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Russian Communists Aim to Build Stalin Museum

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Recent public polling showed the dictator's approval rating hitting all-time highs of 70%. **Denis Grishkin / Moskva News Agency**

Russian communists are planning to build a Josef Stalin museum as the country grapples with the Soviet dictator's legacy, a local Communist Party group said Thursday.

The Nizhny Novgorod branch said regional party leaders on May 8 plan to lay the foundation stone of the Stalin Center in the town of Bor some 450 kilometers east of Moscow. A Bor Communist Party leader unveiled a Stalin monument last summer as the rest of the country marked the 75th anniversary of the Soviet victory in World War II with military parades.

"The construction should be the first step in opening similar museums in all Russian regions," the Nizhny Novgorod regional branch of the Communist Party said in a statement.

"This will give a powerful impetus to the patriotic education of the younger generation and the fight against the falsification and rewriting of history."

The Communist Party described the future museum as “halls dedicated to different periods of the Soviet Generalissimus’ life.”

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> В Нижегородской области появится Сталин-центр https://t.co/pnz9RaIM2g pic.twitter.com/Znr8zX4jyn
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> — РИА Новости (@rianru) April 22, 2021

Russia’s Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov welcomed the construction plans, with his spokesman telling the Vedomosti business daily that there is public demand for the Stalin Center.

“There’s a Yeltsin Center as a symbol of the oligarchic liberal collapse of the country, why not think about erecting a center that will symbolize creation?” Vedomosti quoted Zyuganov’s spokesman Alexander Yushchenko as saying.

“These symbols are in demand and there’s nothing surprising in them, especially if we’re talking about funds raised by the people,” Yushchenko said.

The Soviet Union repudiated Stalin after his death in 1953, blaming him for mass imprisonment, executions and policies that led to the deaths of millions from famine.

Still, many Russians credit Stalin with defeating Nazi Germany in World War II. With President Vladimir Putin accused of attempting to restore Stalin’s image as a “complex figure,” recent public polling showed the dictator’s approval rating hitting all-time highs of 70%.

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