

Eight dead, three missing in C.China coal mine blast



Photo taken on Feb. 14, 2017 shows the scene where a blast hit a coal mine in central China's Hunan province. [Photo: Xinhua]

Eight people have been confirmed dead and three are missing after a blast hit a coal mine in central China's Hunan province on Tuesday.

The incident occurred at 1.37 am at the Zubao mine in Lianyuan, located 190 kilometres from the province capital Changsha, local authorities said.

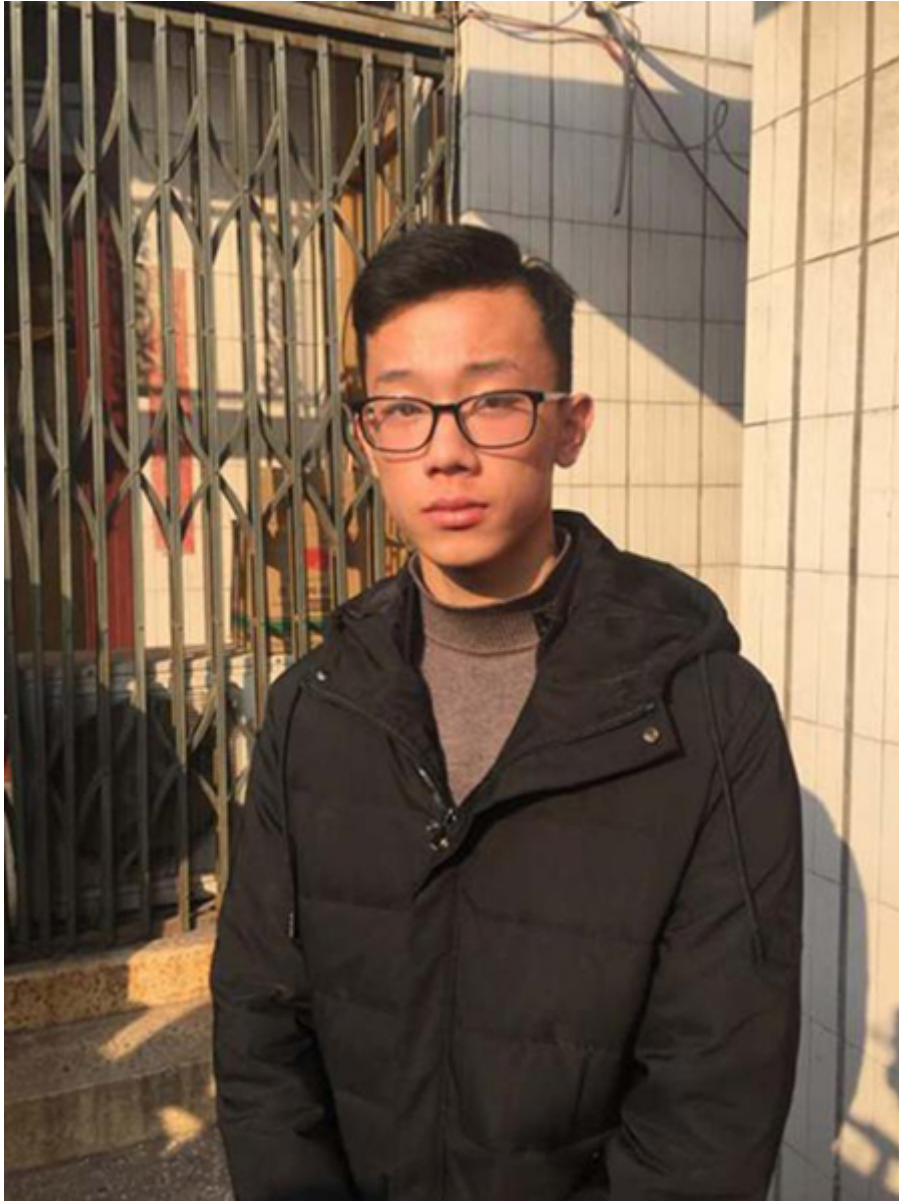
A total of 29 people were working underground when the incident took place, with 18 people rescued, according to a statement from China's national safety regulator, the State Administration of Work Safety.

One person is injured and three people remained unaccounted for, Yang Guangrong the vice governor of Hunan who headed the rescue work said.

The cause of the blast has not been identified but the site is considered a "high gas mine".

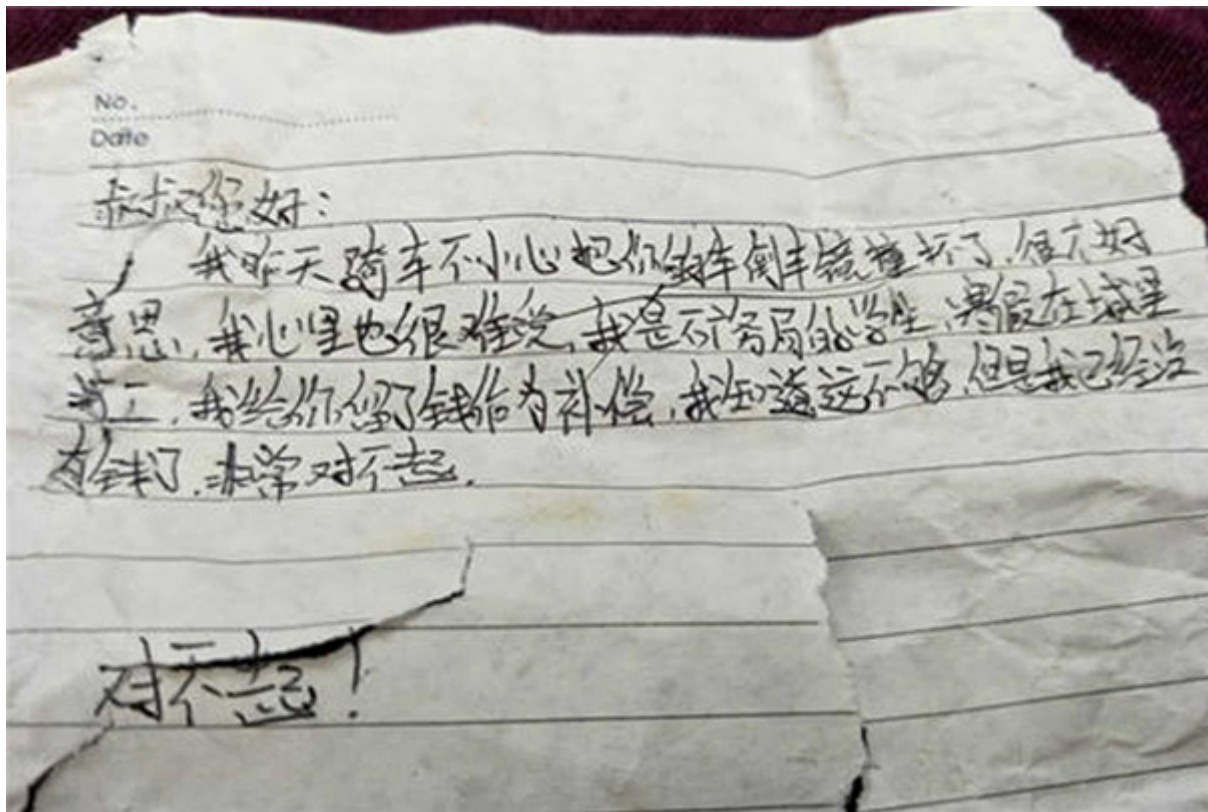
The mine is owned by Tengfei Coal Mine Co. Ltd in Doulishan township in Lianyuan.

Honest boy who admits damaging car rewarded by owner



Chen Yifan [Photo: dahe.cn]

A student left an apology letter and 311 yuan (US\$45) to the owner of a car that the boy hit accidentally with his electric scooter. The owner of the car, who was not there when his car was damaged, was so impressed by the student's honesty that he has donated 10,000 yuan to go toward that student's future tuition, reported dahe.com on Sunday.



The apology letter left by Chen Yifan [Photo: dahe.cn]

Teenager Chen Yifan is a student from Xinmi city, Henan province. At the beginning of February, he accidentally hit a BMW car while he was riding an electric scooter.



The money left by Chen Yifan as compensation for damaging the car [Photo: dahe.cn]

Chen's letter to the driver contained an apology for the damage done to the car, and explained that the money he was leaving was all that he had, as he was a student and his only income was from a part-time job.



The car owner and the car that was damaged by the electric scooter [Photo: dahe.cn]

After finding the apology letter, Xue Zhanmin, the car's owner, said he found no need to blame the boy for the accident. "The boy is honest and kind as he took the responsibility and made the compensation. We should praise such behavior," said Xue.

Xue Zhanmin contacted the boy's family with the help of local police on February 11. He gave the money back to the boy and offered to financially help the boy finish his studies. The boy's mother learned of the incident and offered to make the full compensation, which was 13,000 yuan but this was refused by Xue.

On Sunday, Xue sent 10,000 yuan as a donation to cover the boy's tuition fees. Chen Yifan expressed gratitude but refused the money. After persuasion from the local police and staff members, Chen's family finally accepted this donation that is full of love and care.

Chinese spend US\$1,800 on outbound trip to celebrate Valentine's Day

An increasing number of Chinese couples are celebrating this year's Valentine's Day by traveling abroad, which will cost them 12,154 yuan (about US\$1,766) on average, reports say.

According to a report published recently by Ctrip, one of China's largest tour booking websites, many couples choose to travel between Feb. 10 and 14, with domestic travel and short trips to foreign countries as a preference. About 55% of the couples surveyed have booked outbound tours, which will cost them 12,154 yuan. The total cost for both domestic and outbound trips is expected to reach 6,028 yuan on average.

Couples in first-tier cities, namely, Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou, take the most outbound trips, according to flight booking data released by Qunar, another tour booking website. Couples in Shanghai choose to fly to Bangkok, Hong Kong, and Tokyo to spend the Valentine's Day. Couples in Beijing and the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou prefer nearby destinations, with the former heading to South Korea and Japan, and the latter flying to Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

As this year's Valentine's Day falls on a weekday, many couples who don't have time to travel choose to go to hotels. Young Chinese couples who are born in the 1990s in second-tier cities have contributed to 35 to 45 percent more hotel bookings than last year, according to the Qunar data. Their favorite love hotels are priced between 220 yuan to 360 yuan per night, higher than on average days.

Apart from traveling around and staying at hotels, giving presents remains a popular way of celebrating the Valentine's Day. According to a survey by Zhenai.com, a Chinese matchmaking website, 77.4% of respondents believed couples should celebrate the day and give presents to their loved ones. More than 50% of couples will give presents priced over 1,000 yuan. Men prefer watches, clothes and electronic products, while women like jewelry, roses, and digital "red envelopes," digital cash gifts that are popular on China's social-networking app WeChat.

Shandong loans 50B yuan in battling poverty

East China's Shandong Province provided over 50 billion yuan (7.3 billion U.S. dollars) of loans for poverty reduction in 2016, benefiting 300,000

impoverished people, authorities said Tuesday.

Banks were organized to offer over 30 specific credit products after the province carried out a field survey on 1.8 million poverty-stricken households and 21,000 businesses aimed at poverty alleviation, according to a statement issued by the Jinan branch of the People's Bank of China.

Among the loans, over 1 billion yuan was poured into poverty-alleviation industrial sectors, such as tourism, e-commerce and the photovoltaic industry.

Companies in poor areas were also encouraged to issue medium-term notes, corporate bonds and short-term bonds, securing total financing of 52.3 billion yuan.

An information system was also developed last year to evaluate the effect of these financial measures on poverty reduction.

[Beijing issues yellow alert for smog](#)

Beijing issued a yellow alert for heavy air pollution Tuesday as a new round of smog hit the city, authorities said.

The alert indicates an air quality index of over 200, or over 150 micrograms of PM 2.5 per cubic meter of air for two consecutive days, was issued at 10 a.m., according to a statement by the city's air pollution emergency response office.

Air quality will improve around noon Thursday, according to the statement.

Outdoor construction will be limited, while more road cleaning will be conducted.

Beijing has a four-tier color alert system for pollution, with red the highest, followed by orange, yellow and blue.

Smog is also predicted in large parts of northern China on Tuesday and Wednesday.