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Residents Block City Center in Protest Over Power Outages in Russia's Dagestan

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Protesting residents seen blocking traffic in central Makhachkala. **t.me/chernovik**

Residents of Makhachkala in southern Russia's republic of Dagestan late Wednesday barricaded the city center following three days of blackouts.

Locals blocked traffic with wooden pallets, which police officers were seen taking away later in the evening, as shown in footage shared by the state broadcaster "Dagestan."

"Three days without electricity! We're choking!" shouted one elderly protester.

The Dagestan region's energy minister, Marat Shikhaliyev, was shown telling the angry crowd that both he and the municipal utility company Dagenergo were to blame for the crisis.

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Dagestan region Governor Sergei Melikov accused protesters of “playing into the hands” of Russia’s perceived enemies and threatened legal action against protesters if they continued their demonstration.

Melikov said the regional power grid has not been renovated over the past 30 years.

He vowed to fix the underlying issues in “several years,” saying he had asked Russia’s federal government in Moscow to fund the power grid's restoration.

Melikov said hot weather caused the rolling blackouts, while Russia’s Prosecutor General Igor Krasnov blamed “chaotic multi-story [apartment] construction” and illegal connections to the overworked grid.

Krasnov ordered the restoration of power and "sorting out" the causes of the mass outages.

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