Erasing Escobar: Will Colombia ban the sale of memorabilia of the drug lord?



Pablo Escobar memorabilia is widely available in Colombia

A proposed law in Colombia's Congress seeks to ban the sale of merchandise that celebrates former drug lord Pablo Escobar. But opinions are divided on it.

Erasing Escobar: Will Colombia ban the sale of memorabilia of the drug lord?

Gonzalo Rojas A young Gonzalo Rojas with his father of the same nameGonzalo RojasA young Gonzalo Rojas and his father, who was killed by Pablo EscobarA proposed law in Colombia's Congress seeks to ban the sale of merchandise that celebrates former drug lord Pablo Escobar. But opinions are divided on it.

On Monday, 27 November 1989, Gonzalo Rojas was at school in the Colombian capital of Bogota when a teacher pulled him out of class to deliver some devastating news.His father, also called Gonzalo, had died in a plane crash that morning."I remember leaving and seeing my mum and grandma waiting for me, crying," says Mr Rojas, who was just 10-years-old at the time. "It was a very, very sad day."

Minutes after take off, an explosion on board Avianca flight 203 killed the 107 passengers and crew, as well as three people on the ground who were hit by falling debris.The blast wasn't an accident. It was a deliberate bomb attack by Pablo Escobar and his Medellín cartel Erasing Escobar: Will Colombia ban the sale of memorabilia of the drug lord?

Gonzalo Rojas A young Gonzalo Rojas with his father of the same nameGonzalo RojasA young Gonzalo Rojas and his father, who was killed by Pablo EscobarA proposed law in Colombia's Congress seeks to ban the sale of merchandise that celebrates former drug lord Pablo Escobar. But opinions are divided on it. Gonzalo Rojas was at school in the Colombian capital of Bogota when a teacher pulled him out of class to deliver some devastating news.His father, also called Gonzalo, had died in a plane crash that morning."I remember leaving and seeing my mum and grandma waiting for me, crying," says Mr Rojas, who was just 10-years-old at the time. "It was a very, very sad day."

Minutes after take off, an explosion on board Avianca flight 203 killed the 107 passengers and crew, as well as three people on the ground who were hit by falling debris.The blast wasn't an accident. It was a deliberate bomb attack by Pablo Escobar and his Medellín cartel.While an era defined by drug wars, bombings, kidnappings and a sky high murder rate has largely been relegated to Colombia's past, Escobar's legacy has not.

The notorious criminal, who was killed by security forces in 1993, has achieved a near cult-like status around the world, immortalised in books, music and TV productions like the Netflix series Narcos. Colombia itself, his name and face are adorned on mugs, keychains, and t-shirts in tourist shops catering mainly to curious visitors.But a proposed law in Colombia's Congress is seeking to change this.