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Kwara Sallah tragedy: Death toll rises to 20

Posted by: Adekunle Jimoh, Ilorin in Featured, News 9 hours ago

The number of people who died in Wednesday night's stampede in Ilorin, the Kwara State capital, has risen to 20, according to an unconfirmed report.

Among the dead, sources said, were three expectant mothers.

Scores of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) members, who had queued at the home of the late Dr Olusola Saraki's Ilofa Road home at the Government Reservation Area (GRA), were reportedly trampled to death.

The victims, said to be predominantly women, were taking turns to collect their Sallah gifts, which resulted in the stampede.

But the PDP claimed only four people died in the incident.

Similar incidents happened in 2010 and 2011 at the Mandate Office and Olorunsogo House belonging to the late Saraki.

The bodies of the victims in Wednesday night's incident were said to have been deposited at the government-owned Sobi Specialist Hospital.

The injured are recuperating at the Civil Service Clinic, a walking distance from the scene of the incident.

The Chief Medical Director (CMD) of the Sobi Specialist Hospital, Dr Stephen Arigidi, declined to comment on the matter.

He referred reporters to the Commissioner for Health, Kayode Issa.

When our correspondent visited one of the wards at the Civil Service Clinic, eight of the injured were seen to be recuperating.

A former Kwara State Governor Bukola Saraki yesterday expressed deep sadness on the death of PDP supporters during the stampede in Ilorin.

In statement in Ilorin, the senator representing Kwara Central at the National Assembly said: "I'm deeply saddened to receive the news about the loss of some of our party members, who were stampeded after the Sallah festivities at the Charity House.

"Our party's strength resides solely in the support from party faithful, which gives us huge confidence always – it's very painful to have lost these party faithful.

"I commiserate with the families of the deceased and pray that Allah grant us the strength to bear the loss. To those responding to treatment, I wish them speedy recovery.

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