

This is already the sixth ('?) accident on product pipelines within the oblast since January of this year.

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TRANSPORT - ROAD

Improvements Needed on Magadan - Kolyma Highway

Through the gray smoke could be seen the glimmering suburbs of Magadan - Uptar, Sokol, Stekolnyi... The great northern highway- breadwinner for the region - ran through the most bustling localities, through the richest parts of the gold mining region. The road was pushed through in the 1930's, at the cost of unbelievable efforts among miry swamps, brooding cliffs and permafrost.

Day and night vehicles pass along the "Kolymka" carrying equipment, fuel, building materials, and timber. It has become the primary carrier of regional freight. "If Magadan is the brain and heart of the Kolyma region," someone said to me in one highway administration, "the highway is its aorta."

Our road wound some exhausting kilometres on to the wheels, groaned as if in pain, and struggled on. On one section of road, 150 kilometres before the town of Yablonevyyi, conditions are more or less tolerable: repair and construction work is extensive here. Beyond that point began miles of suffering. At the 230-kilometre mark we skidded to a halt. We climbed out and gaped in amazement: ahead of us was a very long line of heavy trucks standing motionless.