

MISCELLANEOUS

Thirteen Thousand Meters Under the Ground

Written on site

At the Kola ultra-deep borehole, located several kilometers from the city of Zapolyarnyy, a new stage of work has begun: the turbo-drill has already descended to a depth of 12 kilometers 115 meters. The task of the expedition is to drill to 14-14.5 thousand meters.

The sun was no longer visible above the horizon and for a short time only the cumulus clouds in the grayish sky were rose tinted. After that the polar tundra and the snow mounds which clustered near the road became dark blue. From far away the construction of the Kola ultra-deep borehole looked like an ocean submarine with a tall conning tower. "Only the periscope protruded, but downwards rather than upwards, helping the 'captains' to find out what was going on there," - this is what occurred to me before my meeting with the interesting people who had linked their fate with a unique achievement of our time.

My first thoughts are of the many readers who, having quickly glanced at the first lines of the reports will exclaim to themselves: "And why is all this necessary?" During the four hours of travel from Murmansk to Zapolyarnyy, this question also tormented me, since I am not a specialist in the geology of ultra-deep (or shallow) drilling. I also thought about this on my return to Moscow.