

Two killed in Unizik road accident

From Nwanosike Onu, Awka

TWO people were killed in a road accident that involved about 18 students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU), Awka, the Anambra State capital yesterday.

The accident when one of the school's buses that conveyed the students and a trailer rammed into each other at a junction of the school's Old Campus, Awka.

Those who lost their lives were the driver of the bus and a student.

About 11 of the students were injured. As of press time yesterday, five of them were on danger list at the Regina Caeli Hospital, Awka.

A source blamed the accident on men of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), whom, he said, pursued the trailer driver's to the junction.

But one of the FRSC officials at the scene of the accident, A.N. Amadi, denied the claim.

Other sources said the trailer driver lost control at the Independent National Electoral Commission's (INEC's) office on the Enugu-Onitsha Express on top speed, adding that no FRSC official was on its pursuit.

No council poll in Imo soon

From Emma Mgbeahurike, Owerri

THE Special Adviser to the Governor of Imo State Chief Ikedi Ohakim, Bureau for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Mr. Kezie Ogaziechi, has said the council poll will not hold soon.

This, he said, is to avoid a situation where "old brigades would hijack power and feast

phal. Maybe people were marching on me or fell on me."

Mrs. Okeke does not know exactly how many were in the crowd, but there were a lot of people.

"Someone said there was 11,000 of us," she said.

They were applying for only 100 jobs.

"We were just trying our luck," Mrs. Okeke said.

Across Nigeria a dozen people died at the weekend as over 130,000 people applied for 1,260 civil servant positions. Some died during fitness tests that were carried out during the hottest part of the day.

"Had it been that there was employment for people this sort of thing wouldn't happen," she said.

Mrs. Okeke is a qualified teacher, but she has not worked in five years.

"I don't have anything to do. I've been trying but there are no jobs at all," she said.

"There are no jobs in government schools and in private schools the pay is too small."

She said private schools only pay around N3000 (\$25, £12) per month.

The Nigerian civil service is the largest employer in the country, but in recent years posts have been

• Mrs. Okeke

One, not 10, died in Anambra, says Comptroller

THE Anambra State Comptroller Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Mr. Joshua Ayo, has said only one person died in his domain.

He said the other person who collapsed, a woman, was revived by the medical team from the state Ministry of Health.

Media reports said 10 persons died in Anambra during the exercise, while others were on danger list.

Ayo told *The Nation* yesterday in Awka that only Samuel Chima from Ekwulobia, Aguata Local Government died.

He denied that money exchanged hands between the his men and the applicants.

Said Ayo. "The minister gave us a

From Nwanosike Onu, Awka
marching order to conduct it under a level playing ground. Another marching order came from the Comptroller-General, which we complied with. We did not look at anybody's face. Rather, we concentrated on the physical feature and the standards we were looking for in those persons.

"There was no way anybody could have helped anybody even myself; there was no way I could have helped anybody because as of today, all the answer scripts have been sent to Abuja for marking, which means I have no control over it and that is why there was no way anybody could have collected any money from

anybody."

The comptroller denied that the police tear-gassed the venue, leading to the death of some of the candidates. He attributed the death to the speed with which he got to the finishing point.

He said he was the fifth person of about 5,000 candidates.

His words: "There was no case of tear-gassing, this man we are talking of outran others. In fact, he was the fifth person to arrive and he lost his breath because he did not take note of his medical position. Immediately he got to the place, he went to the examination centre without rest and that was when he slumped," Ayo said.

cut in government reforms. But with little industry or service sector, thousands of graduates emerge from col-

leges across the country every year with no prospect of getting a job. Most of Nigeria's 140m population

end up making a living in the informal economy.

• Culled from BBC

Death toll in deliverance stampede hits 20

THE death toll at a deliverance session in Umuoluihe, Isiala Ngwa South Local Government Abia State, has risen to 20.

The session, which held in the countryhome of the late Mr. Martin Okereke Ihieukwumere - who also lost his life in the incident - was supposedly for the deliverance of the family from the grasp of demonic and satanic powers said to have inhabited the compound for over five years.

Speaking to *The Nation* at Umuoluihe, one of the survivors, Mr. Linus Abba, said he and others accompanied the zonal coordinator of a pentecostal church, the late Ihieukwumere, to the town for the session, which began at about 11p.m. last Friday and ended at about

From Ugochukwu Eke, Umuahia
2a.m. the next day.

Abba said during the prayer session, he found himself using the toilet at intervals, and suddenly noticed a cloud of white smoke, adding: "That was all I could remember until I found myself in the hospital".

Also speaking, a man, who lost his wife and three children to the incident, said he was informed by his wife that they were attending the prayer session the previous night, only to hear of their death.

The deputy governor, Mr. Chris Akomas, said the government will not rest on its oars until the mystery surrounding the deaths was unravelled.

He spoke when he visited the survivors at Nneoma Hospital at

Omoba where some of them were receiving treatment.

Akomas expressed concern that the church had not sympathised with the families of the victims.

He directed the Commissioners for Health and Environment to liaise with the council chairman to fumigate the area so as to avoid an outbreak of epidemic.

Akomas praised the Medical Director of Nneoma Hospital, Dr Okey Uwah, for attending to the victims without demanding deposits, and said the government will offset the bills.

Responding, Uwah said all the victims were in of coma.

But two have regained consciousness and five have been referred to the Abia State University Teaching

Hospital (ABSUTH), Aba, he added.

The Council Chairman, Mr. Anthony Agbazuere, described the incident as a tragedy, and made a N100,000 donation for the treatment of the victims.

Agbazuere advised residents to stay away from the scene of the incident for health reasons.

The traditional ruler of Alaoma community, Eze John Onwukwe, said the community was confused since the cause of the incident was yet to be ascertained.

He urged the government to provide security for lives and property of the residents. Deputy Commissioner of Police Ibrahim Maishanu said autopsy will be done on the bodies to ascertain the cause of their deaths.