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## ACCIDENT: Pregnant Woman, 7 Others Dead

Kola Eke Ogiugo

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No fewer than seven persons, including a pregnant woman, at the weekend in Onitsha, Anambra State, lost their lives, while about 15 others sustained various degrees of injuries in an auto crash.

According to our investigation, trouble started for the victims when a 40-foot fuel-laden tanker that was descending the Akwa road in Onitsha lost its brakes and rammed into vehicles that queued up waiting for their turn to pass at the ABS/Akwa road traffic light junction.

The driver, in a bid to avoid more destruction, tried to control the tanker, but to no avail and had to first crush a blue Mitsubishi bus that loaded passengers to full capacity and then hit four tricycles at a stretch, resulting in the casualties.

An eye witness said: "The pregnant woman was standing at the bus-stop waiting for a commuter bus when she was crushed by the tanker.

"Others were mostly passengers in the four tricycles that were hit in the multiple accidents."

The Onitsha Police Area Commander, Mr. Philip Ezekiel, the Inland Town Divisional Police Officer, DPO, Mr. Isa Abubakar, were all present, battling to save lives.

However, officials of the fire service were handy with their vehicles laden with water in case of sudden fire outbreak.

The Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of Okpokpo Police Division, Mr. Emeka Ugwu was among those who sent officers and men of the police on getting distress call.

Confirming the accident, the DPO in charge of Onitsha Inland Town, Mr. Eze said, "Only the pregnant woman was killed, others were injured and sent to both Borromeo and Onitsha General Hospitals."

"Well I will soon go round when we must have cleared the road to ascertain if those who sustained injuries later gave up the ghost," he stated.

On the whereabouts of the driver and conductor, he said, "they are in our custody and the driver said he lost control of the vehicle", the DPO hinted.

At the time of filing this report, the ever-busy Akwa Road was blocked from Mba Road Junction to Okosi Road Junction to enable the evacuation of the tanker and those crushed to death.

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