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All 8 Miners Confirmed Dead After Coal Mine Collapse in Russia's Far East

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Rescuers have recovered the bodies of all eight miners trapped after a coal mine collapsed in the remote Magadan region of Russia's Far East, emergency officials confirmed Monday.

The disaster occurred last Thursday at a site operated by the Kolymskaya Coal Company. Alexander Nesterovich, the company's CEO, said the collapse was likely caused by melting permafrost.

An initial rockslide buried a heavy machinery driver, followed by a second collapse that buried seven other workers who rushed to rescue him.

After four bodies were found on Sunday, Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry told the Interfax news agency that the final four victims were located on Monday, bringing the rescue operation to a close.

"We hoped for the best until the very end," Magadan region Governor Sergei Nosov said in a

statement, offering condolences to the families and friends of the deceased.

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The Investigative Committee, Russia's top investigative body, launched a criminal probe into potential safety violations.

The Magadan region is located around 5,500 kilometers (3,400 miles) east of Moscow.

Scientists have long warned that Russia — one of the world's top greenhouse gas emitters and a major fossil fuel exporter — is increasingly vulnerable to disasters fueled by thawing permafrost.

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