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## Coal mining in Sawahlunto halted after deadly blast

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The Jakarta Post reported that all mining activities in Sawahlunto, West Sumatra are at a standstill after a major underground explosion killed at least 31 miners and buried 12 others. They added the 12 missing miners were feared dead after being trapped underground for more than a day.

The order to halt all mining activities was issued by Sawahlunto Mayor Mr Amran Nur to 13 coal mining firms operating in the area, including PT Detras in Bukit Bual, where the fatal blast occurred Tuesday.

The mayor said that "Company operations have been temporarily closed until they comply with proper mining procedures and ensure the safety of miners."

Mr Amran said the Sawahlunto mining office had tried to prevent accidents in the mine by reviewing operations after examining the levels of methane gas in the mine.

He added that "But miners expelled and chased away officials assigned to investigate the site in December 2001."

The mayor admitted the levels of methane gas in the mine were dangerously high due to a lack of ventilation.

(Sourced from [news.asiaone.com](http://news.asiaone.com))

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