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Crypto's Carbon Costs: Eurasia Feels the Heat

Eurasian Climate Brief

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On 25 January, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan suffered from a mysterious series of electricity power outages, plunging the region into chaos. For several hours, skiers lay perched on lifts and planes grounded while traffic lights, heating district and tap water pumps ran idle. The incident comes after Kazakhstan, the world's second largest bitcoin producer, faced a similar outage in November 2021. The culprit according to the government? Unregistered cryptocurrency miners. While the exact cause of the 25 January power shortage has yet to be pinpointed, it is now clear that crypto-mining is piling pressure on creaking Soviet energy infrastructure. Join us as we discuss the carbon footprint of crypto in Central Asia and the rest of Eurasia. Our reporter Stephen Bland talks to residents and experts about the industry's impact on Kazakhstan, while Boris Schneider asks economist and campaigner Alex de Vries whether there can ever be such a thing as green crypto-mining. We'll also be bringing you the latest climate headlines from our region at the end of the episode.

Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

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