

Beat: Miscellaneous

Factory blast in eastern China kills 68, injures nearly 200

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USPA News - At least 68 people were killed Saturday and nearly 200 others were injured when a powerful explosion likely caused by negligence ripped through a factory in eastern China, making it one of the country's worst industrial accidents in recent years, officials said. The explosion happened at around 7:37 a.m. local time in Kunshan City, located in eastern Jiangsu province, at a factory that polishes wheel hubs.

The factory is owned by Kunshan Zhongrong Metal Products, which manufactures car parts for American carmakers, including General Motors (GM). Local officials said rescue workers had recovered more than 40 bodies at the site, while about 20 others died after being rushed to area hospitals. They said the death toll stood at 68 by late Saturday, but it is feared the death toll could increase. At least 187 others were injured and were being treated at hospitals in Kunshan, Suzhou, Wuxi, and Shanghai. The state-run Xinhua news agency said two senior executives at Kunshan Zhongrong Metal Products were detained after the explosion, which was described as a serious work safety accident. It is believed the explosion, which was heard and felt across the region, was triggered by a flame which was lit in a dust-filled room. The rapid economic growth in China, in combination with poor safety measures, frequently result in deadly industrial accidents.

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