

Putin Suggests \$440M in Baltiisky Shipyard Orders

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Putin, Kozak and other officials viewing a model while visiting the Baltiisky Shipyard in St. Petersburg on Friday. **Yana Lapikova**

Shipyard Baltiisky Zavod could get state orders of 135 billion rubles (\$438 million), Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said while visiting the facility Friday.

The St. Petersburg-based shipyard during the visit signed orders for 18 billion rubles to build three diesel-powered icebreakers and the body for two Mistral-class helicopter carriers. It will receive the proceeds of the contracts through a new legal entity to protect the money from its creditors, who are owed 15 billion rubles, Putin said.

The prime minister backed a rescue plan for the yard, proposed by Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak, in which the yard be declared bankrupt and a new entity be created to which employees will be transferred.

Labor union leaders asked the prime minister to avoid bankruptcy if possible in order to “preserve the yard’s image.” But Putin indicated that he thought bankruptcy was the only solution.

“We’re doing this so that not a kopek goes toward paying for any dodgy scheme and doesn’t end up in the pockets of those responsible for getting the company in this state,” the prime minister said.

During the visit, Putin also took the opportunity to urge voters to unite behind the government and not allow domestic politics to turn into a “circus.”

“If people want to see a show then they should go to the circus, theater or the movies,” he said before laughing and shaking hands with a shipyard worker dressed in overalls.

But shipyard team leader Alexander Bakunin said delays to his salary over recent months have marked the worst period in his life since the fall of the Soviet Union 20 years ago.

“Honestly, I do not know who to vote for. They have all been lying to us,” he said after meeting Putin at the 150-year-old shipyard, where some equipment dates back to the 19th century.

The Baltiisky Zavod may get additional state orders of 117 billion rubles through 2020 to build atomic icebreakers, Putin said.

✎(*Bloomberg, Reuters, Interfax*)

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