

Gas Explosion Injures 8 at Moscow Region Summer Camp

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Four campers were hospitalized following the explosion.

Eight children were injured in a gas explosion over the weekend at a summer camp in the Moscow region, TASS news agency reported, citing regional law enforcement sources.

The injured children, aged 12 to 16, suffered burns of varying severity after a 200 gram propane gas canister exploded near one of the camp's tents set up in the village of Mukhanki, located some 65 kilometers north of Moscow. The explosion occurred a few minutes after one group of children had turned on a portable stove for cooking purposes, investigators said in a statement Sunday.

Four campers were hospitalized following the explosion. One of the injured campers, a 15-year-old girl, was transported by helicopter to a nearby hospital specialized in the treatment of burn victims and was admitted to intensive care, TASS reported.

In response to the incident, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin has ordered all summer camps in the Moscow region to be inspected for their compliance with safety regulations, his press service told reporters Saturday.

Seven of the eight children injured in the explosion were from Moscow, according to TASS.

Children's rights ombudsman Pavel Astakhov also called Saturday on all Russian regions to conduct surprise inspections of the children's camps on their territories.

The regional branch of the Investigative Committee said in a statement Sunday that it had launched a criminal case into the explosion. Under Russian law, individuals found guilty of storing or producing goods that do not meet safety standards can face a hefty fine or up to three years in jail.

Investigators said that gas burners and canisters found at the scene had been seized and would be analyzed to assess their conformity with safety requirements.

Gas explosions have made headlines throughout the country in recent months. Last week, two people were killed and 11 injured in a fire that raged through a St. Petersburg apartment building following a gas explosion. The fire interrupted traffic in the city's downtown core and engulfed Nevsky Prospekt, the city's main thoroughfare, in thick smoke.

Four people, including three children between 1 and 6 years old, were killed last month in the Siberian city of Tyumen after the explosion of gas tanks caused their house to catch fire, Russian media reported at the time.

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