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Krasnodar Floods Land 4 Officials in Hot Water

By The Moscow Times

November 26, 2012



Four Krasnodar region officials have been charged with criminal negligence for failing to adequately warn residents and undertake measures to prevent damage from flash floods on July 6 and 7, investigators said Tuesday.

Krymsk Mayor Vladimir Ulanovsky, former Krymsk district chief Vasily Krutko and former Nizhnebakansk head Irina Ryabchenko were additionally charged with forgery for "ordering subordinates to fabricate official documents about purportedly timely actions," the Investigative Committee said in a statement.

Viktor Zhdanov, acting head of the Krymsk district emergency situations department, was additionally charged with fraud for attempting to receive damage compensation payments for himself, even though his residence was "not only unharmed but was beyond the flood zone," the statement said.

The four officials' failure to properly notify residents about the imminent threat of flash flooding, as well as organize a timely evacuation and undertake damage prevention measures, "led to the deaths of 153 people," the statement said.

If convicted, Ulanovsky, Krutko and Ryabchenko face a maximum of four years behind bars. Zhdanov faces up to six years. Ulanovsky, Krutko and Zhdanov are currently in police custody, whereas Ryabchenko has been released under pledge not to leave town.

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