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Stalin Statue Erected in Ukraine As Anti-Government Protests Continue

By The Moscow Times

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A monument to Soviet dictator Josef Stalin was unveiled in western Ukraine as anti-government demonstrations in the former Soviet nation continue, local media reported.

The installation of the monument in an unspecified location in the Volhynia region was attended by local members of Ukraine's Communist Party, representatives of the Russian and Belarusian communities, members of the local Anti-Fascist Committee and other public organizations, the Comments.ua news portal reported Monday.

Commenting on the event, the Communist Party officials said Stalin was a leader who united modern Ukraine and liberated the world from fascist forces.

The head of the Anti-Fascist Committee of Volhynia called on the communists "to rise in defense of the homeland from fascism" as Ukraine is facing a "neo-Nazi uprising."

Three years ago, Ukrainian nationalists blew up a monument to Stalin in the Zaporizhia region on the territory of the regional committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine.

Meanwhile, a number of statues of Russian revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin across the country have been vandalized since early December amid ongoing protests against the government's decision to halt a landmark political and free-trade deal with the European Union and, instead, opt for stronger ties with Russia.

One of the most notable acts of vandalism took place in the capital, Kiev, on Dec. 8, when a landmark statue of the founder of the Soviet Union was torn down by pro-European protesters in symbolic defiance of Russian influence. Another statue of the Soviet leader was vandalized hours later in the southern town of Kotovsk.

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