

Soldier, DSS official feared dead in A/Ibom gov's escorts accident

Iniobong Ekponta | Uyo

At least three security officers were feared dead on Tuesday in a ghastly accident involving the escort team of Governor Udom Emmanuel of Akwa Ibom State.

The incident occurred at the Ikot Akpan Ishiet portion of the Onna-Etinan road, about a kilometre to the governor's hometown, Awa, in Onna Local Government Area.

Those feared dead included a soldier and another official of the Department of State Services (DSS), while five other soldiers and mobile policemen who were injured had been taken to a hospital in Uyo, the state capital.

"The road is still under construction and the dust haze made visibility to be poor. The vehicles, four *Toyota Hilux* vans ran bumper to bumper and some veered off the road and crashed with impact.

"The driver of one of the vans was heavily covered with air bags, but he looked dead when he was pulled out of the rubble.

"The soldier badly hit in accident attempted to get up three times but fell down, still clutching his rifle. His colleagues rushed down to remove his military gears and boots for him to catch some fresh air before being moved to hospital.

When contacted on phone, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Odiko Macdon, did not pick calls put through to him on his mobile line.

The Senior Special Assistant (SSA) to the governor on Security Matters, Captain Iniobong Ekong, and the Chairman of Ibom Power Company, Mr Etido Inyang, who coordinated the rescue operations, expressed shock at the incident.

The governor's convoy was returning from his final rounds of campaigns in Mbo and Uruefong Oruko Local Government Areas and was scheduled to round off the campaigns in Onna when the incident occurred.