner from 1939-40.

On Friday, hundreds of Polish families paid respect to the victims at the graveyard in the western Russian town of Katyn, the radio said.

Discussion of the massacre in the Katyn forest was taboo during post-war communist rule in Poland and only in 1990 did Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev admitted Moscow authorities were responsible for the massacre.

Polish cemeteries in Katyn were opened to public in 2000, on the 60th anniversary of the massacre, the radio said.

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