

## Mass Animal Killing for Solar Park in Portugal: Anatomy of a Misleading Revival

### Manipulative intent and objective

At the end of May 2025, Russian-language social media accounts on Facebook, VK, Telegram, and X spread a shocking photo showing hundreds of dead deer and wild animals. The caption claimed that over 500 animals were slaughtered in Portugal to clear land for a solar power plant, presented as proof of European hypocrisy and the false nature of EU environmental values.

This narrative serves a clear propagandistic purpose:

Discredit renewable energy projects by associating them with cruelty and ecological harm.

Undermine trust in European institutions and environmental activism, suggesting selective morality and paid silence of NGOs allegedly funded by Western philanthropists such as George Soros or Bill Gates.

Promote an anti-Western worldview, portraying Europe as morally corrupt and hypocritical, while framing Russia or other actors as truly humane defenders of nature.

In short, its a classical moral-shock disinformation tactic: weaponize outrage through emotionally charged imagery to trigger disgust and cynicism toward Western green initiatives.

### Why its fake

Fact-checking by Provereno, BBC, and Portuguese outlets Publico, Visao, and Portugal Resident shows that the viral photo is five years old and completely unrelated to any solar park construction.

The photo was taken in December 2020, when 16 Spanish hunters killed more than 500 deer and wild boar at a private hunting estate in Azambuja, near Lisbon.

The hunting event was organized by the Spanish company Monteros de la Cabra and immediately condemned by Portugals Environment Minister João Pedro Matos Fernandes, who called it an ecological crime.

The Institute for Nature and Forest Conservation (ICNF) launched an investigation and revoked the estates hunting license.

The incident sparked widespread outrage from Portuguese animal-rights groups and international activists in 2020 disproving claims that no eco-activists reacted.

Although a nearby area was later considered for solar-park development, no verified link was ever established between the hunting massacre and renewable-energy projects.

Journalists found that the 2025 posts recycled screenshots from a 2020 article in Portugal Resident, cutting out the publication date to make the event look recent. The framing they killed animals for green energy is therefore a manipulation built on real tragedy repurposed for disinformation.

### Bottom line

The 500 animals killed for a solar park in Portugal story is a distorted resurrection of a 2020 hunting scandal, not a 2025 environmental crime. The reused photo and removed timestamps were meant to mislead and to fuel anti-EU, anti-green-energy sentiment.

To check similar claims in the future:

Reverse-search the image and verify its publication date.

Look for coverage in local media (Portuguese in this case).

Be cautious with emotional posts linking green projects to violence or moral decay they often exploit outrage, not evidence.

Verdict: Mostly false factual base misused to push anti-European disinformation.

Manipulative intent and objective

On June 12, 2025, multiple Russian-language Facebook and Telegram accounts circulated posts claiming that the UK has, for the first time in 100 years, banned church bells following complaints from Muslims. The posts featured a screenshot allegedly from an ITV News broadcast with the caption: For the first time in 100 years, church bell ringing banned after noise complaints.

The framing exploits a classic culture war manipulation. By inserting a false religious motive into a mundane local story, propagandists aim to:

Portray the UK as surrendering its Christian traditions to Muslim minorities;

Stoke fears of Islamization and decline of European civilization;

Feed a broader anti-Western narrative depicting Europe as weak, decadent, and hostile to its own heritage.

This narrative combines emotional symbolism (church bells as cultural identity) with fabricated scapegoating (Muslims allegedly to blame), creating outrage among conservative and religious audiences both in Eastern Europe and within the UK itself.

Why its false

Fact-checking by Detector Media, ITV News, and British outlets including The Telegraph, Daily Mail, Yorkshire Live, and LBC News found no connection whatsoever to religion or Islam.

Here are the verified facts:

The incident involved a single church in West Yorkshire, not a nationwide ban.

The church's bells rang every 15 minutes, day and night. After three local residents complained about the noise, the church agreed to silence the bells between 23:00 and 07:00.

Because the old clock mechanism could not be silenced only at night, the bell ringing was temporarily paused altogether until a new mechanism could be installed.

No media outlet or official statement linked the complaints to Muslims or any religious group.

ITV News clarified that residents were working with the church to restore the bells during daytime hours far from the idea of a ban or censorship.

The viral screenshot was real but miscontextualized: it came from a legitimate ITV segment about noise complaints not about religion or multicultural conflict. Disinformation actors added the Muslim complaints framing later when reposting it on social media.

Bottom line

The claim that Britain banned church bells due to Muslim complaints is false. The story stems from a local technical issue and routine noise dispute, later weaponized online to stoke

religious hostility and cultural panic.

This case typifies how disinformation networks repurpose minor community news to fit a broader ideological script Europe under siege, Christianity silenced, traditions destroyed.

To verify such stories in the future:

Check the original broadcast or article date and location.

Search for multiple sources (BBC, ITV, local outlets).

Be wary of posts mixing real media screenshots with added inflammatory captions they often signal manipulative framing.

Verdict: False local noise issue misrepresented as anti-Christian censorship.