
277 miners die in SA in 2008 - Minister

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Mineral Resources Minister Susan Shabangu said that some 277 workers have died in South African mines in the past year, almost half of them in illegal operations.

Shabangu in a written reply to a question in parliament said that "The number of deaths due to mining incidents for the period of June 1, 2008 to June 1, 2009 were 142 deaths of miners lawfully employed, 135 deaths of illegal miners."

Shabangu gave no comparable figures for the same period the previous year. For the whole of last year 168 workers died in legal operations, down 24% from 2007 when 221 fatalities were reported, according to data.

The South African government has resorted to shutting down mines temporarily as it tries to enforce safety measures and curb deaths that have hurt output in the world's top platinum producer and No. 3 gold producer.

South Africa, which has the world's deepest mines, has one of the highest rates of work-related mining deaths in the industrialized world.

(Sourced from Reuters)

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