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Dozens of Animals Trapped After Flood in Russia's Far East

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Fourteen bears, a lion, three wolfdogs, a wild cat and two boars were trapped in their cages when a zoo flooded in the Russian far eastern Primorye region, the TASS news agency reported Monday, citing local authorities.

The animals have spent more than a day submerged in water after the neighboring river flooded the private zoo in the town of Ussuriysk on Sunday. Smaller and less dangerous species were evacuated by police and rescuers, the report said.

Meanwhile, some wolves, foxes and goats drowned, as well as a bear named Masyanya, famous for participating in the recent City Day festivities, reported Russian government daily Rossiiskaya Gazeta.

“The animals haven't eaten or slept for several days now, they're exhausted and dying of fatigue,” Sergei Asnovin, the director of the zoo in the city of Vladivostok that was ready to accommodate the rescued animals, was cited by TASS as saying Monday.

By the end of the day, volunteers had managed to install wooden pedestals in several cages for

the bears to stand above the water level, local news website VI.ru reported. Rescuers have also started to pump out the water, according to the NTV channel.

Local officials claim the only recourse is to feed the animals. “It is impossible to take them out of the cages at the moment — all the entrances are flooded, and there's no possibility of lifting the cages from the pedestals,” an unidentified official was cited by the news agency as saying Monday.

Yury Trutnev, deputy prime minister and presidential envoy to the far eastern federal district, holds the zoo owners responsible and ordered the evacuation of the animals. Criminal cases into the situation have been launched.

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