

Kurils Governor Unveils \$570M Additional Development Funds

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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REIDOVO, Kuril Islands — The federal government intends to assign 16 billion rubles (\$570 million) in additional funds for the development of the Kuril Islands, Sakhalin Governor Alexander Khoroshavin said.

The announcement comes on the heels of Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov's controversial visit to the islands on Sunday.

Thirteen billion rubles will be assigned from federal coffers and 3 billion rubles from the local budget, he said at a conference reviewing the implementation of the federal program of the social and economic advancement of the islands for 2007–15.

The main directions of the program are the development of transportation infrastructure, the social sector and energy sector on the islands. The region also expects to attract private investment in advancing the islands, the governor added.

Khoroshavin said private investors could take interest in such sectors as sea biological resources, tourism and others.

During his visit, Ivanov said the Kuril Islands should develop a geothermal power grid. "It is necessary to develop geothermal power plants and to build more power plants here. We cannot use diesel fuel and coal forever," he said.

Ivanov said his working trip to the Kuril Islands aimed to check the fulfillment of the federal program. "This is my third visit to the southern Kurils. I like the local nature very much, but I strongly disliked the socioeconomic condition and living standards on the islands from the very start. In fact, there are no living standards here at all," Ivanov said.

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