

Three soldiers killed, three injured in APC accident

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AN Armoured Personnel Carrier belonging to the Joint Task Force in the Niger Delta on Saturday fell into a ditch, killing three soldiers and injuring two others in Okrika, Rivers State.

Six soldiers were test-driving the brand new APC which was recently deployed in Sector 2 Headquarters of the JTF in Okochiri town, when it lost control and fell into a ditch.

A source from the community said the accident might have been caused by overexcitement on the part of the soldiers, who, he said threw caution to the wind while test-driving the machine.

According to him, the APC was on top speed when the driver suddenly discovered a deep gully by the road and attempted to veer off.

He noted that the driver possibly lost control of the vehicle before it fell into the gully and trapped the six soldiers.

Recounting what happened, the source said, "We saw when they brought the new armoured car to our community. The soldiers were very happy and some of the community people too.

"But on Saturday afternoon, six of them entered the vehicle and went through the community in top speed. I don't know what they were chasing but suddenly, I heard

that they fell into a gully and all of them were trapped inside.

"Some of their colleagues came and tried to rescue them but three of the soldiers had died while three others were seriously injured. The car was pulled out of the ditch later in the evening."

The JTF spokesman in the state, Lt. Col. Sagir Musa, confirmed the incident to our correspondent on the telephone on Saturday night.

He said that the APC fell into a big ditch in Okochiri community in Okrika Local Government Area while being test-driven by six soldiers from Sector 2 command of the task force.