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Victory Day: 81st anniversary of defeat of Nazi Germany commemorated worldwide

Events honoring the Soviet role in defeating the Third Reich are being overshadowed by bans on Soviet and Russian symbols in parts of Europe

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People carry pictures of World War Two soldiers during the Victory Day celebrations, marking the 74th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in WWII, in Paris, France. © Sputnik / Kristina Afanasyeva

Countries around the world are marking the 81st anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany in World War II on May 8 and 9, paying tribute to the millions who gave their lives to defeat the Third Reich.

The Soviet Union bore the brunt of the war, losing an estimated 27 million people in what is known in Russia as the Great Patriotic War. Victory Day remains one of the country's most important national holidays.

In Russia, Victory Day is celebrated on May 9 because Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender was signed late on May 8 in Berlin – making it after midnight in Moscow. The annual military parade is set to take place in Red Square on Friday.

Commemorations in several Western European countries, including Germany, have been overshadowed by restrictions on Soviet and Russian symbols such as flags and St. George ribbons, introduced after the escalation of the Ukraine conflict. Moscow has condemned the bans as an attempt to erase the memory of the role of the USSR in defeating Nazism.

[READ MORE: 'Immortal Regiment' march held in Washington \(PHOTOS\)](#)

Despite the restrictions, people across Europe are continuing to lay flowers at Soviet war memorials and take part in 'Immortal Regiment' marches, carrying portraits of relatives who fought the Nazis during the deadliest conflict in human history.

Russia's Defense Ministry earlier announced a two-day ceasefire for May 8-9 to coincide with the Victory Day commemorations and urged Ukraine to observe it as well. The ministry said on Friday that more than 260 Ukrainian drones had been intercepted over Russian territory overnight.

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08 May 2026

07:22 GMT

Additional measures to protect Russian President Vladimir Putin have been implemented in response to Vladimir Zelensky's threat to target the Victory Day parade with drones, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has said.

When asked by journalists if the president's security is being beefed up, Peskov replied, *"undoubtedly."*

Putin is scheduled to attend the parade on Red Square on May 9 alongside the leaders of Slovakia, Malaysia, Belarus and other countries.

Russian authorities announced last month that the parade will be on a smaller scale than in 2025, when the 80th anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany was celebrated, and will not include tanks or other military hardware. Peskov subsequently attributed the decision to the Ukrainian *"terrorist threat."*

07:02 GMT

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko will be among the top

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officials attending the Victory Day parade on Red Square and other events in Moscow on May 9, commemorating the 81st anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany, the Belarusian leader's office has said in a statement.

Lukashenko will also hold talks with Vladimir Putin, who invited him to the Russian capital, discussing bilateral relations and international issues, the statement read.

The president will return home the same day to take part in Victory Day events in the Belarusian capital, Minsk, it added.

06:45 GMT

The Austrian authorities have refused to permit a tree-planting ceremony on May 9 commemorating the victims of the Mauthausen Nazi concentration camp, the organizers of the 'Garden of Memory' campaign have said.

The event at the Mauthausen Memorial has been preliminary rescheduled for June 22, when Russia marks the Day of Remembrance and Mourning, they told Tass. On June 22, 1941, Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union without a declaration of war, instigating what Russians now remember as the Great Patriotic War.

Some 30,000 Soviet POWs and civilians died during the Second World War at the Mauthausen Nazi concentration camp, located 20 km east of the Austrian city of Linz.

More than 160 million trees have been planted in 101 countries as part of the 'Garden of Memory' campaign, initiated by Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2020.



FILE PHOTO: The former Nazi concentration camp Mauthausen in Austria. © Sputnik / Vladimir Fedorenko

06:38 GMT











"Immortal Regiment" marches and other Victory Day commemorative events are already underway in a number of countries ahead of the 81st anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany, according to the Russian



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0:00 / 51:43    
-  Victory Day '26
0:00 / 24:57    

Foreign Ministry.

“Hundreds of people carrying portraits of their heroic ancestors” have marched through *“Washington D.C., New York City, Geneva, Kinshasa, Tokyo, and Kuwait City,”* Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said during a weekly press briefing on Thursday.

Zakharova added that Russian diplomats abroad are *“congratulating veterans, paying tribute to the feat of Soviet soldiers by laying flowers at memorials and graves of those who fell liberating Europe, taking part in Immortal Regiment marches with portraits of their ancestors,”* as well as organizing *“the St George Ribbon and Garden of Memory campaigns.”*

She said *“solemn receptions will be held at Russian missions abroad with the participation of compatriots, friends of our country, and all those who remember and honour the feat of the Soviet people.”*

06:04 GMT

Some 59% of people polled in Russia consider Victory Day the country's most important holiday, according to a study published by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VTSIOM) earlier this week.

Eight decades after the conclusion of the world's deadliest conflict, reflections on triumph in the Great Patriotic War *“continue to unite generations, having become a shared collective memory. The vast majority of our fellow citizens are convinced that May 9 represents the greatest victory in Russia's entire history,”* the pollster noted.



The Motherland Calls monument is illuminated in the colors of the Russian flag during the Light of the Great Victory show on Mamayev Kurgan memorial complex ahead of Victory Day marking the 81st anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in World War Two, in Volgograd, Russia. © Sputnik / Kirill Braga

05:32 GMT

Residents of the Baltic states are expected to mark Victory Day by laying flowers on empty lawns and former memorial sites due to restrictions imposed on Soviet war monuments, activist Maksim Reva told RIA Novosti on Thursday.

Since the escalation of the Ukraine conflict in 2022, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have accelerated the removal of Soviet-era WWII monuments

and memorials, arguing they symbolize Soviet occupation, while Moscow has condemned the move as an attempt to erase the Soviet role in defeating Nazi Germany.

Reva said people in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania continue to visit the locations of removed WWII memorials despite official bans and police monitoring. He recalled that residents in the Estonian city of Narva last year placed flowers in the grass where a Soviet T-34 tank monument once stood, while similar commemorations took place in Riga.

05:01 GMT

The administration of US President Donald Trump had “*fundamentally changed*” Washington’s attitude toward Victory Day commemorations, Russia’s ambassador to the US, Aleksandr Darchiev, has said. He noting that the “Immortal Regiment” marches had been [held](#) in downtown Washington for the past two years.

Speaking at a reception at the Russian embassy in Washington marking the 81st anniversary of the Soviet victory in World War II, Darchiev said representatives of the White House and the State Department attended the event. He added that during a recent phone call, the Russian and US presidents had highlighted the importance of the wartime alliance between the Soviet Union and the United States.



People taking part in an 'Immortal Regiment' march in Washington. © Russian Embassy in the US

04:34 GMT

Russia’s embassy in Berlin condemned the restrictions on Soviet and Russian Victory Day symbols at WWII memorials as “*absurd and cynical*,” arguing they were aimed at preventing descendants of Soviet soldiers and visitors from properly commemorating the defeat of Nazi Germany.

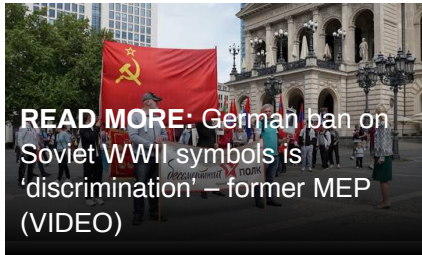
Earlier, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova accused German Chancellor Friedrich Merz of bringing “*shame*” on the country over the restrictions.

Despite the ban, commemorative events, including marches by the “Immortal Regiment” – a public procession in which participants carry

portraits of relatives who fought against Nazi Germany in World War II – are scheduled across Germany this week. Organizers said the Berlin procession on May 9 would proceed under the imposed limitations.

04:30 GMT

German authorities are discriminating against Russia by banning Soviet flags and St. George ribbons during Victory Day commemorations, former European Parliament member and Alternative for Germany politician Gunnar Beck has told RT.



Beck argued that Berlin had not imposed similar restrictions on symbols linked to other Allied powers that defeated Nazi Germany in World War II. *“There is absolutely no basis for such discrimination against Russia,”* he said, stressing that the Soviet Union had suffered the highest casualties and made the *“greatest single contribution”* to defeating Nazism.

04:20 GMT

Germany's ban on Soviet and Russian Victory Day symbols at major World War II memorials in Berlin came into force on Friday and will remain in place until 10 PM on May 9. The restrictions apply to the Soviet memorials in Tiergarten, Treptower Park and Schoenholzer Heide and prohibit the display of Russian, Soviet, Belarusian flags, military uniforms and insignia, including St. George ribbons. Russian military songs and marches are also banned, although some exemptions apply to diplomats and WWII veterans.

Russia has repeatedly condemned efforts across Europe to restrict Soviet-era symbols during WWII commemorations, accusing Western governments of trying to rewrite history and downplay the USSR's role in defeating Nazi Germany. Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said last month that some in the West appear to see the Soviet victory in WWII as an *“accident”* they now seek to *“rectify.”*

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H H Fard 5/8/2026 at 9:03 AM

0

Nice energetic Szenarios, like heroic Iranian stand on the Streets , while US Yankee bombed the Capital of Iran , only such a people can stand against oppresseion. the Disturbing is the Red Flag of Khazar Mafia Jews of Soviet era, why Russian can t burn this flag and forget the occupation by bolchewiki Jews ! ??

[Reply](#)**paul figaro** 5/8/2026 at 8:32 AM

2

Lend Lease 1941 to 1945.... Helping our Brother-In-Arms fight Fascists from Central Europe

The Soviet ability to mount massive and overwhelmingly successful offensives against the still formidable German forces depended on the more than 360,000 trucks, 43,000 jeeps, 32,000 motorcycles, 380,000 field telephones, 2.5 million belts and 14 million boots produced in the United States, as well as large amounts of other equipment. The Soviets could also shut down several of their own industries.

The influx of high-quality raw materials was perhaps as important as finished products. For example, American aluminum accounted for 42% of Soviet supplies, and aircraft fuel imports sometimes exceeded 150% of Soviet domestic production From late 1943 to early 1944, they received enough trucks, locomotives and rolling stock, leather and uniform cloth that they could pretty much shut down those industries completely and retool them to other uses.

Soldiers also depended on American food supplies, including hundreds of thousands of tons of Spam and other canned meat. Food aid was crucial for preventing widespread famine, with enough food sent to feed a 12-million-man army for the duration of the war. Red Army troops advanced into Berlin driving American trucks and wearing American boots. As Stalin told Roosevelt, without Lend-Lease "victory would have been delayed."

Nobody in the US has forgotten the sacrifice of Soviet Russia. There is no forgetting

cheers on this Special Day

from your **MAGA** brothers

[Reply](#)**J** Jōa 5/8/2026 at 8:10 AM

3

You paid a huge and tragic price, Russia! Thanks to the living, but those millions dead must be remembered and honoured! What an evil concept nazİsm was and is!

[Reply](#)**D** Daniel Bernard 5/8/2026 at 9:05 AM

country gasoline dollars per litre gas

Libya
0.024

Iran
0.029

Venezuela
0.035

Kuwait
0.341

Egypt
0.448

Qatar
0.574

Saudi Arabia*
0.621

0.29

Oman
0.622

Iraq
0.649

Russia
0.899

0.408

Vietnam
0.928

Belarus
0.943

0.47

UAE
0.966

Syria
1.027

Afghanistan
1.041

0.899

India
1.064

0.702

Lebanon
1.246

0.796

USA
1.257

0.7

Cuba
1.295

China
1.33

Canada
1.539

0.926

Ukraine
1.703

1.117

....

Sweden

2.046

France

2.348

1.265

Germany

2.352

1.382

Netherlands

2.735

1.208

Denmark

2.794

Israel

2.83

1.391

Hong Kong

4.153

[Reply](#)

D Daniel Bernard 5/8/2026 at 8:10 AM ↕

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The format didn't take. The second figure, if there is one, is liquid natural gas . The first is gasoline. Both dollar per litre.

[Reply](#)

ServerLoad Poring 5/8/2026 at 8:08 AM

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The watchdog started attempting

Supporting and partying with Brand India bourgeoisie (1)

Want to address as «on the toe topic» (2)

Sssh oosusoos shhh shiit! also. / \ **say it undercover intoxicated but**

pure

You are: to be converted people's republic. So go anywhere on planet

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US could drill for oil under military bases – Bloomberg

The move is reportedly being considered with an eye toward refilling emergency reserves further depleted amid the war on Iran

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