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Amid Radiation Scare, Russian Atomic Agency Finds 'No Violations'

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The Mayak nuclear facility / Ilya Yakovlev / TASS

Russia's Atomic oversight agency (Rostekhnadzor) says it has found no violations of radiation norms at the Mayak nuclear facility in Chelyabinsk.

After a complaint from Greenpeace, European monitors earlier this month detected a cloud of radioactive material originating in Russia's southern Urals over two dozen European countries in late September.

Russia's state nuclear corporation Rosatom first claimed the release of the radioactive material, known as Ruthenium 106 or Ru-106, was natural background radiation.

The Consumer Oversight Agency (Rospotrebnadzor) even said that the amount of Ru-106 in the atmosphere was 200 times less than the norm and was no danger to public health.

But on Monday, Russia's Federal Meteorological Service said it had registered extreme levels of Ru-106 across several locations in late September. The highest levels of the radioisotope — 986 times the norm — were at Rosatom's Mayak facility.

The Federal Agency for Environmental, Technical and Atomic Oversight said it inspected Mayak from Oct. 26 to Nov. 3, the news agency Interfax reported.

In a press statement Wednesday, the agency said that during the inspection, "the activity of radionuclides in the ground air, including the specific activity of the isotope Ruthenium-106 did not exceed the permissible and controlled levels established for the facility."

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