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Major Power Outage Hits Far East Russia

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Power disruptions leave the streets in the dark in Vladivostok. **Yuri Smityuk / TASS**

At least two regions in Russia's Far East faced blackouts on Friday after authorities held previously scheduled regionwide power outage drills.

People reported being stuck in traffic, at shopping malls and inside elevators in the regions of Khabarovsk and Primorye, where the city of Vladivostok is located.

Earlier, the Primorye region's Energy Ministry announced that it held a "scheduled emergency response exercise related to the shutdown of a high-voltage power line."

"As part of the drill, a situation room was assembled to establish cooperation to quickly restore power supply to consumers," the ministry said in a statement.

The Far Eastern Distribution Grid Company DRSK, which took part in the drills, said the outages were linked to "equipment failure" at one of the units of the Primorskaya thermal power plant.

Acting Primorye region Energy Minister Yelena Shish called the outage after the drill a

“coincidence” in comments to the Kremlin-linked Telegram news channel Shot.

Shish later informed Primorye region Governor Oleg Kozhemyako that emergency crews were on track to restore power to all consumers by Friday evening. Kozhemyako said the regional water supply company promised to restore cold water overnight.

Local media reported that around 600 households were still without power and 1,000 without cold water in Vladivostok, a city with a population of more than 600,000.

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