

Thousands Evacuated as Germany Defuses World War II-Era Bombs



Berlin, July 20 (RHC)-- Thousands of people have been evacuated in northern Germany as the government is set to defuse unexploded bombs left from the World War II there. Officials in northern Germany evacuated around 16,000 people from their homes on Sunday near the city of Hanover.

Authorities also closed a major section of the Autobahn or the federal controlled-access highway system in the area. Unexploded bombs dating back to the aerial bombing of Germany by the United Kingdom, the U.S., and Russia during World War II are still frequently found. Most local authorities have teams working full-time to detect and defuse them across the country.

Last month, German authorities evacuated around 20,000 people from their homes in the western city of Cologne to defuse an American-made bomb unearthed during construction work. Barely does a week go by in Germany without a city street or motorway cordoned off or even evacuated due to an unexploded bomb being discovered.

As Germany rebuilt its cities after the war, authorities didn't have the time or the means to locate and dispose many of the unexploded bombs the country was attacked with.

According to government figures, more than 2,000 tons of American and British aerial bombs and all sorts of munitions ranging from German hand grenades and tank mines to Russian artillery shells are recovered each year.

Experts warn that these devices are as dangerous now as they were during the war, prompting the regularity of wide-scale evacuations.

Bomb disposal experts in Germany defused a 1.8-ton bomb in the river Rhine in 2011. Tens of thousands of residents were evacuated from homes, hospitals, and even a prison.

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