Beat: Entertainment

Facebook party invite sparks rioting in New Zealand

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USPA News - A party at a house in New Zealand ended in rioting late on Friday when more than 500 people responded to a public invitation on the social networking website Facebook, authorities said. Several people were arrested while a number of people were injured.

Police in the city of Hamilton, on the North Island of New Zealand, first became aware of the public Facebook invitation at about 9 p.m. local time. Officers were called to the scene about two hours later when the owners of the property requested police assistance in shutting down the party, which had more than 500 people in attendance by then. Senior Sergeant Andrew O`Reilly of Waikato Police said partygoers left the property when police responded but started to throw bottles - among other items - at officers as they gathered on the street outside. "As the large group was moved on, further bottles were thrown at police, and several fights broke out among the group," he said. A total of 10 people were arrested by 3 a.m. as a direct result of the disorder, but more arrests were possible as further incidents were being reported in the area. O`Reilly explained that alcohol and the age of those drinking played a large role in the disorder and warned that anyone who supplies alcohol to under 18s will be prosecuted. A number of people were also injured during the disturbance, including one person who was taken to Waikato Hospital after being knocked out and left bleeding on the side of the road. "We know there were a number of people who were seen with injuries as a result of fighting amongst themselves, [but] most didn`t want police or ambulance attention," O`Reilly said, adding that none of the officers were injured. Similar incidents involving public Facebook invitations have been reported in the past. Riots broke out in the Dutch town of Haren in September 2012 when thousands of people showed up at a girl`s 16th birthday party, injuring about 45 people and causing damages worth millions of euros.

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