

Baghdad - Ibrahim Khalil, who five years ago took part in the iconic toppling of a giant statue of Saddam Hussein in central Baghdad, said on Wednesday he now regrets taking part in the hugely symbolic event.

"If history can take me back, I will kiss the statue of Saddam Hussein which I helped pull down," Khalil told reporters on the fifth anniversary of the statue's toppling.

"All my friends who were with me that day feel the same as me," Khalil told reporters in Firdoos Square, which was virtually deserted on Wednesday amid a vehicle ban in the capital imposed by the government to prevent insurgent attack.

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