

Lightning kills boy, injures his sister [South Africa]

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By Sharika Regchand

Durban - Intense lightning during a thunderstorm killed a nine-year-old boy in Richmond on Sunday afternoon, and his 2-year-old sister, who was also struck, is fighting for her life in hospital.

Three other people were hit by lightning at different places in Magoda, while many were left homeless.

An elderly woman was admitted to hospital for injuries sustained when the roof of her house collapsed, while others suffered minor injuries.

Two wards in Magoda were the worst affected by the storm, which hit the area at 4pm and lasted for about 10 minutes.

Richmond mayor Andrew Ragavaloo, also a councillor in one of the wards, spoke to an uncle of the child who died.

He said the family lived in a dilapidated house in the central business area of the town.

The mother, Zandile Mbeje, and two children, Ayanda, 9, and Akhona, 2, were huddled together when lightning struck the building.

The older child was hit in the head and died instantly, while his sister suffered burns. Ragavaloo said Akhona had become partly paralysed.

The mother was burnt on her thighs and was also admitted to hospital.

Ragavaloo visited the area, where he saw the devastation left by the storm.