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Thursday, 18 November 2010 00:00



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Gov. Bukola Saraki

At least eleven supporters of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) died in a **stampede** at the ruling party's popular 'Mandate' campaign office along Olohunshogo area of Ilorin, capital the Kwara State on Sallah day, police sources informed Daily Trust yesterday. Mandate House is the office complex of **Governor Bukola Saraki's** presidential campaign organisation in the state.

A reliable source at the State Police command said the **stampede** occurred when the party supporters were making frantic efforts to get a share of **rice** and some other food items during a Sallah party organised by the state PDP on Tuesday evening. A very large crowd of

party supporters had gathered for the party and many people fainted during the rush to get at the food. Daily Trust also learnt that six other victims of the **stampede** who sustained serious injuries are now receiving treatment at Sobi Specialist Hospital in Ilorin. Dr. Steven Arigide told Daily Trust on telephone that the six victims on admission at the hospital suffered only "minor injuries."

However, the Kwara State government denied that **11** people died, saying only four deaths were confirmed. The government statement signed by the governor's Chief Press Secretary Alhaji Mas'ud Adebimpe said, "Kwara State Governor Dr Abubakar Bukola Saraki has commiserated with the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) family in the State on the death of about four of its members who died during the Sallah celebration."

In the condolence message, which was addressed to the PDP leadership and families of the bereaved, the governor expressed shock and sorrow over the sad event, saying "the deceased would be greatly missed by both the party and their families." He described the death of the PDP stalwarts as a painful one as well as a great loss to the state.

Governor Saraki also sent a high powered government delegation to commiserate with the families of the victims, while the government said it had taken up the bills of those receiving treatment in the hospital.

Saraki, who also visited the injured persons at the State Specialist Hospital, Sobi, cancelled all his official engagements for the day as a mark of respect for the deceased.

The Kwara Police Command's Public Relations Officer Dabo Ezekiel said, "No report on the incident has been made to the police, so we have no comment." State chairman of the PDP Chief Aiyedun, when contacted on phone, said he was away to his home town for the Sallah holidays and could not comment.

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