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Ice Storms in Russia's Far East Prompt State of Emergency

By AFP

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Photos and videos showed everything from apartment buildings to road signs to public transport covered in ice. **Yuri Smityuk / TASS**

Freak ice storms following an abnormal weather phenomenon have left 150,000 people without water and electricity in the far eastern Russian city of Vladivostok and prompted a state of emergency.

The exceptional weather brought down cables and trees with the government of the Primorye region declaring a state of emergency.

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> Aftermath of a snow and ice storm in Vladivostok, Russia. Around 148,000 homes were without power. pic.twitter.com/i4LLDstISb

— BBC Weather (@bbcweather) November 20, 2020

"The situation with the electricity supply remains very difficult — the destruction is widespread," the regional administration's deputy head Elena Parkhamenko said.

She said it could take "several days" to restore power.

Freezing rain began pummelling the city of some 600,000 people overnight Thursday after a cyclone carrying hot air met an anticyclone carrying cold air, Boris Kubay, a local weather service official said.

He said in some places the resulting ice was 12 millimeters thick — something not observed in the region in 30 years.

Photos and videos published by local authorities and on social media showed everything from apartment buildings to road signs to public transport covered in ice.

Video footage from a security camera showed a man moving away from his car at the last second as he was cleaning ice from its windshield before a block came crashing down from the side of a building.

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