

The harsh life in Norilsk, which is isolated from the world: Not only is the climate cold but also the most polluted place on the planet

Norilsk is a city isolated from the world, restrained from tourists and built on the ruins of a labor camp.

The Norilsk city of Siberia is a city in the northernmost part of Russia. Located about 320 km from the North Pole, this city is not only a cold climate but also the most polluted place in Russia. It was an isolated place, restricted from tourists and built on the ruins of a labor camp.



However, 177,000 people still choose to live in this city. That makes Norilsk the largest city in the North Pole.

Here, the average annual temperature is about -10 degrees C. The lowest level of this city record is -53 degrees C. In winter, many people can not wait at the bus stop for fear of being freeze to death.

About 3 months in a year, the Sun almost does not appear, making this city in darkness. But around June and July, the sun appears 24/7, making the city always bright as day.

The city with the most valuable metal mines in the world

Despite the harsh climate, deep in the layers of soil buried in snow, Norilsk contains a lot of rare metal ores. Those are the most valuable metal mines in the world. Norilsk is also one of the largest producers of nickel and palladium. Palladium is a type of compound used in electronics and is a valuable mineral, about 35 million VND / 1 ounce (28g).



The city was officially founded in 1935 under Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. Between 1935 and 1953, an estimated 650,000 prisoners were exiled here to mine metal ores beneath the permafrost. The prisoners at that time worked 14 hours a day without labor safety equipment.

One survivor recounted: *"It was hard work. We had no days off, unless the temperature dropped to around -50 degrees Celsius."*



Many prisoners died of hunger, cold, metal poisoning and exhaustion. There are some people who are so desperate that they commit suicide so they don't have to work in this harsh environment anymore.

About 250,000 prisoners have died. The prison system is currently closed and no foreign nationals are allowed to visit the area.

Daily life in "Where the world ends"

In the winter, most activities in this city take place indoors. People living in Norilsk often consider their city an "island" and the rest of Russia as "mainland". It wasn't until 2017 that the city had internet access.

In the summer, life in this city is a little easier. However, the melting ice does not give Norilsk a true summer.



Citizens in Norilsk are often descended from exiles and hard labor. They still live here because it is hard to leave the city and find another job. Some people come here to settle in the hope of having a desired high salary.

Some locals who have the opportunity to leave Norilsk often don't want to go back. A 30-year-old resident was asked by The New York Times how he felt going to other parts of Russia and received the reply: *"I really don't want to go back to Norilsk and I'm ready to give anything to not have to return."*

Besides, there are still Norilsk residents who are proud of their ability to thrive in such a harsh place.



Norilsk is located separately from Russia. To get here, people have to take a ship or plane for hours. Because it seems to live in the "end of the world," people here spend most of their time in enclosed spaces at work, at home in their apartments, or in entertainment and center centers. local shopping.

The most polluted city in Russia

Metal mining has made the environment heavily polluted. Because of the high concentration of sulfur dioxide produced in the smelting process in the air, Norilsk is not only Russia's most polluted city but also one of the 10 most polluted cities on the planet.



In the summer, air pollution makes it difficult for the city to breathe because of toxic gases

Emission emissions have killed the vegetation. In 2016, a spill from nickel plants turned the nearby Daldykan into bloody red. Death from respiratory disease is also higher here than elsewhere. Besides the cancer and psychology of the residents here.



The city soon followed suit to reduce polluting emissions. In 2016, Norilsk Nickel Co., Ltd closed its old smelter in 1942, the largest emitter of toxic gases. This has had a positive impact when, by 2019, sulfur dioxide emissions have decreased by nearly 200,000 tons.

Despite this, the city still produces the largest amount of toxic gas in the world. Norilsk is currently spending about \$ 3.5 billion to help modernize the mine and clean up emissions.

(According to allthatsinteresting, meduza)

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