
8 Miners Still Trapped in Nicaraguan Gold Mine

01/09/2014



Rescue teams continue to look for miners trapped in a gold mine in Nicaragua, after the mine collapsed following heavy rains Thursday morning. Twenty miners were pulled out one-by-one on Friday, with officials reporting that there are eight miners still missing.

Initially officials reported that five miners were still trapped, although they later determined that three other miners remain unaccounted for. Rescue teams found the first 20 miners 400 meters below the surface in a tunnel.

Several miners left the hospital on Saturday and joined rescue efforts to locate the remaining miners. Others remain hospitalized in stable condition in a clinic in El Comal, 450 kilometers from Managua, the nation's capital.

The cave-in happened near the town of Bonanza, located near Nicaragua's largest gold mines. Mining has boomed in Nicaragua as the price of gold has risen from \$400 an ounce to more than \$1,200. Informal gold mining in Bonanza employs an estimated 6,000 people.

The gold mine, operated by Hemco, is owned by Colombian-based Minero SA. The miners are allowed to work in the area if they sell their gold to the mining company, often in precarious conditions with two miners dying in a landslide just last month..

Hemco is Nicaragua's 12th largest exporter and processes an estimated 700 tons of material daily.

