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Blast at Russian Military Explosives Plant Kills 2

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Two workers were killed at an explosives factory in Russia's Perm region 1,000 kilometers east of Moscow, local authorities said Monday.

"There was a fire at around 20:00 on May 1 at the plastics production site in the Perm Power Plant federal state enterprise," the regional labor watchdog said in a statement.

One employee was killed immediately, one died in hospital and a third victim remains hospitalized.

The watchdog said an investigative commission that includes technological inspectors is working to establish the cause of the incident.

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The Perm powder plant makes explosives for Grad and Smerch multiple launch rocket systems, air defense systems, tanks and artillery, launch and acceleration stages for sea-based cruise missiles, as well as ball propellants for small arms.

It also manufactures civilian products including paints and finishes, according to the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

Local eyewitnesses described the explosion at the factory building to local media, identifying the victims as female employees with third-degree burns.

“The building simply flew into the sky, we had bags of gunpowder there all our lives,” an unnamed employee told the Komsomolskaya Pravda tabloid.

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