

Russian Communist Unveils Stalin Statue on WWII Anniversary

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Russia continues to grapple with how to treat Stalin's legacy. **bezczenn / V Kontakte**

A Russian communist businessman has unveiled a monument of Josef Stalin that local authorities dubbed illegal on the 75th anniversary of the Soviet victory in World War II.

The statue is being unveiled as Russia grapples with how to treat the Soviet leader's legacy and amid a contentious worldwide debate over which historical figures deserve to be celebrated.

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Several hundred supporters holding red flags attended the unveiling ceremony on Wednesday in the town of Bor across the river from Nizhny Novgorod, a major city 400 kilometers east of Moscow.

The concrete sculpture with a bronze finish, which residents says is the [first](#) in the Nizhny

Novgorod region, depicts Stalin standing 3 meters tall in a military coat and cap.

“This statue is a symbol of the fight against corruption in Bor,” its owner and head of the local Communist Party branch, Alexei Zorov, [said](#) at the ceremony.

Across the river, soldiers and military vehicles [paraded](#) down the Lower Volga Embankment to mark the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany in 1945 under Stalin.

Zorov said he plans to build a Stalin museum on the land he had specifically purchased for erecting the monument.

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Municipal authorities said the Stalin sculpture was installed illegally and plan to launch an inspection, the Kommersant business daily [reported](#). Zorov said that the authorities repeatedly refused to allocate land for the monument.

Stalin was repudiated by the Soviet Union after his death in 1953. He is blamed for the deaths of millions due to policies that included the forced collectivization of farms that caused famine as well as mass executions and imprisonment.

Many Russians still associate Stalin with the country's greatest achievements, including the Soviet victory in World War II. In a 2019 poll, Stalin's approval rating hit an all-time high of 70% among Russians.

President Vladimir Putin has been accused of attempting to restore Stalin's image in recent years, calling him a “complex figure.”

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