

Group leads the way over Ukrainianian tragedy

Memorial for millions killed in famine

by Cherry Thomas

UKRAINIANS from Bolton led a procession in London to commemorate a tragedy in which seven million people died.

They joined people from across the UK to mark the 75th anniversary of Holodomor, a famine which lasted 18 months in from 1932.

Ukrainians want the man-made famine to be recognised as genocide led by Soviet leader Josef Stalin.

Ihor Luchka and Petro Hrycaj, from Bolton, led the group from Westminster Hall to Westminster Abbey.

The procession included Ukrainians from across the UK, with three generations represented, and many participants wore national dress and black ribbons.

Bolton Ukrainians also attended and took part in a memorial concert in Westminster Hall.

Vera Tymchyshyn sang in the Bulava Chorus and her daughter, Lilya Tymchyshyn, sang in the Ukrainian Youth Association Girls choir.

Ihor Kharchenko, Ukrainian ambassador in the UK, gave awards to the relatives of journalists, Malcolm Muggerridge and Gareth Jones, who covered the incident.

Yaroslav Tymchyshyn said: "We did our duty to commemorate the seven million who lost their lives and hopefully this raised some



MEMORIAL: Petro Hrycaj, left, and Ihor Luchka lead the procession

public awareness about it. "It was a very emotional day for everyone concerned. I did not have any relatives who were directly affected but they are my fellow countrymen."

The group then moved to Westminster Abbey for Evening song and a Ukrainian Religious Service.

The Bolton Branch of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain co-ordinated the visit to the capital. It joined calls for the

Government to recognise the famine as a Soviet-enforced genocide.

The town's group is also running a petition asking Bolton Council to acknowledge the atrocity.

It will be presented on December 10, in the hope a motion can be passed.

Anyone who wants to sign the petition should go to the Ukrainian Social Club in Castle Street, The Haulgh.

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Holodomor: The facts

- The famine was caused by the actions of the Soviet authorities, under Josef Stalin. They seized farms from the peasants and created collective farms with much of the produce handed over to the state.
- They increased the grain procurement quota for Ukraine, resulting in a grain shortage.
- An internal passport system was implemented to restrict movements of Ukrainian peasants.
- Historical scholars think the famine was deliberately created to quash a rise in Ukrainian nationalism and punish Ukrainian peasants for their opposition to collectivism.
- Earlier this year the European Parliament recognized the Holodomor as a crime against humanity.