

Ukraine Interior Minister Among 14 Killed in Helicopter Crash Near Kyiv

January 18, 2023



A helicopter crashed near a kindergarten and a residential building in the city of Brovary. **Sergei Dolzhenko / EPA / TASS**

Updates with reduced death toll, adds tributes to the dead.

At least 14 people, including Ukraine's interior minister, have been killed in a helicopter crash outside the Ukrainian capital Kyiv, authorities said Wednesday, in what President Volodymyr Zelensky has called a "terrible tragedy."

The aircraft fell near a kindergarten in the town of Brovary, some 20 kilometers northeast of Kyiv, while children and staff were inside the building, according to Kyrylo Tymoshenko, deputy head of the Ukrainian presidential office. Eyewitness footage from the aftermath shows a massive fire raging at the crash site.

Ukrainian Interior Minister Denys Monastyrsky, who was onboard the helicopter with other ministry officials, was killed in the crash, Ukrainian national police chief Igor Klymenko [said](#) in a statement on social media.

Monastyrsky's first deputy Yevhen Yenin and the ministry's State Secretary Yuriy Lubkovych were also killed.

Officials initially said that 18 people died but subsequently revised the toll down to 14, including a child. A further 29 people, 15 of whom are children, have been hospitalized with injuries, head of the Kyiv regional administration, Oleksiy Kuleba said.

The Ukrainian presidency said the helicopter had been flying toward frontline regions in eastern Ukraine when it crashed.

"The purpose of the helicopter flight was to carry out work in one of the hotspots of our country where hostilities are ongoing. The interior minister was heading there," the deputy head of the Ukrainian presidential office, Kyrylo Tymoshenko, said on local television.

There was no immediate claim from Kyiv that Russian forces were involved in the tragedy, and authorities launched an investigation while crews were still working near the charred remains of the aircraft.

Ukraine's Interior Ministry [said](#) it was considering sabotage, equipment malfunction, or violation of safety rules as possible causes.

Zelensky said he has instructed the SBU state security service, the Ukrainian national police, and other authorized agencies to determine the circumstances of the crash.

Embed:

Oh... A helicopter crashed near a kindergarten in Brovary, Kyiv region, and a fire broke out. A rescue operation continues, at least 5 wounded. The reason is not reported... pic.twitter.com/sLmxGABr5k

— Iuliia Mendel (@IuliiaMendel) [January 18, 2023](#)

Embed:

В Броварах Киевской области возле здания детского сада упал вертолет.

МВД Украины сообщает о пяти пострадавших pic.twitter.com/OI7sPLTMp7

— Холод (@holodmedia) [January 18, 2023](#)

In a statement on social media, Zelensky [said](#) the crash was a "terrible tragedy" and called Monastyrsky, Yenin and Lubkovych "true patriots of Ukraine."

Kyiv mayor Vitaly Klitschko also paid homage to Monastyrsky, calling him "young, very

creative, good person ... always proactive in supporting and defending the lives of our citizens."

Monastyrsky, 42, a trained lawyer, who had served as Ukraine's interior minister from July 2021, was a key member of Zelensky's party. He is survived by his wife and two children.

Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said the deaths of Monastyrsky and two other senior officials were "a great loss for the government team and the entire state."

Western officials offered condolences to Ukraine over the fatal crash.

"We grieve with all those who are mourning this heartbreaking tragedy," U.S. President Joe Biden said in a statement, reiterating the United States' "unfailing partnership" with Ukraine amid Russia's invasion and calling Monastyrsky a "reformer and patriot."

"We join Ukraine in grief following the tragic helicopter accident," European Union chief Charles Michel said in a message posted to social media, calling Monastyrsky "a great friend of the EU."

Russian and Ukrainian forces fought for control of Brovary during the early stages of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine until Russian troops withdrew in early April.

The crash comes days after a Russian missile hit a residential building in the central-eastern Ukrainian city of Dnipro, killing at least 45 people, including six children.

AFP contributed reporting.

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