

New Moscow Statue of LDPR Leader Zhirinovsky To Be Dismantled

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A three-meter bronze statue of Russia's LDPR party leader, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, is to be dismantled for violating federal law.

The monument, which was unveiled at an educational institute in central Moscow on Monday, breaks Russian law by "contributing to the formation of false ideological values and the imposition of political views among students," the Gazeta.ru news website reported.

Sculptor Zurab Tsereteli created the statue to mark the 70th birthday of the nationalist politician renowned for his outrageous statements. The unveiling ceremony, which took place at the Institute of World Civilizations on First Basmanny Pereulok, was shown on all central Russian television channels and featured the national anthem of the Russian Empire, "God Save the Tsar." The institute, established by LDPR's flamboyant leader himself, may now be fined 100,000 rubles (\$1,500).

"I never thought in my life there would be a sculpture in my honor. I am not a scientist or a famous traveler, all my work is associated with the Liberal Democratic Party," the politician said during the ceremony, calling the sculpture's author the "great artist".

"For what will mankind remember this day? Without false modesty, I would say — for this ceremony," said Zhirinovsky.

Several sculpture workshops have estimated that a three-meter bronze statue would cost from 3.5 to 5 million rubles depending on the material quality and the sculptor's fee, Gazeta.ru reported. Tsereteli's representatives declined to comment, noting only that "the bronze itself could cost more than \$10,000."

Chairman of the Moscow City Duma Commission on Monumental Art, Igor Voskresensky, told Gazeta.ru that no appeals had been made regarding the statue. "If [a statue is installed on] closed territory, Moscow law can provide a site for it. If a construction is erected in an open area, it will be considered unauthorized," Voskresensky explained.

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