

Medvedev Heading Far East Commission

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev announced Thursday that he would head a new government commission for development of Russia's Far East following record floods in several regions.

"It is about the development of the whole area, not just the elimination of the disaster's aftermath. Of course, one thing is impossible without the other," Medvedev said during a Cabinet meeting Thursday.

The country's vast Far East has been in the spotlight in recent weeks after being inundated with floods that meteorologists have called the worst in 120 years. The disaster, which led to the evacuation of tens of thousands of people, prompted President Vladimir Putin to earlier this week appoint a new Far East development minister, Alexander Galushka, replacing Viktor Ishayev, who was dismissed last month after the president criticized him as ineffective.

Medvedev called on government officials to work on the flood problem so that such disasters could be handled more effectively in future. But it was not immediately clear how Medvedev's new Far East commission's responsibilities would be shared with the ministry in charge of the

territory as well as the newly appointed presidential envoy to the Far East, Yury Trutnev, a former Putin aide who is now the deputy prime minister responsible the region.

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