

Kyrgyz Freeze as Gas and Power Supplies Run Short

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BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan — Thousands of households in the capital of Kyrgyzstan have been hit by gas and electricity shortages just as temperatures dropped to around minus 20 Celsius.

Residents of Bishkek and nearby towns, including Kant, which houses a Russian air base, struggled Tuesday for the fifth straight day to keep homes warm.

The shortages are fraying nerves in the cash-starved Central Asian nation, which also hosts a U.S. air base and has struggled to maintain stability since the previous president was overthrown in an uprising in 2010.

Energy Minister Avtandil Kalmambetov said neighboring Kazakhstan is delivering only about 60 percent of the natural gas it promised.

Failure in gas deliveries pushes people into using more electricity for heating, which in turn leads to blackouts.

(AP)

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