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Siberian Communists Unveil Stalin Monument Amid Controversy

By Reuters

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A controversial sculpture of Soviet leader Josef Stalin was unveiled in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk on Thursday.

A small black bust and two plaques were unveiled on the date Russia celebrates Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in World War II, with crowds gathering at a site where a fence and security measures will protect the memorial from vandalism.

Stalin was repudiated by the Soviet Union after his death in 1953.

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He is recognized as responsible for the deaths of millions, from policies that included the forced collectivization of farms that caused famine, and from a succession of purges that saw

mass executions and imprisonment.

But the Soviet leader during World War II is still associated by many Russians with the country's greatest achievements and Russian President Vladimir Putin has called Stalin "a complex figure."

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