Beat: Local

Coal mine accident in northern Russia kills at least 18

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USPA News - At least eighteen people were confirmed dead after a coal mine accident in northern Russia, officials said Monday. The accident occurred in the Vorkutinskaya coal mine, located in Russia`s northern republic of Komi, when a powerful gas blast took place while.

Around 259 miners were reportedly working at the mine at the time of the blast. The republic`s Interior Ministry confirmed the death toll of 18, as emergency workers have been able to pull out ten bodies from the mine, RIA Novosti reported. However, the Russian Investigative Committee place a death toll of 15. The regional Emergencies Ministry, meanwhile, said the methane exploded around 800 meters deep into the mine, at a section where 26 people were working. While experts have criticized mining conditions in Russia, one of the most deadliest incidents in recent history occurred in 2010, when 91 workers died during a double explosion also caused by methane at a mine in the region of Kemerovo. Russian steel producer Severstal owns the coal mine, which has been operating since 1973, producing approximately 1.8 million tons of coal per year.

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