

Tear in dike along Oder River sends sandbaggers scrambling

BAD FEREINWALDE, Germany (AP) — The surging Oder River tore through an earthen dike Monday in eastern Germany, sending soldiers scrambling to patch the latest break before water could engulf the villages behind them.

Authorities said the 15,000 remaining residents of the rural, lowland Oderbruch region northeast of Berlin were not in immediate danger.

But after nearly two weeks of record-high water, "the dikes are melting away practically before our eyes," said Michael Muth, head of the crisis staff for Brandenburg state.

The rain-swollen Oder, which forms the border between Poland and Germany, started flooding this month in what quickly became Central Europe's worst flood in two centuries.

Flooding in Poland and the Czech Republic has killed about 100 people; there have been no deaths in Germany, which had more time to prepare.

Authorities evacuated 5,000 people from the Oderbruch area last week and have told another 9,000 to be ready to go at a moment's notice. On Tuesday, a second flood wave from Poland is expected to crash up against the 5 million sandbags piled on the 100-mile dike.

"If the dikes stand against that, then most of it's over," Muth said.

Brandenburg state Environment Minister Matthias Platzeck said it already appeared that second flood wave

would not hit as hard as first estimated.

Petra Moewis left her home along with the 280 other residents of the town of Neukuestrinchen last week, but slipped back in Monday to rescue a couple of chairs.

"The wait is grueling," she said. "If everything goes under now, we're ruined. All we have left is just hope."

Just to the north, a section of dike gave way again Monday, three days after it had been patched. Hundreds of soldiers were repairing the damage.

Muth said Germany's sand reserves were depleted and more was being shipped from Holland and Scandinavian countries. Forestry workers bundled twigs to put under the sandbags to keep them from sinking in the muck.

Brandenburg Interior Minister Alwin Ziel said he expected no evacuation would be necessary for Frankfurt an der Oder, a border city of 80,000 about 50 miles east of Berlin.

But just across the river, Slubice, Poland, appeared a ghost town after 17,000 residents were ordered out of their homes as a precaution, and street-level stores and apartments were cleared.

The Polish shore is 3 to 10 feet lower than the German side.


About 2,000 people defied the evacuation order; they were allowed to stay after signing a release, said Krzysztof Pomes, flood headquarters spokesman in Warsaw.

aus: Jackson Hole Daily

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- regionale Tageszeitung im US -
Bundesstaat Wyoming -

Hallo lieber Peter,
hier leider etwas verspätet für eure
Oder - Überschwemmungsausstellung im
Zeitungsbericht aus den USA.
Vielleicht könnt Ihr ihn doch noch
einbauen.
Vielen Dank für die Freiburg

Viele Grüße




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