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Siberian Miners Ask Putin to Intervene in Hunger Strike

By The Moscow Times

September 01, 2015



Dozens of miners in the Khakassia region of Russia's resourch-rich Siberia have gone on hunger strike in protest against unpaid salaries, a local news service reported Monday.

The workers are demanding three months in unpaid wages, according to the Khakasia news agency.

“We want open and transparent information about the situation, instead of the murky one [we have] now,” one of the protestors, Stepan Vorontsov, was quoted as saying.

The protestors are also looking for a meeting with President Vladimir Putin, who is expected to visit the region in early September, the report said.

Over 50 miners are reportedly involved in the strike, which has lasted for a week.

Regional chief Viktor Zimin blamed the current crisis on the company that runs the mines, Yevrazruda, accusing it of abandoning unprofitable mines and their workers, Khakasia news

portal reported. No comment from the company was immediately available.

“Only President Putin” can resolve the issue now, Zimin said, according to Khakassia.

Putin put an end to a similar strike at the Vostochny Cosmodrome earlier this year after workers appealed to him during his annual live-call in show.

Protests by miners and other workers over unpaid wages were common during the economic turmoil of the 1990s.

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