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Putin Sends Russian Puppy to Venezuelan President

By The Moscow Times

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A fully grown black Russian terrier. Putin sent his Venezuelan counterpart a three-month-old puppy of the same breed.

President Vladimir Putin sent a black puppy as a gift to Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, a news report said Thursday.

Igor Sechin, president of oil major Rosneft, handed over the three-month-old Russian terrier at a meeting with Venezuela's president and energy minister Wednesday, RIA-Novosti reported.

Sechin told the news agency that Chavez was thrilled with the gift and that he would announce its name Friday.

Rosneft has major investments in the South American country, and Sechin announced at the meeting that Rosneft would invest $16 billion in the Carabobo-2 bloc in Venezuela's oil-rich

Orinoco basin, Vedomosti reported.

The Russian terrier, also known as "Stalin's dog," is not the first pet Putin has sent or received from international counterparts.

In late January, Putin received an Akita dog during a visit by Japanese Foreign Minister Koichiro Gemba. Putin announced that he would send a Siberian cat to Japan in return.

Putin also owns a Karakachan puppy called Buffy, which he was given by Bulgarian Prime Minister Boiko Borisov in 2010, and a black labrador called Koni.

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