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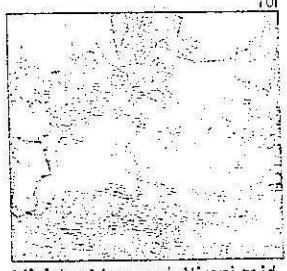
ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE : 25/1/24

3 detained, probe ordered after 6 die in Shivamogga explosion

Udaya Kumar | TNN

Shivamogga/Bengaluru: Three persons were detained and a high-level probe was ordered into the blast which killed at least six men in Hunasodu village of Shivamogga district late Thursday night.

While three of the dead are migrant workers from AP, two are from Bhadravathi in Shivamogga, officials said. CM BS Yediyurappa said



Minister Murugesh Nirani said it's not clear if the explosive substance was gelatin

stringent action would be taken against the guilty. He announced Rs 5 lakh as compensation for kin of the deceased.

Home minister Basavaraj Bommai said cops have detained three persons, including the quarry owner and a gelatin stick supplier, and are interrogating them to confirm the kind of explosives used in the quarry and their shipment.

► Explosive shipment, P 8

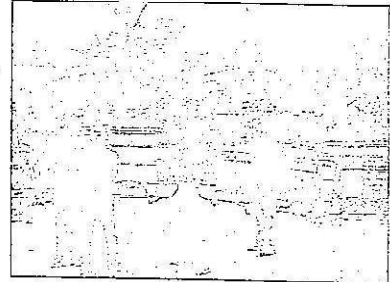
MLC claims officials colluding with owners of illegal mines

HDK: Govt Should Go After Big Fish

TIMES NEWS NETWORK
25/1/24

Shivamogga: A day after the deaths of five people at a stone quarry following explosion of gelatin sticks in Shivamogga, elected representatives on Friday aimed their guns at officials for failing to check illegal mining in the district.

Pointing out that the blast had occurred at an illegal stone mining site, BJP MLC Aynur Manjunath accused officials of colluding with owners of many such units. "Many illegal mining units are operational in the area. Corrupt officials are



NO-GO ZONE: Barricades put up at the blast site in Hunasodu village, Shivamogga

in the district connecting Shivamogga to Shikaripur, the CM's constituency.

Shivamogga district in-charge minister KS Eshwarappa said illegal quarries were operating in and around the vicinity of the site where the blast happened. "Explosives are transported illegally from these sites. I have received complaints about illegal quarries," he said.

Former CM HD Kumaraswamy, meanwhile, called on the Yediyurappa-led government to crack the whip on those responsible. "The government must look into the incident thoroughly, and put an end to illegal mining in the area. It must go after the big sharks, not target the small fish," the former CM said.

KPCC spokesperson KB Prasanna Kumar demanded Eshwarappa's resignation. He alleged the involvement of politicians and senior government officials in the illegal mining business.

Probe to focus on explosive shipment

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Mining and geology minister Murugesh Nirani after inspecting the blast site said five bodies have been recovered. He said it's not clear if the explosive substance found at the site was gelatin or some other material but added that a large quantity of explosive was shipped to the site. "Minerals are mined illegally in the state and we're verifying if the stone quarry was operating illegally," he said, adding that the probe will focus on shipment of explosives to the site.

Authorities are piecing together evidence to figure out what led to the explosion of the parked truck loaded with explosives. Locals said it happened when the consignment was being unloaded from the truck. The blast caused damage to buildings and civic infrastructure in Shivamogga. Some houses developed cracks and roof tiles and windowpanes shattered. Manoj Rajan, director, Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre, said there was no earthquake or tremors in the area.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted the state government is providing all possible assistance to the affected. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also offered condolences to victims' families.

SHIVAMOGGA BLAST

to blame for the tragedy. Politicians are among those involved in this illegal business. Chief minister BS Yediyurappa needs to initiate stringent action against those responsible for the tragedy. I will write to the Prime Minister seeking his intervention," Manjunath said.

Most labourers, numbering in hundreds, are either from neighbouring states or from North India. The illegal units are found mostly in Hunasodu and neighbouring villages such as Basavanaguru and Kote Ganaguru. Most of these quarries are situated around 10km from Shivamogga town, off Savalanga Road, a lifeli-