OTAS LIVE

Supporting Events and Professionals at Every Stage

OTAS Insight, event security. Article

When everyone is told to come in at once

A crush at a gate in Sialkot, and what it means for doors, announcements and free events with a set start time



Illustrative image

Operational **Tactical** **Strategic**

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OTAS Live Ltd.

SUMMARY

Police in Sialkot say one announcement told a whole crowd to enter at once. The gate is where that call landed.

2

people died. Police told Dawn 18 were injured. PTI reported more than two dozen [1][2][3]

1

announcement over the loudspeakers told everyone to enter at once, police said [1][2]

6

people arrested, police said. A police case is open and nothing has been proven [1][2]

ACTION

Before your next free event with a set start time, decide who may speak on the PA at doors, and plan entry in stages.

By OTAS Insights. Edited by Kris Dailly. Correct as of 3 November 2026.



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01
Read this first

Sources: 8 public sources opened on 3 November 2026. They are two reports in Dawn, a PTI report published by the Hindustan Times, and five HSE guidance pages. Reports differ on the day and on the number injured, so we give both and say who reported what. We do not name any person, organiser or ground. Each fact carries its source number. Everything without a source number is OTAS guidance for event professionals.

At a prize draw and wedding celebration at a sports ground in Sialkot, Pakistan, people were crushed at the gate as the crowd tried to get in [1][2][3]. Dawn reported the event on the night of Friday 30 October, with the police report dated 31 October [1]. A PTI report said it happened on Saturday evening [3]. Police said an announcement over the loudspeakers told everyone to enter the ground at the same time [1][2]. Two people died [1][2]. Police told Dawn that 18 people were injured [2]. PTI, quoting a police officer, reported more than two dozen [3]. The police case is open and nothing has been proven. This Insight is about the gate and the announcement, and what event teams in the UK can take from them this season.

> **In short:** one call to come in at once can turn a queue into a crush at the gate. Decide before doors who may speak on the PA, open the gate in stages, keep the queue moving forward only, and give stewards a clear way to stop entry without force.

Five things to take away

01	The queue is part of your event. Plan it like a standing area.
02	One announcement can move a whole crowd. Control who speaks at doors.
03	Open the gate in stages, at a rate the space inside can take.
04	Stewards need a way to stop entry that never relies on pushing people back.
05	Free events with a set start time bring the same risk in the UK this season.

ACTION

Read the case, then share the actions with your team.



02

What was reported

Two reports in Dawn and one PTI report give most of what is known [1][2][3]. They differ on the day and on the number injured, so both are shown with their source.

A speaker on a pole above a crowd behind a fence. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

The event

What	A wedding celebration with a prize draw, promoted to the public, at a sports ground in Sialkot [1][3].
When	Dawn reported Friday night, 30 October, with the police report dated 31 October [1]. PTI reported Saturday evening [3].
The crowd	Hundreds had gathered at the site when the gates opened, Dawn reported [1].
The permit	A district spokesperson said a permit was issued for a private gathering in an enclosed space, and was revoked after reports of irregularities from about 16:00 local time (11:00 UK time) [1][2].

At the gate

The call	Police said an announcement over the loudspeakers told everyone to enter the ground at the same time, and that this triggered the crush [1][2].
The footage	Dawn reported that video showed guards opening the gate, then a man asking them to push people out, and using a wooden club to do so himself [2].
Witnesses	A police officer told PTI that eyewitnesses blamed poor crowd management, confusing announcements and alleged use of force by security guards [3].
The case	Police registered a case against the organisers, the ground owner and up to 45 security guards, and arrested six people [1][2]. PTI reported that the event's host says the crush was an accident and that he was not at the ground when it happened [3]. Police said their investigation was continuing [1].

	As reported
Deaths	Two [1][2][3]
Injured, police via Dawn	18 [1][2]
Injured, PTI	More than two dozen [3]
Injured, first rescue count	13, with residents putting it higher [1]
Arrests	Six [1][2]

Table 1. The reported figures, with their source. Dawn [1][2], PTI via the Hindustan Times [3].

ACTION

Read your own doors plan and find the moment where one sentence on the PA could send everyone forward at once.

03
Where the reports differ

The reports do not agree on every detail. This is what each one said.

Detail	Dawn	PTI
Day	Friday night, 30 October. Police report dated 31 October [1]	Saturday evening [3]
Injured	18, from Sialkot police [1][2]	More than two dozen, from a police officer [3]
The call to enter	An announcement over the loudspeakers, police said [1][2]	An announcement from the stage, a police officer said [3]

Table 3. Where the reports differ. Dawn [1][2], PTI via the Hindustan Times [3].

We use the police figure of 18 injured where one number is needed, and say where it comes from. Rescue services first counted 13 injured, and residents put the number higher [1].

ACTION

When you brief on an incident like this, give the source with each number.

04

The PA at doors

Police said the call to enter came over the loudspeakers [1][2]. OTAS guidance on the PA at doors follows.

Before the day

- Write the doors script: the time doors open, how entry works, and what to do while waiting.
- Write the hold script: a calm request to stop and wait, with a reason.
- Name who may use the PA at doors. Nobody else does.

On the day

- Keep a steward or supervisor next to the microphone at doors.
- Repeat the same message on the PA, on screens and from stewards.
- HSE says to plan for the PA failing, with back up loud hailers [7].

ACTION

Write the doors script and the hold script today, and give them to whoever will hold the microphone.



05

Why the gate is the pressure point

The reports describe one call to enter, a gate opening, and then an attempt to push people back [1][2][3]. The rest of this section is OTAS guidance, drawing on HSE.

Letting people in a few at a time. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

How one call becomes pressure at the gate

1	2	3	4	5
Promote the event	Crowd gathers	One call to enter	The gate opens	Pressure builds

The call to enter is the step you control. Plan who makes it, and when. OTAS guidance.

The call

An instruction heard by everyone at once moves everyone at once. People at the back cannot see the gate and keep moving forward.

The wait

The longer a crowd waits, the more people arrive behind it. HSE warns that delays may cause people to surge when the doors open [4].

The opening

A gate opening is the moment of highest pressure. If the space inside cannot take the flow, the pressure stays at the gate.

Pushing back

Trying to push a crowd back out of a gate works against the people behind. Pressure needs somewhere to go.

Mixed messages

A police officer quoted by PTI said eyewitnesses described confusing announcements [3]. If the PA and the stewards say different things, people trust neither.

ACTION

Name the one person who may tell the crowd to come in, and write it into your doors plan.

06

Six actions before your next doors

These are the six things to do first. OTAS guidance unless a source is shown.

Before doors

Capacity	Set a number for the space inside and the queue outside, and plan for more [5].
Script	Agree the PA wording for doors, delays and holds.
Roles	Name who calls doors open and who calls a hold [8].
Lanes	Set out lanes with a way to step out of the queue [5].
Count	Count people in at the gate, and know the number inside [6].
Overflow	Agree where extra people go, and with police how to send them there [5].

ACTION

Give each of the six actions a named owner today.

07

If pressure builds at the gate

A gate response, agreed before doors. OTAS guidance unless a source is shown.

The four steps

Stop at the back	Stop people joining the back of the queue. That is where the pressure comes from.
Keep the front moving	If people are already moving through the gate and the space inside can take them, keep the gate open and keep them moving. If the space inside is full, stop entry at the back of the queue and open the overflow or extra routes.
One message	Use the PA and the stewards to give one calm instruction, with a reason.
Report	Radio the location and what you see to the control point.

Never

- Push people back out of a gate.
- Use force to move a crowd.
- Let anyone outside the doors plan make an entry call.

HSE says people should be able to get out of a queue without moving against those queuing behind them [5].

ACTION

Write the gate response into your event safety plan, and brief it to every gate supervisor.

08
What to do at each level

Operational

Forward only

Radio pressure in

Never push back

Keep the queue moving forward only. If pressure builds, radio it in and wait for the hold call. Never push people back out of the gate. Help anyone who falls or needs to step out.

Tactical

Open in stages

Count people in

One message

Open the gate in stages. Count people in. Keep the PA and the stewards on one message. Stop the flow at the back if the front is under pressure.

Strategic

Set the capacity

Own the PA script

Name the doors call

Set a capacity for the space and the queue. Agree the PA script and who may use it. Name who calls doors and who calls a hold. Plan for more people than you expect.

ACTION

Pick one action at your level and do it before your next event with a set start time.

09

What we do not know yet

- Exactly what was said over the loudspeakers, and who said it.
- How many people were at the ground, and how many the gate was meant to take.
- What the investigation will find. The case is open and nothing has been proven.

ACTION

We will update this Insight if the police or the district administration publish more.

10

Coming up: free events with a set start time

Christmas lights switch-ons and winter market openings begin across the UK in the coming weeks. Many are free, and many have one moment when everyone wants to be in place. The same questions apply: who speaks at doors, how fast the gate opens, and where extra people go [4][5].

ACTION

If you need support with entry, queue and doors plans for a free event, reach out to us to see how we can support you.

Questions

Is this only a risk at free events?

No. HSE says delays at the doors can lead people to surge when the doors open [4]. Free events add the problem of not knowing how many will come.

Should we tell the crowd when the doors will open?

Yes, and keep telling them. Give the same time on the PA, on screens and from stewards. A police officer told PTI that eyewitnesses blamed confusing announcements [3].

Can stewards close the gate if it gets too busy?

Stopping the flow is the right call, but where you stop it matters. Stop people joining at the back. Closing the front while people are still pushing forward can make the pressure worse.

Who should be allowed to use the PA at doors?

Only the people named in your doors plan, reading from an agreed script. Hosts, artists and guests should not make entry calls.

What if far more people arrive than expected?

HSE says to monitor and estimate the numbers arriving, and to agree with police how extra people can be redirected, with overflow space and extra routes [5].

If someone grabbed the microphone at doors on your next event, who would stop them?

ACTION

Send us your question and we will add the answer to the next update.

Sources

Web sources opened 3 November 2026 and labelled with their publisher.

1. **Dawn, Sialkot police say six held after crush at mehndi event, 1 November 2026** dawn.com
2. **Dawn, case registered over crush that killed two and injured 18, 2 November 2026** dawn.com
3. **Hindustan Times, PTI report, two killed at wedding event in Punjab, 2 November 2026** hindustantimes.com
4. **HSE, crowd management, assess the risks** hse.gov.uk
5. **HSE, crowd management, controls** hse.gov.uk
6. **HSE, crowd management, monitoring** hse.gov.uk
7. **HSE, crowd controls inside the venue** hse.gov.uk
8. **HSE, set clear roles and responsibilities** hse.gov.uk

Related OTAS Insights

These are links to other OTAS Insights pieces, not to any OTAS Live product or service.

Christmas lights switch-ons: a capacity without a turnstile
When a social post draws a crowd: pop-up events without a plan

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Guidance: this Insight summarises HSE guidance as published on hse.gov.uk. It is not legal advice. Ask your council, the police and your safety advisory group what applies to your event.

Interest: OTAS Live Ltd, which publishes OTAS Insights, sells event operations services, handbooks and training related to this topic.

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Corrections: if you spot an error, tell us using the contact details on the OTAS Insights page and we will correct it and update the 'Correct as of' date. To ask for this Insight in another format, use the same contact details.

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Events industry since 2008, internationally since 2015.

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Images are OTAS style images, generated from real photography. None is a record of a specific event.

ACTION

Check the sources before you quote them, and tell us if any link has changed.

OVER TO YOU

If someone grabbed the microphone at doors on your next event, who would stop them?

If you need support with entry, queue and doors plans for a free event, reach out to us to see how we can support you.

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