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Tuesday, March 24, 2009

18 die in Borno, Lagos road mishaps

From Njadvara Musa (Maiduguri), Tunde Alao and Alex Olise (Lagos)

SIX people, including two children, were feared dead yesterday at Auno Junction, Borno State, when an oil tanker crashed into a bus carrying 12 passengers to Maiduguri, the state capital.

Also, tears flowed freely yesterday at Alapere, Ketu at the Lagos-Ibadan expressway in Lagos State at the scene where a truck rammed into some cars, killing five and injuring no fewer than 15 people.

According to eyewitnesses, the flour-laden truck was allegedly on high speed when it ran into the vehicles, crushing their occupants.

The truck marked SQ 83 LND and two Toyota cars involved in the accident were destroyed beyond repair.

The early-morning tragedy drew the attention of residents who helped operatives of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) in their rescue operations.

The police, who were also at the scene, later took away the remains of the dead and the injured to the state general hospital. No fewer than seven people were on Sunday night feared dead in yet another accident involving a Sports Utility Van (SUV) marked Lagos MB 829 AAA and an Opel passenger car with the registration Lagos BP 938 FKJ, along Epe/Ipeju Expressway Lagos.

According to an official of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Epe Unit, five passengers in the Opel car and two of the four occupants of the SUV died on the spot.

The SUV was Lagos-bound while the Opel car was on its way to Ijebu Ode, Ogun State.

Policemen, fire servicemen and FRSC officials used axes and other implements to cut open the vehicles before the trapped and mangled remains of the victims could be removed from the scene at about 12 a.m. yesterday.

A police source, who pleaded anonymity said: "The driver of the SUV took 'one way' in the process of evading a police checkpoint along the road and in the course, had a head-on collision with the on-coming Opel passenger car.

"When we sighted the SUV car around 8.00 p.m., the behaviour of the occupants suggested that they were heavily drunk."

Meanwhile, the seven bodied have been deposited at the morgue of the Epe General Hospital. Two injured occupants of the car are also being treated at the hospital. Website Search



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The tanker driver, according to eyewitnesses, lost control of the vehicle as he negotiated a bend on his way to Kano to lift petroleum products.

Confirming the crash and the deaths, Sector Commander of FRSC, Borno State, Donatus Edeh, disclosed that the driver was overspeeding when he negotiated the Auno bend before crashing into the bus, which was coming from Katsina State.

He said that all the eight injured passengers were receiving treatment while the remains of the six dead victims were deposited at the Umaru Shehu Specialist Hospital, Maiduguri, for identification and retrieval by their relations.

Edeh warned drivers against over-speeding and driving under the influence of alcohol, stating that most road accidents were caused by human errors and recklessness of drivers.

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