

Life back to normal on snow-bound Bornholm

Written by AFP / The Swedish Wire

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COPENHAGEN (AFP) - Life on the Baltic Danish Island of Bornholm started to return to normal for its 43,000 inhabitants on Wednesday, after days of complete paralysis following extreme snowfall.

"The main roads are cleared with at least one lane open, in some places two lanes are open," Jan Egelund of the Bornholm police told AFP by telephone.

"We have cleared most of the local roads in the south and are now working on the local roads in the north," he said.

Egelund said it was impossible to say how long it would take for all roads to be cleared and stressed police had "urged the residents to stay indoors to help the clearing effort."

Bornholm, to the east of Denmark and to the south of Sweden in the Baltic Sea, has since Thursday received an unusually heavy amount of snow, causing residents to start fearing a shortage of medicine or fuel.

Police set up an emergency response centre and have received extra snow-plowing vehicles and many offers of help from residents, Egelund said.

On its website, the Bornholm police says it has lifted the ban on driving on the snow-bound island, but warned that many roads remain very difficult to drive on.

The snowfall was so heavy the some visitors remained stranded on the island and were forced to spend a few nights in a gym and barracks.

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Denmark's meteorological institute (DMI) measured 140 centimetres (55 inches) of snow on Bornholm and according to television reports, snow can reach up to six meters (19.6 feet) deep in some locations.

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