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Russian Regions Cancel New Year's Office Parties to Support Soldiers in Ukraine

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New Year decorations in Ulan-Ude. **Zorikto Dagbaev / newbur.ru**

Officials in Russia's Far East republic of Buryatia and Siberian republic of Sakha (Yakutia) have announced they will forgo New Year's office parties, redirecting the funds to support Russian troops in Ukraine.

Extravagant New Year's celebrations, a staple of the Russian holiday season, have already been scaled back or canceled across much of the country since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

"It's wrong for public administrators and local governments to hold such events when the country is conducting a special military operation," the Buryatia regional government said Tuesday, using the Kremlin's term for the war in Ukraine.

The Buryatia government urged local authorities to allocate the savings from canceled celebrations to military needs.

In Sakha, the region's head, Aysen Nikolayev, also opted out of hosting a New Year's party and encouraged other officials to do the same.

"All our thoughts should be for the brave fighters who valiantly defend the interests of our country in the special military operation," Sakha's deputy head Georgy Mikhailov said.

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Despite the cutbacks, children's celebrations and public New Year's events will continue as planned in both regions, the governments said.

Other Russian regions and cities announced earlier this month that they would skip traditional New Year's festivities in favor of donating the funds to the military, according to the Vedomosti business newspaper.

The Volga republic of Chuvashia will forgo fireworks displays, instead hosting events with a "special focus" on soldiers' children, according to its head Oleg Nikolayev.

Leningrad region Governor Alexander Drozdenko announced plans to curtail concerts and celebrations in favor of supporting the war effort, while Bashkortostan leader Radiy Khabirov recommended postponing New Year's parties "until better times."

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