

Tipper driver, 10 others die in attack by police, accident

John Ameh
Onitsha

NO fewer than 11 persons were feared dead on Wednesday in two separate incidents in Anambra State involving an accident, and an encounter between riot policemen and a tipper driver.

Investigations by our correspondent on Wednesday showed that the accident, in which 10 persons reportedly lost their lives, involved a commercial bus on

the Onitsha-Owerri Road at the popular Oba Junction.

It was gathered that the 13-seater bus lost one of its front tyres in circumstances attributed to over speeding and fell into a ditch.

It was said to have burst into flames immediately, killing 10 out of the 12 passengers on board, including the driver, before help came their way.

Investigations by our correspondent also showed that a tipper driver was allegedly shot

dead by riot policemen at a checkpoint at the popular 33 area of Onitsha.

It was not clear as at press time what led to the killing, but an eyewitness alleged that the driver disobeyed the policemen's order to stop at the checkpoint.

The 33 route, which connects Nsugbe Town with Onitsha from the western part of the state, is frequently used by tipper drivers who supply sand and chippings to construction sites in Onitsha's

new layouts.

It was learnt that each time a tipper arrived at the checkpoint, the driver was expected to offer about N200 to the men manning the checkpoint to guarantee their passage.

When our correspondent sought the reactions of the Onitsha Area Commander, Mr. Matthew Uyana, an Assistant Commissioner of Police, he declined to comment on the incidents.

Uyana directed our corre-

spondent to the state command's image maker, Mr Fidelis Agbo, whom he said was in a position to speak.

"The PPRO will answer all your questions concerning what you are looking for, no me," he added.

Agbo's mobile phone, however, rang without a response as at 6.16pm on Wednesday

The Commissioner of Police Anambra State Command, Mr Haruna John, had, in keeping with the directive of the Force Headquarters, dismantled all road blocks in the state, but some policemen still mount road blocks on some major routes.

Our correspondent also made several calls to the mobile line of the state Sector Commander of the Federal Road Safety Commission, Mr Olu-Mike Olagunju, but he did not pick his phone.

Stop shedding of blood, politicians urged

Bisi Olaniyi
Yenagoa

THE Special Adviser to the Bayelsa State Governor on Political Matters, Chief Asara A. Asara, has urged politicians to shun bloodshed and politics of bitterness.

Speaking at an interactive session in

geria. Killing others to have political power is very sad."

The political adviser stressed that, as politicians were warming up for campaign and preparations towards the 2007 elections, they should have the fear of God.

He also counselled that emphasis should be placed

on issues, instead of abusive words, mudslinging and character assassination during the electioneering.

While commenting on the trend of Niger Delta youths preventing expatriates from contributing to the region's development, Asara said that it must be

halted.

He said, "You can imagine that in Bayelsa State, besides kidnapping of workers of oil companies, the youths decided to be holding expatriate staff of Julius Berger Construction Company hostage. Is it not bad?