

Beat: Travel

Mine collapse in Sudan;s Darfur kills at least 53

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USPA News - At least 53 people were killed this week when a gold mine collapsed in Sudan's troubled Darfur region, making it the country's worst ever mine disaster, local officials said on Thursday. The death toll is expected to rise as dozens remain missing.

The Darfur Regional Authority said the accident happened on Monday in the remote Jebel Amir area of North Darfur, but word about the extent of the disaster was slow to reach regional and national officials. A total of 53 bodies had been recovered by Thursday, although that number is likely to increase. A resident near the site said 66 people had registered to work in the mine on Monday, but around 20 others later went down without registering themselves. Ten other miners were sent down to investigate after the collapse happened, but only one of them returned after the group was caught in a secondary collapse. Authorities believe as many as 42 people could still be trapped underground, but rescue work was progressing slowly because heavy machinery would likely cause further collapses. Instead, rescue workers have been forced to use their bare hands and shuffles, but hopes of finding any survivors were fading by Thursday. The disaster happened in an area that has witnessed an explosive growth in gold mining in recent years. Sudanese Mining Minister Kamal Abdul Latif previously said that gold mines produced more than \$2 billion worth of gold last year, and added that many youth in the Jebel Amir region had turned to gold mining.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

UPA United Press Agency LTD

483 Green Lanes

UK, London N13NV 4BS

contact (at) unitedpressagency.com

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