

Death toll in China mine blast reaches 28

by UPI

BEIJING - The death toll from a gas blast in a coal mine in Linfen in north China rose to 28 Tuesday with the recovery of five more bodies.

The official government Xinhua news agency reported the miners were trapped after the explosion on Saturday in the mine located in the coal-rich Shanxi Province.

The report said the fate of two miners was not known but that about 100 rescuers were continuing work to provide ventilation to the shafts.

About 125 miners were working at the Pudeng Coal Mine when the blast occurred, but 95 managed to escape with 23 of them suffering carbon monoxide poisoning. The injured miners were reported in stable condition.

Xinhua said rescue efforts by local governments started two hours after the blast because mine managers did not report the accident immediately. The mine, which had many safety problems, was ordered to cease production last month but it resumed operation without an official permit.

Last week, an explosion at another illegal mine in the province killed 14 people, the report said.

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.