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# Mining Accident News No.0823

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Wednesday 1 October 2008

## **USA: Miner still critical after accident, officials say**

*Extract from The Register-Herald, Beckley, WV, USA*

State officials have reported that the miner injured in an early Monday morning accident at a Massey Energy strip mine in Nicholas County is 21 years old and not 29, as previously released by the West Virginia Department of Commerce.

Addam Perdue, 29, of Mount Lookout remained in critical condition at Charleston Area Medical Center, according Jama Jarrett, communications specialist for the Department of Commerce.

Jarrett said the mine mechanic was checking the oil level on a piece of equipment when a protective shield was lowered onto his head accidentally.

"It appears that he became trapped between the blast shield of a highwall mining machine and its cutting head, which is a component of the machine that protects the miner from the cutting head," Jarrett said.

Apparently, according to Jarrett, Perdue suffered massive facial fractures, lesions and bleeding.

Jarrett said the accident occurred at Massey subsidiary Alex Energy's No. 1 Surface Mine.

Thursday 2 October 2008

## **South Africa: Three miners killed in two days**

*Extract from [www.ioi.co.za](http://www.ioi.co.za)*

Three miners were killed in separate accidents at AngloGold Ashanti, Anglo Platinum and Harmony Gold mines in the past two days, the National Union of Mineworkers (Num) said on Thursday.

A mine worker died at the Tau Tona mine near Carletonville around 1am on Thursday after being buried alive, AngloGold Ashanti said in a statement.

"A miner was killed in a fall of ground while securing a working place in a haulage. The accident occurred at just after 1am on 94 level. His body is being recovered."

The Num said a second miner died at Harmony Gold's Elandsrand mine after a fall of ground, also on Thursday morning.

The third miner died in hospital on Wednesday following an accident at an Anglo Platinum mine in Townlands late last month.

Also, more than 3000 mineworkers will observe a day of mourning on Thursday following the death of a worker at AngloGold's Savuka mine a week ago.

"The Num is shocked that while those whose hands stink of workers' blood smile all the way to the bank, hundred of thousands of breadwinners' dependants are left with no food on their table.

"It is with this in mind that the Num urges the DME [department of minerals and energy] to release the safety audit report as a matter of urgency and to take serious steps against these companies that seem to be competing to kill mineworkers". - Sapa

## **Three miners killed weekly - Solidarity**

*Extract from [www.ioi.co.za](http://www.ioi.co.za)*

Three miners are killed in accidents every week, trade union Solidarity said on Thursday.

It was responding to news that three mine workers had died in separate accidents in the past two days.

"In the past 40 weeks, 135 employees have already died on South African mines. This means that more than three mineworkers currently die in accidents each week," said union spokesperson Jaco Kleynhans.

"In other words, a mineworker has died almost every second day thus far," he added.

He said Solidarity was "extremely concerned" about an "imbalance between production targets and safety".

"Mine management likes to blame human behaviour for most of the mine accidents, but research in this regard is still elusive. Mining companies should invest more funds in research regarding this aspect of mine safety, as well as safety technology," said Kleynhans.

Friday 3 October 2008

## Measures to stop coalmine mishaps

*Extract from The China Daily, China*

Authorities will launch a three-month inspection on Oct 11 to prevent coalmine accidents nationwide, following a slew of fatal mining mishaps in the past months, the State Administration of Work Safety (SAWS) announced on its website on Wednesday.

As part of the work safety measures, the administration has urged all mines across the country to conduct self checks this month.

The mines will then be subjected to a thorough check next month.

All unlicensed mines and those that violate production safety regulations will be closed.

During inspections, related government departments will keep records related to the safety of drinking water, industrial facilities and residential areas around mines.

Mines that are deemed prone to accidents must suspend production and improve work facilities to safe levels, authorities said.

Last month, eight officials in Xiangfen county in Shanxi province were detained for negligence following a fatal accident in a deserted mining site that killed 267 nearby residents.

An iron ore dregs retaining pond in the county burst on Sept 8, letting loose a torrent of tailing, mud and rock that devastated a downstream village, an office building and a busy outdoor market.

An initial investigation found the collapse had occurred because of negligence. The tailing dump was built in violation of regulations and had few safety inspections.

"The September 8 landslide was a very serious production safety incident, causing great losses, having a bad impact and leaving a deep lesson," Vice-Premier Zhang Dejiang said during a visit to the site of the landslide yesterday.

He said those responsible for it should be punished seriously in accordance with law.

In the same province, another landslide toppled a waste dump of a local iron mine and buried Sigou village in Loufan county in the suburbs of the provincial capital Taiyuan on Aug 1.

The death toll has reached 41, with local authorities saying 16 people were still missing.

The number of deaths from mining accidents has remained high from May to July this year, with 903 dead, SAWS figures showed.

Sunday 5 October 2008

## Philippines: Felon rescued from flooded mine shaft

*Extract from gulfnews.com*

Itoyon, Benguet: The drama over the rescue of ten men at a mining shaft in northern Philippines heightened on Saturday after it was reported that a man wanted for felony in 2002 was among the survivors.

Joseph Anayasan was immediately whisked away by his relatives to evade police, who have a standing warrant for his arrest on theft and robbery charges, said George Baywong, a Mines and Geosciences Bureau officer who supervised the rescue efforts.

Anayasan, who cheated death recently after spending 11 days trapped inside the collapsed mine shaft, will be made to account for a crime he allegedly committed in 2002. Authorities said that due to humanitarian considerations, they will wait for Anayasan to get a medical clearance before serving him a warrant for his arrest.

Anayasan, 32, was the last of the 10 survivors of the mine tragedy in Itoyon where six others

were trapped days inside the stinking and dark abandoned tunnel.

### **Charges of violence**

Anayasan is allegedly facing trial before branch six of the Regional Trial Court in Baguio City for two counts of robbery with violence raps in 2002.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau reported that Anayasan was rescued from the 264 vein in level 700 of the abandoned mining tunnel on Friday afternoon and was initially checked at the makeshift treatment facility in Itogon at exactly 4:30pm that afternoon.

Many of Anayasan's relatives had also become elusive to journalists - a complete turn-around from last Wednesday when they turned out in force at the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Centre's emergency room where his elder brother Mario was rushed after being rescued at shaft 114 also in level 700.

Anayasan was reportedly brought by relatives to an undisclosed hospital after local miners took over the last-ditch rescue operation Friday when the authorities officially terminated the rescue operations Thursday night.

### **Identified**

With the confirmation that Joseph Anayasan is still alive, officials have placed the final death toll in the mine accident at six.

The fatalities were identified as Marvin Himmayod, Juan Himmayod, Rudy Himmayod, Vincent Himmayod, Jojo Himmayod and Joel Bulga.

Rescued earlier at separate dates were Gilbert Natter, Rudy Boling Jr, Mario Anayasan, Ngilit Pagulayan, Jose Panio Jr, Jerry Monyobda, Jason Himmayod, Robert Buhway, and Gary Gano.

Only Jason Himmayod and Vincent Buhway are still at the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Centre for further treatment.

Monday 6 October 2008

## **China: 9 arrested for mine accident**

*Extract from The Strait Times, Singapore*

BEIJING - AUTHORITIES in central China have arrested nine mining officials in relation to a colliery accident that left 37 workers dead, state press said on Monday.

Among the arrested were an investor and the head of the Xinfeng mine in Henan province where the 37 miners died after inhaling gas fumes on Sept 21, Xinhua news agency said.

The seven other arrested mining officials were in charge of safety, technology and production at the mine, it said.

Seven other people have been detained for questioning, it added.

According to Xinhua, the mine had been ordered to suspend production on Sept 15 and undergo renovation, but the operators kept the mine working illegally.

China's coal mines are among the most dangerous in the world, with safety standards often ignored in the quest for profits and the drive to meet surging demand for coal - the source of about 70 per cent of the country's energy.

## **USA: Woman sues over father's mine injury death**

*Extract from The West Virginia Record, WV, USA*

CHARLESTON - A Kanawha County woman has filed a suit on behalf of the estate of her father, who died from injuries sustained in a mining accident.

Rhonda Brogan filed the suit Aug. 27 in Kanawha Circuit Court against Spartan Mining Company and Millennium Vulcanizing Inc.

According to the suit, her father, David J. Neal, a Nicholas County resident, was employed by Spartan as a belt man/fire boss.

On Dec. 3, 2007, Neal was assigned to replace worn out bottom rollers on the cross-hollow

conveyor belt on the surface area of the underground mine in Hughes Creek in Kanawha County.

At the same time Neal was beginning his shift, a team from Millennium Vulcanizing was working on the same belt. According to the suit, they had been contracted to make a vulcanized splice on the belt.

According to the suit, the circuit breaker that locked the belt during maintenance had a broken handle. Therefore, the belt could not be de-energized and locked while Neal and the Millennium team were working.

While Neal was lying on the belt replacing the rollers the belt started, the suit says. The belt has a "10-second start up alarm" that was supposed to sound and alert workers that the belt was about to move.

However, the alarm was not loud enough for Neal to hear.

"Had Mr. Neal heard the start up alarm he would have taken action to move out of harm's way," the suit said. "Because the two start up alarms were not maintained in such a way so that they could be heard at the location where Mr. Neal was working on the belt, he did not have an opportunity to get out of harm's way prior to the belt starting to move."

The area where Neal was working was approximately eight to 12 inches high, the suit says. When the belt started, Neal screamed for the belt to be turned off, the suit says.

Neal was pulled approximately 50 feet and slammed into several cross-support beams along the way. He then fell 40 feet onto a frozen coal pile below.

A mine trainee, David Shelton, saw Neal's cap light go by on the bottom belt and tried to pull the cord to stop the belt, but the belt continued, the suit says.

Shelton then pulled cords in two other locations and the belt stopped after coasting another 50 feet.

Neal was airlifted to Charleston Area Medical Center, where he endured multiple surgeries, but never regained consciousness and died ten days after the accident.

According to the suit, the West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training cited Spartan Mining for violations inspectors concluded caused Neal's fatal fall.

In the three-count suit, Rhonda Brogan claims she and her family suffered sorrow, mental anguish, solace, including loss of society, companionship, comfort, guidance, kindly offices and advice of Neal. They also endured the medical and funeral expenses.

Brogan seeks compensatory and punitive damages.

Attorney Sean McGinley is representing Brogan. The case has been assigned to Judge James Stucky.

*Kanawha Circuit Court case number 08-C-1646*

Tuesday 7 October 2008

## **Family of dead miner Larry Knight distressed by Beaconsfield musical comedy**

*Extract from The Australian*

**THE widow and family of Beaconsfield mine accident victim Larry Knight are distressed and appalled by a new musical comedy, Beaconsfield: A Musical In A-Flat Minor.**

The play, to be performed at the Melbourne Fringe Festival from tomorrow night, is being marketed as the "feel good piss-take of the year", but is generating outrage.

Family members of Mr Knight, who died in the 2006 Anzac Day rockfall at the northern Tasmanian mine, say the comedy "makes a mockery" of their loss.

"The whole concept of it is wrong," Mr Knight's brother Shane told The Australian earlier today.

"Making comedy out of someone's death might be alright if it happened a long, long time ago, but not when the family still (grieves).

"We haven't even finished the inquest yet and they're making a mockery of it."

He said Larry's widow, Jacquie, was upset and disappointed about the play but did not want to fuel publicity for it.

The musical, created by Dan Ilic, was also condemned as "bad taste" by the miners who survived the rockfall, Brant Webb and Todd Russell, as well as the Australian Workers' Union and a host of politicians.

However, Mr Ilic said the only death not treated with respect in the play was that of veteran journalist Richard Carleton, who died of a heart attack while covering the Beaconsfield rescue.

The play features a song "Carleton Cardiac". Mr Ilic said the play's targets were the media circus at Beaconsfield during the two-week rescue, as well as mine management and Macquarie Bank, creditor to the mine's then-managers Allstate Explorations.

"I was actually absolutely astonished, as many Australians were, about the media coverage of the event, and how quite often insensitively the media was constantly barraging not only the survivors when they came out, but the townspeople during the event itself," Mr Ilic told ABC Radio.

"I totally understand I have offended a family... in fact today we're going to change the name of the show to Beaconsfield: The Underground Smash Hit of the Fringe Festival, so that's pretty exciting," Mr Ilic later told Sky News.

However, AWU national secretary Paul Howes said Beaconsfield was about the death of a husband and father at work - not about the media.

Thursday 9 October 2008

## **Another Murray Energy coal mine hit with hefty MSHA fines**

***MSHA claims that Murray Energy subsidiary American Coal repeatedly flouted safety regulations, resulting in \$1.46 million in***

***fines, the second time this year Murray has been hit with substantial fines.***

RENO, NV - After the U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration levied a record \$1.85 million in fines for violations pertaining to the Crandall Canyon coal mining disaster, the agency has assessed another \$1.46 million in fines against another subsidiary of parent company Murray Energy Corp.

Nine violations were assessed against American Coal Company's Galatia Mine in Saline County, Illinois under the flagrant violation provision of MSHA's civil penalty regulation.

In a statement released Thursday Richard E. Stickler, acting assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health, said, "American Coal Company repeatedly demonstrated its failure to comply with basic safety laws over a number of months, and for that it must be held accountable."

On Sept. 6, 2008, an MSHA inspector watched as a maintenance supervisor reached into a live 480-volt electrical while an hourly employee stood next to him. He reportedly told the MSHA inspector that he was "just taking a shortcut." The violation was assessed at \$161,800.

Two violations involving accumulation of coal and coal dust accumulation on September 18, 2007, were assessed at \$179,300 and \$164,700.

On November 7 and December 5, 2007, a MSHA inspector two unwarrantable failure orders for failure to conduct adequate pre-shift examinations. These violations were assessed at \$161,800 and \$145,800.

On November 8, 2007, an MSHA inspector issued an unwarrantable failure order for failure to support loose and broken roof around an escapeway with a violation assessed at \$158,900.

This year MSHA issued three unwarrantable failure orders for accumulations of combustible materials on January 11, 13 and 24. The

violations were assessed at \$153,100, \$153,100 and \$188,000.

Previously MSHA imposed record fines on Genwal Resources, another Murray Energy Company, in the deaths of six miners in the Crandall Canyon coal mine disaster in Utah for an August 6<sup>th</sup> accident.

## USA: 1 person killed in W.Va. mine

Extract from *Forbes.com*

PRENTER, W.Va. - The state has identified a contract worker killed at a **Massey Energy** mine in West Virginia.

Apprentice miner Steven Cain, 32, of Comfort, died after being pinned between the wall and a supply car at Massey's Justice No. 1 mine in Boone County late Wednesday, said Jama Jarrett, a spokeswoman for the state Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training. Cain worked for contractor Mountaineer Labor Solutions.

"Our thoughts and prayers are definitely with the family," Massey spokesman Jeff Gillenwater said Thursday. "It's a terrible, terrible situation."

A telephone message left with Mountaineer was not immediately returned.

State mine inspectors and investigators with the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration were planning to recreate the accident Thursday afternoon, Jarrett said.

Seven West Virginia coal miners and 21 nationally have been killed on the job this year, according to government records.

Richmond, Va.-based Massey, the nation's fourth-largest coal producer by revenue, operates mines in West Virginia, Kentucky and Virginia.

### Electrical Engineering Safety Seminar

The 18th Annual NSW DPI Electrical Engineering Safety Seminar will be held at the Waterview Convention Centre, Sydney Olympic Park on Thursday 13 and Friday 14 November 2008.

For further information contact Owen Barry on 02 6571 8708 or Bernard Gittins on 02 6360 5351 or email [minesafety.seminars@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:minesafety.seminars@dpi.nsw.gov.au).

Friday 10 October 2008

## Death toll hits 9 in south China mine gas blast

Extract from *The China Daily, China*

NANNING - The death toll from a coal mine gas blast on Friday morning in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has risen to nine, a local safety official said.

The accident occurred at around 9:20 a.m. in a well of Heshan Coal Mine Co. Ltd in Heshan City, said Zeng Biao, the Laibin Municipal Work Safety Bureau deputy head.

Heshan is a city administered by Laibin City.

A total of 83 miners were underground at the time of the blast according to the company, Zeng said in a phone interview with Xinhua.

Nine bodies were found and the other 74 got out of the well safely, he said.

He earlier said 91 miners were found and 84 were saved.

Rescuers were still working in a shaft yet to be searched.

Heshan Coal Mine Co. Ltd is a joint venture with a Hong Kong investment company. It has the exploitation right and mining rights for 820 million tons of coal in three mines in Guangxi and neighbouring Guizhou Province.

It is the largest coal mine company in Guangxi with an annual production capacity of around 8 million tons.

The cause of the accident is under investigation.

## Mining dictionary

A guide to common mining terminology

### M

**matte** The metallic copper resulting from the smelting process. Matte was normally between 40 and 60% pure copper, and was further refined in converters or sent to centralised works for refinement by careful smelting or electrolysis.

- Ed.