

Coal & Gas Outburst Kills 17 Miners

BEIJING (AP) — An accident in a coal mine in southwest China killed 17 miners on Wednesday, while 11 workers were still missing three days after another mine flooded in the northeast, state media reported.

The official Xinhua News Agency said there was an outburst of coal and gas in a shaft in a mine in Fuyuan county in Yunnan province on Wednesday afternoon.

Citing the county government, Xinhua said the other 49 miners underground at the time escaped unharmed.

In a separate report, Xinhua said 11 miners were still missing three days after a coal mine flooded in northeastern Heilongjiang province. A total of 22 miners were working in the mine when it was flooded on Saturday night. Six escaped, two were helped out on Sunday and three miners had been confirmed dead.

China has the world's deadliest coal mine industry, with 1,973 miners killed in accidents last year.

Safety improvements have reduced deaths in recent years, but safety rules are often ignored and accidents are still common.

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