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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Holiday Characters Brave Arctic Blizzard to Light New Year's Tree

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Nothing can break the New Year's spirit of Russian Santa Claus and his friends — not even a fierce Siberian blizzard.

The annual lighting of the New Year's tree in Tiksi, one of the world's northernmost settlements located in the republic of Sakha, took place Tuesday despite wind gusts reaching 34 miles per second (122 kilometers per hour), according to The Siberian Times.

Embed:

> Xmas trees are traditionally lit up all around Yakutia, Russia's coldest inhabited region on 1 December. This year's tree ceremony at the port of Tiksi was held at the gusts of wind reaching 34m/s (122km/h) pic.twitter.com/Vm4pGIYInn
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> — The Siberian Times (@siberian_times) December 1, 2020

Ded Moroz, Russia's version of Santa Claus, and Chyskhan, the half-human, half-bull Lord of the Cold who is native to Sakha, joined forces with several other costumed characters to light the tree in the name of the holiday spirit.

In video footage from the ceremony at the port of Tiksi, sounds of cheer can barely be heard over the wind as the operator tells the characters to stand closer together.

The tree was reportedly placed on an iron stand that was specially designed to withstand even the harshest winter winds. Local authorities plan to install five or six more trees throughout the city before the New Year holiday.

“Usually the Christmas trees don’t stand long enough: they are blown away by the wind. Therefore, this year we will install them closer to the New Year in order to have time to admire them," Usachev told the local News.Ykt.Ru news outlet.

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