The Moscow Times
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Wildfire Emergencies Declared in Russia's Far East Republics of Tyva, Sakha

July 01, 2024



Russian Emergencies Ministry

Authorities in Russia's Siberian and Far East republics of Tyva and Sakha (Yakutia) have declared states of emergency due to summer wildfires raging across the regions.

Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry said 75 people died and 2,200 were evacuated from more than 500 active wildfires across the country in the past week. Over two-thirds of these fires have been recorded in 18 regions in Russia's Far East.

More than 100 wildfires spanning more than 300,000 hectares are currently active in Sakha, which declared a regional state of emergency last month. Monday's Emergency Situations Ministry statement elevates the threat to a federal level, unlocking additional firefighting resources.

In Tyva, regional leader Vladislav Khovalyg said 23 active wildfires spanning 1,700 hectares

prompted his administration to declare a state of emergency.

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Local firefighters have been recalled from neighboring regions, Khovalyg said, adding that he has asked colleagues to send their crews to help the effort.

“July promises to be the most difficult month in terms of the fire situation. But we have to fight for every hectare of forest,” he wrote on Telegram.

Russia’s wildfire season started in early March, with twice as many fires recorded by mid-April as over the same period in 2023 and human negligence thought to be the most likely cause.

Officials say more than 2.3 million hectares of forest have burned in Russia since the start of 2024, the highest since 2020.

Experts have warned that limited resources for fire prevention and control, along with ongoing practices such as dry grass burning, risk turning this year’s wildfire season in Russia into a crisis.

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https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/07/01/wildfire-emergencies-declared-in-russias-far-east-republics-of-tyva-sakha-a85571