

'Cinderella' Sparks Time Zone Feud

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Even Cinderella can't escape censorship.

Kamchatka region officials have come down hard on a theatrical performance based on Charles Perrault's 17th-century rendition of "Cinderella" after declaring that it mocks the authorities, a former Kamchatka governor said.

Local officials say a scene where the king sets the clock back an hour to keep Cinderella at the ball is in fact poking fun at the Kremlin's plans to set the local time zone one hour closer to Moscow — a move opposed by many residents, former Governor Mikhail Mashkovtsev said in an interview Tuesday.

The officials also disliked references to the slow and sub-par reconstruction of the local state-owned theater where "Cinderella" is being performed that were added to Perrault's classic play, he said.

Kamchatka administration spokeswoman Guzel Latypova dismissed the allegations as

“absurd” and “nonsense” when reached by phone.

But several of the actors in the play and numerous bloggers confirmed Mashkovtsev's account of the dispute.

“I got credible information from several of my friends in the city and performers who I keep in touch with,” Mashkovtsev said by phone from St. Petersburg, where he moved after leaving office in 2007.

The performance, “A New Year's Cocktail for Cinderella,” which targets adults, not children, premiered days before New Year's at a theater in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, the region's capital.

Deputy Governor Irina Tretyakova attended a performance Friday and criticized several scenes, calling them “inappropriate” and saying they evoked “unhealthy emotions,” Mashkovtsev said.

On hearing Tretyakova's report, Governor Alexei Kuzmitsky ordered the cancellation of the next performance on Saturday, Tatyana Artemyeva, who plays Cinderella's stepmother, [told](#) Business FM radio on Tuesday.

Artemyeva said the cancellation was later lifted, but local officials revised the script of the play — although the actors ignored the changes during Saturday's show.

A final performance is scheduled for Thursday, but it remains unclear whether it will take place.

“It's clear that the show must go on. Otherwise the situation would look idiotic,” Arkady Khozyaichev, the actor who plays the role of king, [wrote](#) on Mashkovtsev's blog on Tuesday.

Mashkovtsev said he worried that the actors would get into trouble. “Now I fear that the actors will face repressions,” he said.

Repeated phone calls to the theater went unanswered, but its management told Itar-Tass that the show was going on without censorship. The theater's [web site](#) contains no official statement on the issue, but it has published a word-for-word account of the dispute from Mashkovtsev's blog.

Mashkovtsev, 64, a member of the Communists of Russia movement, served as Kamchatka's governor from 2000 to 2007, when he resigned amid the merger of the region and the Koryak autonomous district.

President Dmitry Medvedev has spearheaded an effort to slice an hour off time zones in an effort to stimulate the economy and make governing easier. But many residents of the affected regions — including Samara, Kemerovo, Irkutsk, Primorye, Chukotka and Udmurtia — say the change threatens to boost crime rates and people's depression.

Some 3,000 people rallied in Kamchatka last month to protest the proposed time change.

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