

Putin Orders Creation of Commission to Fight Floods

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 27, 2013



A sign reading "Happy travels!" in flood-stricken Khabarovsk, where water continues to rise after evacuations. **Ivan Nechepurenko**

As much of the Far East remained under water Tuesday after weeks of heavy rainfall and flooding, President Vladimir Putin announced the creation of a government commission to issue flood warnings and manage clean-up efforts in any future disasters.

The announcement came shortly after Vladimir Pysin, deputy presidential envoy to the Far East Federal District, said the overall damage to the area would likely amount to more than 30 billion rubles (\$902.8 million), Interfax reported.

According to the Energy Ministry, 35 villages in the Khabarovsk and Amur regions and the Jewish autonomous region remained without power Tuesday, leaving an estimated 5,000 people without electricity after flooding forced authorities to shut down local power plants.

At a meeting Tuesday in the republic of Khakasia devoted to the development of the electric power industry in the Far East, Putin called on officials to do all they could to restore buildings belonging to the power industry as quickly as possible, Gazeta.ru reported.

He also said that before officials issue compensation to owners of buildings located outside the safety zone, they should determine which government agency gave permission for construction in that area.

Alexander Frolov, head of Roshydromet, an agency within the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry, said at a separate meeting that the water level of the Amur River would be maintained at 750 to 780 centimeters, Interfax reported.

The number of those affected by the flooding has now reached more than 98,000 people, with more than 10,000 homes damaged, Far East Development Minister Viktor Ishayev said.

As of 4 p.m. local time Tuesday, the level of the Amur River in Khabarovsk had risen to 736 centimeters, although its rise was slowing, according to the Emergency Situations Ministry.

Ishayev estimated that parts of the Khabarovsk region would remain under water for another month.

In the Amur region, the situation was more stable Tuesday, with the water level gradually falling.

Torrential rainfall began in the Far East in late July, causing water levels in local rivers to rise dramatically, including in the Zeya, a major tributary of the Amur River.

States of emergency were declared in the Primorye and Khabarovsk regions, the republic of Sakha and the Jewish autonomous region.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/08/27/putin-orders-creation-of-commission-to-fight-floods-a27136>