2 Mine Accidents Kill 37

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A miner smoking outside a mine in the Luhansk region on Friday.

KIEV — Ukraine held a national day of mourning Sunday after accidents at two coal mines killed 37 people.

An explosion in a mine in the Luhansk region early Friday killed at least 26 people and injured two, according to a report on the Emergency Situations Ministry's web site.

Also early Friday, 11 miners died and four were injured at a state-owned mine in the neighboring Donetsk region when a piece of heavy machinery collapsed.

The Luhansk disaster was the deadliest in a Ukrainian coal mine since 2007, raising concern about the industry's safety standards. The mine is owned by Ukraine's richest man, steel tycoon Rinat Akhmetov.

President Viktor Yanukovych ordered his government on Friday to investigate the accidents and develop a program to ensure miners' safety. He published a decree on Saturday ordering state flags to fly at half mast on Sunday.

The Emergency Situations Ministry said the causes of the disasters had not yet been established.

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