

Russia Opens Criminal Probe Into Deaths of 5 North Korean Laborers

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Russian Investigative Committee in Bashkortostan

Authorities have launched an investigation into criminally negligent manslaughter after five North Korean workers were found dead at a construction site in southern Russia.

Up to 15,000 Russian work permits are issued to North Korean nationals every year, [according](#) to Moscow's envoy in Pyongyang. Last month, Russia began to deport North Korean workers to comply with UN Security Council sanctions demanding their repatriation within 24 months, over fears that their remittances help finance the country's nuclear program.

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The five workers died of suspected carbon monoxide poisoning inside a trailer in the city of Ufa, the local branch of the Investigative Committee [said](#) in a statement on Thursday.

Investigators said the workers "kindled a fire inside a bucket" to keep warm after their

electric heating cable broke.

A colleague of the five victims [told](#) the Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper that their bodies were discovered when the morning shift came in to replace the night crew.

“They went into the trailer in the morning to warm up and change clothes,” their colleague told the outlet.

"Conditions there are good, they had electric heating. The cable got cut that day so it became cold," he was cited as saying.

“They lit a fire to warm up and suffocated,” he said.

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