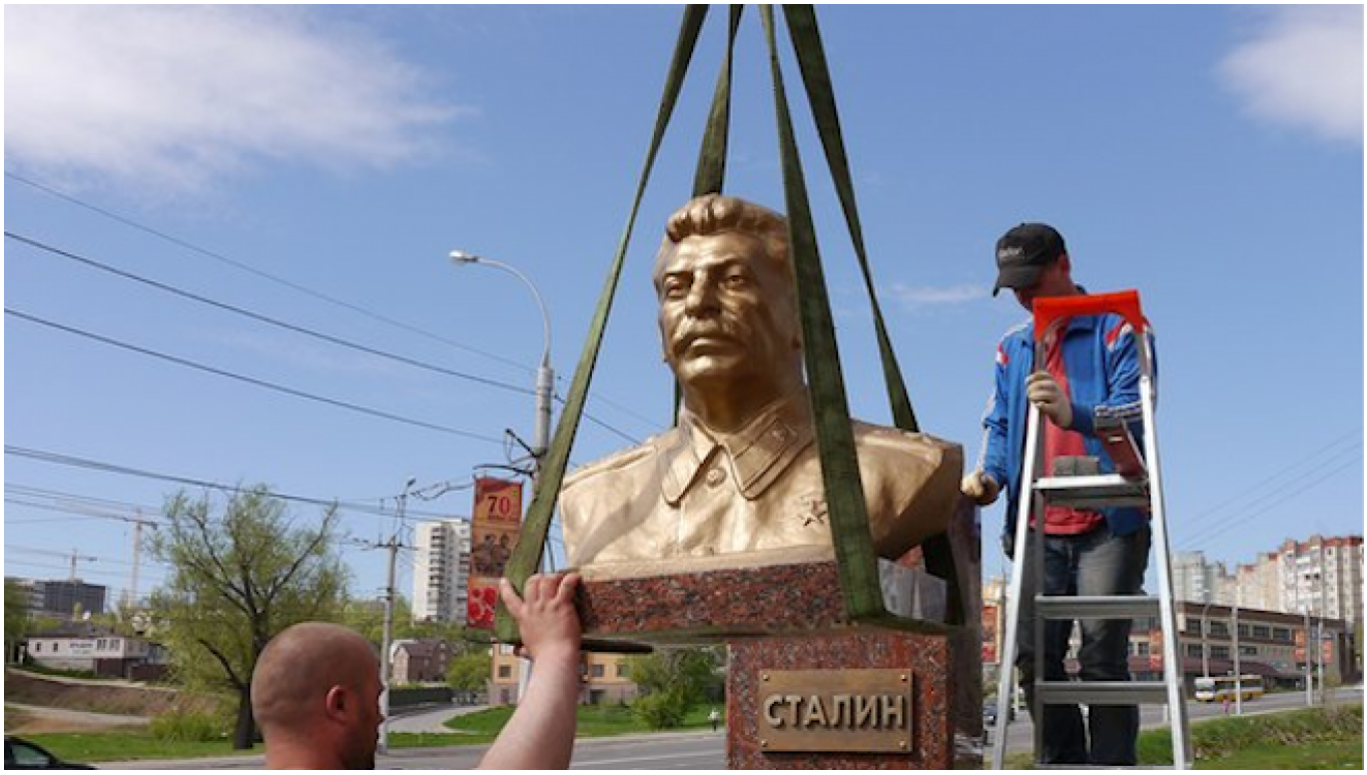
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Stalin Monument Installed in Russian Town Over Authorities' Objections

By Anna Dolgov

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A memorial to Soviet dictator Josef Stalin in Lipetsk.

A memorial to Soviet dictator Josef Stalin has been installed in the Russian town of Lipetsk in front of the local Communist Party's headquarters, despite what appear to be some objections from the City Hall, a news report said.

The three-meter-high monument topped by a bust of the dictator was a gift to the Lipetsk Communists from their fellow party members in the Russian republic of North Ossetia, Lipetsk's Gorod48 news portal reported Wednesday.

A Communist lawmaker in the State Duma national legislature, Nikolai Razvorotnev, said the Lipetsk administration had initially approved the installation, apparently to revoke the decision later, Gorod48 reported.

As the memorial was being placed outside the headquarters, Communist politicians received

a letter from Lipetsk Deputy Mayor Anna Shamayeva, saying the permit was only for installing the bust inside the building, Gorod48 reported.

"I believe the decision to somehow roll things back was belated, and had no reason to ban the installation on the street," Razvorotnev was quoted as saying. "The previous document from the mayor's office and the current one contradict each other."

Razvorotnev said that he expected the memorial to be "heaped with flowers" on the upcoming May 9 celebration of the victory in World War II, adding that should the city authorities try to dismantle the monument, "I think the people of Lipetsk will prevent them from doing so," Gorod48 reported.

"Moreover, Communists are already prepared to hold round-the-clock vigils near the memorial," he said, Gorod48 reported.

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