Beat: News

Ivory Coast declares 3-day national mourning for stampede victims

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USPA News - Côte d`Ivoire (Ivory Coast) President Alassane Ouattara on Wednesday declared three days of national mourning after at least 60 people were killed and hundreds more were injured in a stampede at a New Year`s Eve fireworks display. The stampede happened outside the Stade Félix Houphouët-Boigny stadium in Abidjan, the country`s capital, after a fireworks display to ring in the new year.

Authorities have said 60 people were killed while more than 200 people were injured, including 49 people who were in a serious condition. A statement from the presidency said Ouattara had declared three days of national mourning which began on Wednesday morning. "The President of the Republic extends his condolences to the families and relatives of the victims and assures them of all his compassion amidst these painful circumstances," the statement said. On Tuesday, hours after the stampede, Ouattara went to the scene and also visited some of the injured who were taken to University Hospital Center (CHU) in Cocody. He instructed the authorities to carry out a swift investigation to determine the exact cause and circumstances which led to the tragedy. Few details have been released by the authorities, but witnesses have said the stampede took place when thousands of people were trying to leave the area as another large crowd began to arrive. Photos from the scene showed numerous bodies, piles of abandoned shoes and other clothes. It is not the first time a stampede took place at the Stade Félix Houphouët-Boigny stadium. In March 2009, at least 22 people were killed and more than 130 others were injured when thousands of people tried to squeeze into the city`s main stadium during a World Cup qualifier.

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