

33 killed as overloaded trailer crashes in Yobe

A CRASH on Monday by an Abuja-bound trailer at Garin, a boundary village between Yobe and Bauchi states, claimed 33 lives including children.

At the time of the incident, the trailer marked GMB AA582FKY, was carrying about 76 people and at least 600 bags of cement.

Many critically injured were taken to the Potiskum General Hospital. Four children were among the survivors.

The trailer had taken off from Ashaka where it loaded the bags of cement.

But eyewitnesses said the trailer stopped over at Potiskum where it took in more than 50 passengers majority of who were headed for Kano.

The Zonal Commander of Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) RS 12, Dr. Shehu Mohammed, said 11 men, eight women and chil-

From Joel Duku,
Damaturu and Austin
Tsensughul Bauchi

dren lost their lives on the spot, while 53 were receiving medical attention at the Potiskum General Hospital.

Dr. Mohammed attributed the accident to overloading, over-speeding and sheer carelessness. He described the situation as "terribly bad".

He said, "for now, there are 39 males, four children and 10 female survivors, but some are in a very critical condition".

The FRSC immediately sent an S.O.S to Governor Buka Abba Ibrahim of Yobe State for immediate assistance to the survivors.

Though he could not give the name of the owner of the trailer, he said the driver might have died with others.

Mohammed said the driver might have lost control as a result of over-

loading.

He also said there were obvious evidence of decay on the body of the trailer.

Mallam Hussaini, the junior driver of the truck said the vehicle lost control due to power failure from the engine. This situation he said "cannot be controlled by any driver no matter how good and experienced he may be."

Another eyewitness said that people were buried with cement which is one of the reasons why an immediate death toll of 23 was recorded. Ten others later died at the General Hospital, Potiskum, Yobe State where survivors were taken to for prompt treatment.

A senior medical official at the hospital, Mrs Maidurumi confirmed the deaths.

The passengers joined the trailer due to the high transport fare, as a result of the acute fuel situation in the country.