

## June 22. 1941 – June 22. 2021

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80 years ago started the most terrible and bloody war in the history of our country. It was the Great Patriotic War (The Second World War).

The first day of the war was met in the Far East Regions in different ways.

The geographical position of the Far East of Russia gave the citizens of the region some more peaceful hours. Bursting of bombs and projectiles on the west borders of USSR at 4 a.m. notified about the beginning of the war. Most parts of the Soviet Union population learned about the beginning of the war (the attack of Hitler Germany) from a radio broadcast on Sunday afternoon, June 22. And the Far East citizens could live peacefully till the evening.



The first official announcement was broadcast at 12.15 in Vladivostok and at 21.15 in Kamchatka.

In the Pacific Navy staff, the news about Germany's attack was known much earlier. They got the code about the fighting readiness at 9 a.m. by Vladivostok time from Moscow. So not all citizens and military men could enjoy peaceful life till the evening.

### **Amur Region and the Jewish Autonomous Region**

The first not secret information about the beginning of the Great Patriotic War was got in Blagoveschensk, the capital of Amur Oblast. It was a TASS telegraph message about the beginning of the war for the newspaper “Amurskaya Pravda”. It was taken by the telegraphist Aleftina Melnikova on the 22 June in 1941 at about 6 p.m. by local time. Aleftina Melnikova send the message to Khabarovsk and Vladivostok and then cried loudly: “German! German have attacked us!”.

Today the telegraph device Morze on which the news about the beginning of the war was taken is kept in Amursky Regional Museum of Local Lore.

Birobidzhan, the capital of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast was at that time a small village with 30 inhabitants. The news about the beginning of the war they learned from radio broadcasting. It happened on the corner of Lenin and October streets. The eye-witnesses of that time remembered the alarm sirens of steam locomotives after the radio broadcasting.

### **Khabarovsk Krai**

On Sunday 22 June 1941, there was a Moscow Puppet Theatre and a troupe of Max Borisov on tour in Khabarovsk. Max Borisov was considered to be the most famous Lion-tamer of that time. In the oldest cinema, “Sovkino” (on Muravjev-Amursky Street) was shown the film “MakarNechay”. But the end of the day finished in a different way.



Natalya Egorovna Smirnova remembered: “At 7 p.m. on 22 June in the square near the loudspeaker the crowd was gathering. I and my friend came up nearby. We heard the speech of Molotov. He said about the attack of Germany on our country. There were no panic and emotions. It was difficult to believe that the war had started.”

Long before 22 June, 1941 Khabarovsk became a front-line city. On the eve of the war, the higher command of the red army had reported to Stalin: “The Soviet

Union needs to be ready to fight on 2 fronts: In the West – against Germany and in the East – against Japan as an open enemy or an adversary holding a position of armed neutrality, which can always go over to open collision...”

That’s why the beginning of the Great Patriotic War in Khabarovsk Krai turned out to be the start of the defending actions.

### Vladivostok and Primorye

22 June 1941 was sunny and warm. The eye-witnesses remembered that a very unusual funny American comedy was shown in the cinema “Ussuri” in Svetlanskaya street. They couldn't remember the comedy name but the moment when the light in the cinema hall was switched on the scream: “Men, anybody out! Primarily – the military ones”. In the street, they heard the speech of Molotov which was broadcasted on the loudspeaker: “Today, at 4 a.m without any claims to the Soviet Union, without any declaration of the war the German Army attacked our country...”



At that time the telephone connection was rare, radio also was not everywhere could be heard alarm sirens. So for the military men who were far from Vladivostok, was created an original system of signaling. In the case of alarm, an old bomber D.B flew up in the sky. It was colored in bright red. That time a plane was rear and it was an object of sincere admiration, everybody from the youngest to the eldest follow the flying machine. And it was not difficult to notice the bright-red plane in the clear evening sky on 22 June 1941. Thus the red

plane brought the alarm signal even to those who were far from Vladivostok and other settlements of Primorye.

### **Yakutia and Magadan**

Primorsky and Khabarovsk Krai though far from the fighting actions felt anxiety because of near borders of militant Japan. Lands of extreme North were situated very far from war danger (thousands km).

In Magadan the day 22 June 1941 was remembered as the day of opening the first city park of culture and rest. The event was solemnly celebrated at noon by the local time. In the evening, a new film "The wind from the East" was shown about the joining of west Ukraine to the USSR.

The premiere of the film had already been shown in Moscow in February 1941 but it came to Magadan only in June. While the spectators were watching the film "The wind from the East", winds from the west brought the news about the beginning of the war. It was 9 p. m. in Magadan. Thousands of citizens came to the newly opened park. The spontaneous meeting was finished at 2 a.m. on 23 of June.

### **Sakhalin**

Evening 22 June 1941. The regional Drama Theatre in Alexandrovsk-Sakhalinsky (It was the capital of Sakhalin at that time). At the stage was a new performance "Vasilisa Melentyeva" by A. Ostrovsky. The 3 act was interrupted by the speech of Molotov about the attack of Germany. In such a way, the people of Sakhalin learned about the beginning of the war.

In 1941 only the north part of Sakhalin belonged to Russia. The south part was Japanese territory (after the Russian-Japan war). At that time the extract of oil was not produced in Siberia, Tatarstan, and Bashkiria. So the North Sakhalin and the Caucasus were the main sources of "the Black gold" in the USSR. That's why the main theme of the meeting was oil after they had got terrible news about the war." Let's give more oil for our warships, tanks, and planes!"

It is no coincidence that the construction of a strategic oil pipeline from the island to the mainland will soon be called "the Sakhalin front" by local residents.

In remote villages of the north, Sakhalin people learned about the war only in a day."22 June 1941 we had graduation ball. I kissed the girl for the first time. I was absolutely happy and full of life."-remember the last peaceful day Nikolai Aseev, a graduator of that time from the village Mgachi not far from Alexandrovsk-Sakhalinski. Four years later he came back to the native village on crutches because of serious injury in the battle on Germany's border.



**The guides, students of the 8th grade, tell how residents of the Far Eastern regions learned about the beginning of the war.**

**Kamchatka and Chukotka.**

These territories geographically were the most distant from the war. That time it was one united region - “Chukotsky national okrug”. It was a part of Kamchatka’s oblast and at the same time a part of Khabarovsk Krai. People of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski met the 22d of June 1941 walking on Nikolskaya sopka (hill). In the morning there came schooner “Nazim” to the bay of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky. It was dealing with the sea hunting trade in the Sea of Okhotsk. At that moment nobody knew that the ship would blow up on a sea mine in 1945.

All regions of the Far East were working for the Soviet Army supplying food and ammunition to the front. Till late evening on the 22d of June 1941, nobody knew about the war. For those who couldn’t hear the information about it the radio and the newspaper “Kamchatskaya Pravda” published a special leaflet with the heading “Give the fight to the enemy”. But in small villages of the west seaside people recognized it only on the 24th of June because there was no radio there. In Chukotka, they learned about it even later. In the bay “Providence” they learned about the beginning of the war at 10 p.m. 22 of June. It was thanks to the

radio –operators of the ice-breaker “Krasin”. It was waiting for a new arctic expedition there.

To the Far East settlements of Chukotka, the terrible news was getting for some days. They learned about it only on June 27 in 1941.



Museum exhibits. Central newspapers of the period

The Great Patriotic War