

18 die, 70 injured in Katsina, Imo auto crashes

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At least 18 persons have lost their lives in a separate accident in Katsina and Imo states.

In the Katsina accident which occurred along Kaita-Dankama Highway on Thursday night, 13 people reportedly died while 70 others sustained varying degrees of injury.

Although details of circumstances surrounding the accident were still sketchy as of Friday, eyewitnesses said the Lagos-bound truck involved in the accident left Dankama few minutes before the crash occurred.

It was also learnt that the majority of the passengers inside the truck were from the neighbouring Niger Republic.

The witnesses added that 70 sheep were also killed in the accident.

The Katsina State Government however sent a delegation to attend the burial of the deceased on Thursday night at Dantakum graveyard located within the Katsina metropolis.

The delegation included commissioners of local governments, Alhaji Ya'u -Umar Gwajo-Gwajo and that of Sports and Social Development, Alhaji Sani Danlami, as well as Governor Aminu Masari's Senior Special Assistant on Restoration, Alhaji Sabo Musa, among others.

One Imam Yahaya Haruna led the funeral prayers after which all the deceased were buried according to Islamic rites.

Those who sustained injuries were said to have taken to the Federal Medical Centre, Katsina General Hospital and Amadi Rimi Orthopaedic Hospital, for treatment.

The government delegation also visited the injured at the hospitals and wished them quick recovery.

One of the government officials who participated in the burial and spoke to our correspondent on condition of anonymity said, "Thirteen persons were buried." "We learnt that 70 other victims sustained injuries," the official added.

The spokesman for the Katsina State Police Command, SP Gambo Isah, had yet to comment on the accident as of the time of filing this report.

Meanwhile, the National Emergency Management Agency has confirmed the death of five persons in an auto accident that occurred in Owerri, Imo State on Thursday.

NEMA said that Thursday's tanker accident in Owerri was as a result of reckless driving by officials of the Correctional Service in the state.

The head of Imo/Abia operations office of NEMA, Evans Ugoh, said on Friday at the scene that the accident was avoidable, adding that "five persons died."

He said, “It was not a one-way driving as reported by people, but the fear of the gun-wielding prison officials that made the tanker driver veer off the lane. We have seen the level of disaster caused as a result of the reckless driving and will make recommendations soon.”

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