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Truck crushes four to death, injures six

JULY 22, 2014 BY AFEEZ HANAFI ■ 2 COMMENTS

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The scene of the incident.

| credits: Afeez Hanafi

No fewer than four persons were said to have lost their lives on Monday after the driver of a truck loaded with bags of sachet water crashed into a market along LASU-Isheri Road, Odo Eran, Lagos State.

About six others, including two children, were reportedly injured in the incident that was said to have occurred at about 9.30am.

Our correspondent learnt that the driver, identified as Fredrick Stanley, had tried to avoid hitting a woman who was alighting from a tricycle before the truck crashed into the market due to a break failure.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the driver's

effort was not successful as he eventually rammed into the woman, crushing her and three others in the market to death.

The remains of the dead were said to have been deposited at a morgue in the Yaba area of the state, while the injured persons were taken to a hospital.

It was also said that some of the butchers operating in an abattoir inside the market attacked the driver with cutlasses when he attempted to flee the scene.

When our correspondent visited the place around 11.30am, the front part of the market, where pepper and other soup ingredients were being sold, was in shambles.

Items such as pepper, salt, pieces of meat, and sachets of pure water were entrapped in the rubble. Law enforcement agents were also on ground to help in the evacuation of the truck.

An eyewitness, who declined to give her name, told our correspondent that she identified four corpses and six injured persons, adding that their remains were mangled on the floor.

She said, "As far as I could see, four women died — the woman that the driver was trying to avoid, a woman who wanted to buy pepper, the pepper seller and one woman who was selling onion."

A trader in the market said it was very unfortunate that the onion seller who they used to call "Mama" died at a time she was the sole bread winner of her family since her husband died sometime last year. She said Mama was eating when the disaster befell her.

The Divisional Police Officer, Ikotun Division, Mr. Haruna Alaba, who was also at the scene of the incident, declined to give the number of the victims to our correspondent.

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However, an unnamed official of the Federal Road Safety Corps and the Chairman of the butchers in the market, Alhaji Kazeem Bamidele, said the accident claimed two lives while some persons were injured. They, however, did not disclose the number of the injured.

Bamidele also refuted the claim that his men attacked the driver.

The butchers' boss said, "It is very shocking. I was not around when it happened. They called me on the phone and on getting here I felt very sad with the situation of things. I was told that two women died while others sustained minor injuries.

"This has never happened before since this market opened 20 years ago. I pray that God give the families of the deceased the fortitude to bear the loss of their loved ones."

Bamidele explained further that the recklessness of commercial riders in the area was to a large extent responsible for the incident.

The DPO, who later addressed the riders, warned them to move their park from a sharp bend opposite the market.

"You can see that point is a sharp corner which makes it difficult for an oncoming vehicle to notice that you (riders) are there. As from now on, whoever operates near the point will be duly sanctioned," he said.

The Lagos State police spokesperson, Ngozi Braide, confirmed the incident.

She said, "An accident at Igando inward Isheri Olofin was reported to the police. It happened around 9am. The driver of a van marked, ACC 996 XG, carrying pure (sachet) water lost control and killed two persons, while others were injured. The driver's name is Fredrick Stanley and he is now in police custody."

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