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## **Criminal case over explosion at Ulyanovskaya mine in Kemerovo Region sent to court**

A criminal case over an explosion at Ulyanovskaya mine in Kemerovo Region with the approved indictment has been sent to Novokuznetsky district court of Kemerovo Region to be tried on the merits. The case was investigated by the main Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee. There are 9 accused people.

The mine director Andrei Funk, shiftman Yuri Pimenov, mechanic of ventilation part and safety engineering Gennady Krasko, foreman and electricians of this part Oleg Kozyavin, Denis But and Oleg Sobakin are charged with a crime under part 3 of article 217 of the RF Criminal Code (violation of safety rules in explosive facilities or in explosives shops involving by negligence death of two or more persons). In addition head of Kuybyshev mine technical department Sergey Sleptsov and state inspectors of this department Alexander Kostromin and Igor Dmitriyev are charged with a crime under part 3 of article 293 of the RF Criminal Code (negligence involving death of two or more persons).

We remind that in the afternoon of 19 March 2007, a methane explosion occurred at a coal mine in Novokuznetsk district, Kemerovo Region. 110 miners, who were underground at the time, died of wounds, thermal scolds and carbon monoxide inhalation, 7 more were wounded. The accident was caused by the fact that the CEOs of the mine in the period between June 2006 and the moment of explosion ignored the safety requirements for mine works in order to fulfill the program. Despite the every-day dangerous concentration of methane and coal dust, the miners continued their job under the threat of being sacked or have reduced bonuses. The explosion and such serious consequences took place due to the fact that head and staff of Kuybyshev mine technical department of Kemerovo Region Office of Federal Service for Environmental, Technological and Atomic Supervision Sleptsov, Kostromin and Dmitriyev did not carried out proper state mine supervision over observance of safety requirements at this dangerous enterprise, did not timely prevent the abovementioned violations of safety requirements and rules to fight coal dust, concentration of which was so high that allowed explosions to spread through a net of mines in places where there was no dangerous amount of methane making the accident worse and the number of victims even higher.

Besides, the criminal case against 19 engineers of the mine over their violation of safety rules at the explosion-hazardous facility, which might have caused human victims, was closed due to laps of statute of limitations. These individuals completed performing their professional duties during the

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shifts before the accident and their violations were not the direct cause of the explosion. The Committee has also refused to launch criminal proceedings against 5 heads of the mine killed in the accident.

A comprehensive commission mine expert examination has been run during the investigation involving leading specialists in this area, computer and other examinations, more than 450 people have been questioned. There are 234 volumes in the case. To prevent such tragedies in future, investigators have taken measures to eliminate causes and circumstances contributing to the crime.

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