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South Korean Leader Says Putin Has 'Soul of a Siberian Tiger'

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South Korea's president Moon Jae-in and Vladimir Putin **Kremlin Press Service**

South Korea's president described Vladimir Putin as embodying the "spirit of a Siberian tiger" in a speech at the Eastern Economic Forum in in the Russian Far East on Thursday.

"Many believe that your spirit, Mr. President, is that of an Amur tiger," President Moon Jae-in said at the forum's plenary session.

Moon said the "vast forests and vistas" he had flown over en route to the two-day event in Vladivostok in eastern Russia reminded him of the Siberian tiger, which used to range throughout Northeast Asia, he said, "from the Siberian plains to the Korean hills."

"Koreans, since time immemorial, believe the tiger to be a sacred animal."

He noted that part of the name Moon Jae-in also translates as "tiger" from Korean, "and one may say that we're look-alikes in terms of courage and valiancy."

The Amur tiger, also called the Siberian tiger, is a protected species in Russia. Conservation

efforts have helped grow its population nearly twofold in a decade in the country's Far East.

"If we worked together in the Far East jointly, we would be able to succeed, wouldn't we?" Moon Jae-in said to Putin.

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