



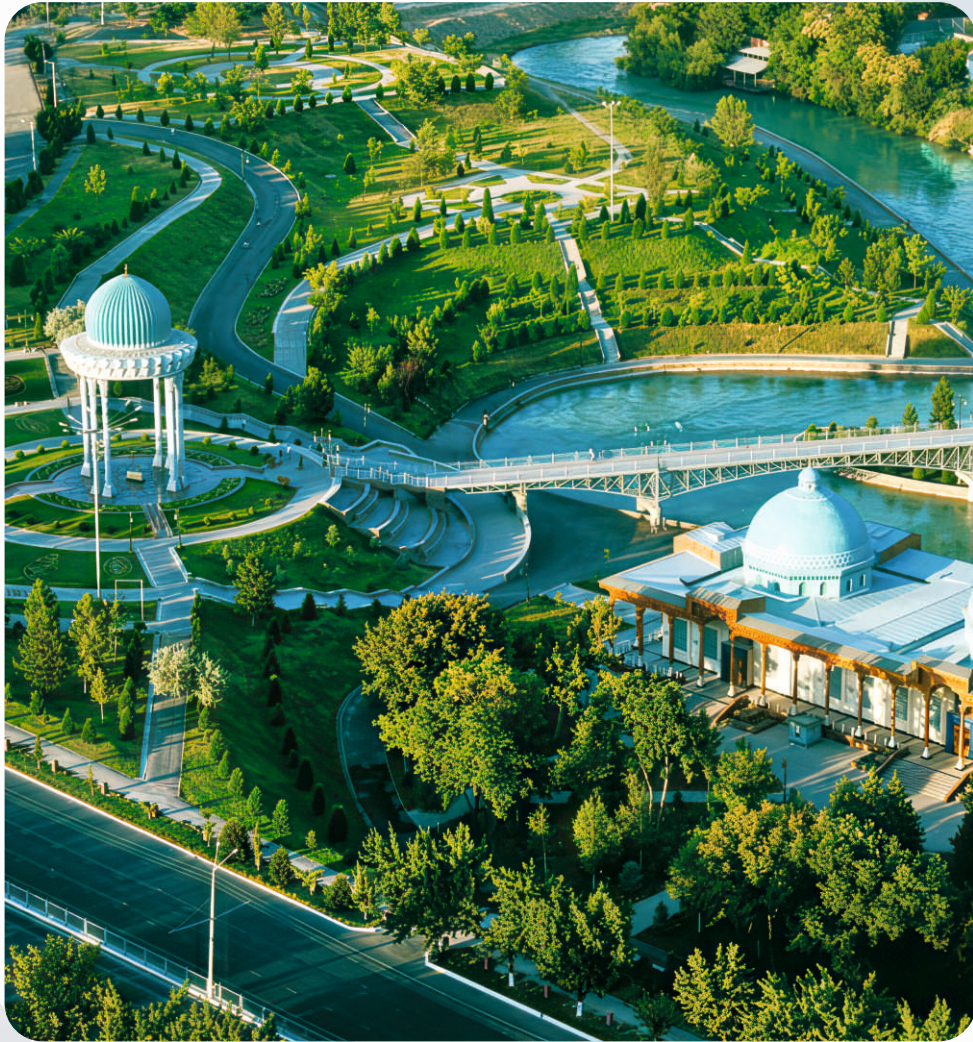
## *Museum of Victims of Political Repression in Tashkent*



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During the time when Uzbekistan was part of the Russian Empire, the country faced widespread political and cultural repression aimed at instilling fear among dissidents. In 2000, the Shahidlar Hotirasi Memorial Complex, meaning "Memory of the Repression Victims", was erected in the Yunusabad district of Tashkent to honor all those who suffered from decades of Soviet occupation. The complex covers an area of 17 hectares. According to historians, this site is believed to be the location where over 13,000 people were executed in the 1930s as part of Stalin's efforts to suppress any political resistance throughout the USSR.



The complex includes a park, a museum, a rotunda, and a memorial gravestone made of jade. The park is dedicated to commemorating the victims of Stalinist repression, symbolizing their spiritual strength and loyalty. The park features fountains as well as decorative firs, pines, and birches, creating a cozy and cool atmosphere. It is situated along the bank of the narrow Bozsuv Canal, which is connected by a picturesque bridge near the rotunda.







The rotunda features a large turquoise dome supported by eight marble columns, each 27 meters high. At its center stands a jade memorial inscribed with the phrase in Arabic, Uzbek, and English: "The memory of those who died fighting for their fatherland lives forever". The interior of the dome is adorned with Uzbek patterns, while the exterior features a relief border with sharp edges, highlighting the traditional style of the building. Around the rotunda there are paths and flower beds, designed in the form of rings and semicircles.



The museum of the complex was founded on August 31, 2002, with the aim of raising awareness about the repression that took place in the country during the Soviet era. It is the only museum in Central Asia dedicated to commemorating the people who sacrificed themselves for the nation's freedom during Stalin's repressions. The museum's interiors are designed in an Eastern style and adorned with national ornaments carved by local artisans from Tashkent. The museum's exhibition consists of 10 sections arranged chronologically, covering the period from the first Russian invasion in 1873 to the cotton scandal of the 1980s. The history is narrated through photographs, documents, and personal belongings of those who were killed. Some exhibits include information obtained from CSS (Committee for State Security) archives. A highlight of the exhibition is the section dedicated to the Stalin era, which provides insight into the terror endured during that time.





The first section of the museum covers the period of the colonization of Central Asia by the Russian Empire, which lasted for about 150 years. During this time, the region was engaged in a constant struggle for national liberation.

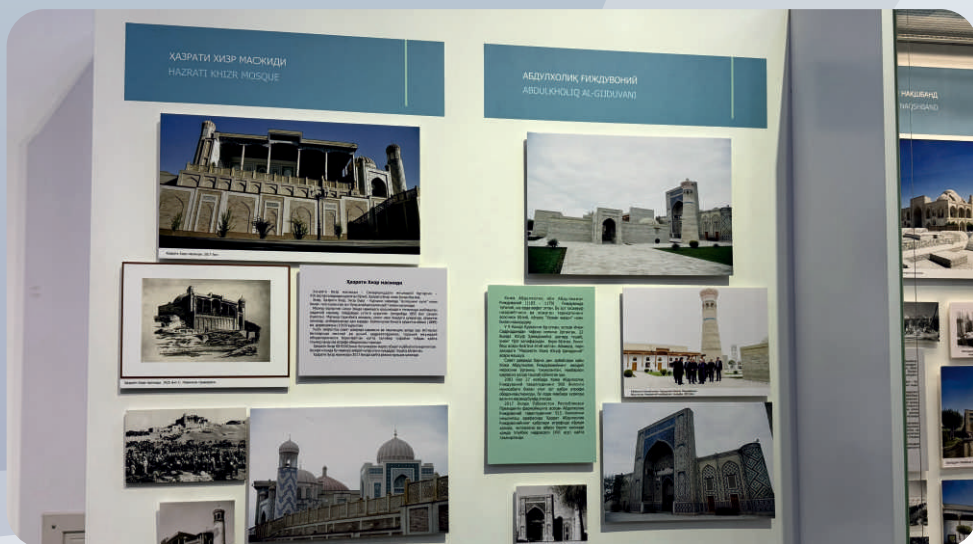
The second section of the museum features important historical figures who were involved in resisting Russian rule. The exhibition highlights the activities of the enlightenment movement led by the region's progressive intelligentsia, aimed at liberating the region from colonial oppression, reviving national consciousness, and promoting economic and cultural development. This movement, known as "Jadidism", had a significant impact on the development of the region. The section includes portraits of the most prominent Jadids, many of whom were executed or imprisoned.



The third section of the museum covers the period of colonization of Central Asia from 1917 to 1924, including the liquidation of the Turkestan autonomy and the beginning of the repressions of the Soviet state. This section features documentary materials that reflect the process of dismantling the autonomy, which took only 72 days.







The fourth section is dedicated to the resistance movement against repression and violence, as well as armed uprisings in Central Asia. This section demonstrates how the violence of Soviet authorities led to widespread discontent and protests. The Fergana Valley stands out as a region with particularly intense and extensive conflicts. The exhibition includes a map highlighting the areas of armed conflict that began in February 1918 and continued until 1924.



The fifth section addresses the events from 1930 to 1936 and the consequences of the Soviet government's policy called "collectivization". Collectivization was the process by which individual land and other means of production were abolished and replaced with collective ownership and control, typically by the state or cooperatives. Agriculture in the Soviet Union was considered inefficient, unjust (with the exploitation of agricultural workers by landowners), and uncontrolled by the state. Soviet leaders viewed collectivization as a solution to these problems. The radical policy resulted in enormous social losses and a decline in agricultural productivity that did not return to pre-1936 levels.



The sixth section of the museum presents the events of political repression from 1929 to 1936. The increase in repression affected those who criticized Soviet ideology and reforms, deeming them unscientific and inhumane. Those who voiced opposition were sent to labor camps, where they were forced to work on large construction sites.



The seventh section provides comprehensive information about the Great Purge, also known as the Great Terror of 1937-1938. The Great Terror of 1937 was a brutal political campaign led by Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin aimed at eliminating dissenting members of the Communist Party and anyone else he deemed a threat. While estimates vary, most experts believe that during the Great Terror, which began in 1937 and ended in 1938, at least 750,000 people were executed. Over a million survivors were sent to forced labor camps known as the Gulag. This ruthless and bloody operation unleashed unchecked terror across the Soviet Union and had a lasting impact on the country for many years.





The next section is dedicated to the repressions that took place during the 1940s and 1950s. Despite the hardships of World War II, the Soviet government did not halt its repressive activities. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, a new wave of repression began, targeting progressive intellectuals, including scientists, artists, poets, and writers. These individuals, who explored the history, daily life, traditions, and spiritual heritage of the Uzbek people in their work, were accused of "idealizing the past" and nationalism. As a result, they were convicted and sentenced to long prison terms, some reaching up to 25 years.

Among the sections of the museum, the ninth section stands out with its unique design, dedicated to the Uzbek cotton scandal. In the 1980s, the Soviet regime conducted a large-scale campaign to address the consequences of falsified cotton production data after several high-ranking local officials were found guilty of these crimes. Nearly 25,000 innocent peasants were accused, and 4,500 of them were prosecuted.





The final section of the museum focuses on the restoration of national values following the country's independence in 1991. This period marked the restoration of historical justice regarding prominent figures such as Amir Timur, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, Mirzo Ulugbek, and Jalaliddin Manguberdi. Among the exhibits is a GAZ-11-73 van, used for transporting prisoners accused of treason. Additionally, the museum features 10 interactive kiosks and 9 monitors displaying rare archival materials, eyewitness testimonies, interviews, and examples of national musical heritage. These interactive elements provide an immersive historical experience, allowing visitors to not only learn the facts but also feel the emotional intensity of the repressive era.

