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Explosion at Rocket Engine Plant in Samara Claims 2 Lives

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A firefighting vehicle by the Sverdlov Defense Plant in the town of Dzerzhinsk, Nizhny Novgorod region
Roman Vladimirov / TASS

Two workers have been killed in a gas explosion at a rocket engine factory in central Russia only hours after a blast at an arms-making plant claimed at least three lives.

The Samara Investigative Committee said two workers at the Kuznetsov Design Bureau died during an explosion while cleaning an oxygen tank on Friday.

Investigators said they are still working to determine the circumstances that led to the explosion.

An emergency response source told Interfax a third body was later uncovered at the scene.

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The explosion may have occurred because workers did not take adequate precautions for liquid oxygen, an anonymous regional technical oversight service source told the news agency.

The Kuznetsov factory is co-owned between the United Engine Corporation, state-owned defense conglomerate Rostec and the Federal Property Management Agency.

Earlier on Friday, at least three people were reportedly killed in an explosion at a weapons-making factory in Nizhny Novgorod region, some 400 kilometers east of Moscow.

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