

apostar e sports

The global players union for professional footballers has confirmed two Ukrainian stars have died during Russia's invasion.

FIFPRO revealed on Wednesday: Vitalii Sapylo, 21, and Dmytro Martynenko, 25, had been killed in Ukraine.

Our thoughts are with the families, friends, and teammates of young Ukrainian footballers Vitalii Sapylo and Dmytro Martynenko, football's first reported losses in this war, FIFPRO tweeted. May they both rest in peace.

Sapylo played for Karpaty Lviv's youth team as a goalkeeper and the club paid tribute to him in a statement that said: We cherish the eternal memory of this hero.

Sapylo's father Roman reportedly told German publication BILD: He was such a happy, fun-loving boy. It was an air strike by that damn Putin. He took my child from me.

He really wanted to fight. First one tank broke down, then the second. But under no circumstances did he want to leave the front.

Martynenko played for Ukrainian second-division side FC Gostomel.

On Wednesday FIFPRO's General Secretary Jonas Baer-Hoffmann spoke to BBC radio about the tragedy.

We've had confirmation from the ground (of their deaths) which is of course incredibly sad, he said. We don't have clear information on how many of our members are really currently involved in the conflict.

Of course there are still hundreds of Ukrainian players, male and female, in the country so it's very difficult right now to get an overview how many of them are at what degree of risk.

Our union on the ground is effectively working out of bunkers and cellars.

These two players have passed away as part of this military invasion.

They're showing how football and sport in general is just a n afterthought because they're just individuals who unfortunately got caught up