

Beat: Miscellaneous

Gas explosion in central Prague injures 35

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USPA News - A large gas explosion Monday morning ripped through a building in downtown Prague, injuring more than 30 people, local authorities said. Initial reports that a number of people were trapped under the rubble turned out to be unfounded.

The incident occurred shortly before 10 a.m. local time in a building belonging to the Air Navigation Services of the Czech Republic, located on Divadelni street in the center of Prague, the country's capital. The sound of the powerful explosion could be felt up to 1.5 kilometer (0.9 mile) away from the scene. Prague Mayor Bohuslav Svoboda, who went to the scene, said a strong smell of gas initially made it difficult for search dogs to search the rubble to check whether anyone had been trapped. But no victims were found under the rubble, and authorities confirmed no one was reported missing. "According to my information, it was not a terrorist attack. The most likely cause is a gas explosion, which is being investigated," Svoboda said. He initially said around 40 people were injured, but emergency officials clarified that 35 people had been injured, including one person with serious injuries. Several nearby buildings were also damaged by the explosion, including the National Theatre, the Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts, and other academic buildings. Police cordoned off the area and traffic was not allowed through as investigators began their investigation.

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