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APEC Road Closed Again After Wall Collapses

By The Moscow Times

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State-run Channel One broadcast images of the collapsed retaining wall in Vladivostok's Pervomaisky district.

Primorye police closed a stretch of highway built for this month's Asia-Pacific Cooperation Summit after a retaining wall supporting the road collapsed, news reports said Monday.

The road closure, which occurred late Sunday in Vladivostok's Pervomaisky district, followed a landslide that caused bedrock underlying the wall to move, RIA-Novosti reported, citing a source in the regional administration.

Igor Peterimov, acting head of the Primorye region's road maintenance department, told RBC that the contractor responsible for the affected section of the Novy-Patrokl road would finish reconstruction work within a week.

Authorities closed a section of the same road in June after heavy rains damaged a separate

retaining wall and swamped several private garages. At the time, officials blamed the damage on building contractors' failure to install adequate drainage after Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev ordered those responsible to be punished.

Unlike in June, however, the road surface was not damaged Sunday, and a nearby gas pipeline remained intact, according to the news agency.

The source added that police were redirecting traffic and that emergency workers and administration officials quickly arrived on the scene to monitor the situation. Prosecutors are running a check into the incident, in which there were no casualties.

Sunday's road closure is the latest embarrassment for Primorye region officials, who have been accused of misspending billions of rubles of federal money in the buildup to the APEC summit, which finished Sep. 9.

The entire Novy-Patrokl road was constructed at a cost of 29 billion rubles ($950 million), RBC reported, 21 billion rubles of which came from federal coffers.

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