

Ulster St. Patrick's parade called off

by UPI

LURGAN, Northern Ireland -- The Lurgan, Northern Ireland, St. Patrick's Day parade was canceled Tuesday because of heightened sectarian tensions, officials said.

The slaying of a police constable in the town, as well as the killings of two British soldiers elsewhere in Northern Ireland in recent acts claimed by dissident Irish republicans, has sparked sporadic clashes between local youths and police, prompting organizers to cancel the parade, RTE reported.

The decision was made Monday night during a meeting of the organizers, the St. Peter's Gaelic Athletic Association club, as 11 people were being questioned about the killings of the constable and two soldiers, The Times of London said.

But elsewhere in Ireland, the St. Patrick's Day festivities went on. In Dublin, around 500,000 people lined the streets for the annual parade, where four grand marshals headed the procession, whose theme was a tribute to 125 years of the Gaelic Games, Wicklow People reported.

Meanwhile, 60,000 people from across Ireland's Midwest attended the biggest-ever parade in Limerick, where warm sunshine greeted spectators, the Limerick Leader said.

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