

One die, others injured in Edo community festival

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One person has been killed and several others injured at the conclusion of the first phase of the Olimi Festival in Okpella, Etsako East Local Government Area.

Also, two motorcyclists, popularly known as okada, riders have been crushed to death at Idogbo in headquarters of Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area of **Edo State**.

The deceased in Okpella, identified as Dickson Aliu, was reportedly stabbed to death by yet-to-be identified assailants after residents retired to their homes after the festival.

The traditional ruler of Okpella, the Okuokpellagbe of Okpella, Micheal Sado, condoled with the bereaved families, saying every loss of life in the community was painful and unacceptable.

The monarch said he issued directives forbidding the possession of firearms, battle axes, or cutlasses during the festival.

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In a statement in Benin City, the king recalled that he invited security agencies and urged them to remain on high alert as well as guarantee peace before, during, and after the festivities.

He said he authorised deployment of advanced technology, including drones, to monitor compliance and document any individual bearing prohibited materials.

“Regrettably, despite these precautions, a tragic incident occurred later that night after the festival had ended and the community had retired, leading to the loss of one of our sons.

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"We call on all residents of Okpella, particularly our young men and all community groups, to remain calm, law-abiding, and peaceful as the security agencies carry out their investigations.

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"No one should take the law into their own hands. It is imperative that we resist the urge to let emotions dictate our actions or words. Prejudging outcomes or directing accusations without evidence does not serve justice; it only obscures the truth and hinders the work of those tasked with finding it.

"The Okuokpellagbe remains committed to peace, and no amount of provocative language will alter that stance. We encourage everyone to cooperate fully with law enforcement and to allow facts, not anger, to guide public discourse. Those responsible for any criminal acts will eventually be identified through proper process."

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"The Palace therefore expresses complete confidence that the police will carry out a thorough investigation and that those found responsible will face the full weight of the law."

The men were crushed after a truck driver lost control and rammed into them at the Idogbo by-pass on the Benin-Abraka highway.

Witnesses said the truck was coming from the Abraka end of the highway when it lost control.

The Police spokesman, Eno Ikoedem, confirmed the incident and said it happened on Saturday.

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She said the truck driver had been arrested for further investigation.