

Three die in Anambra crashes, FRSC warns

Ikenna Obianeri, Awka

Owerri Road.

NO fewer than three people were killed and two others injured in three separate accidents in Anambra State on Sunday.

1. PUNCH Metro learnt that a pedestrian was crushed to death when a container detached from a truck and fell on the victim on the Upper Iweka end of the Onitsha-

2. Also, one person was killed and two others injured in an accident at the St. John Catholic Church Bus Stop by Igboekwu-Oraifite Road.

3. The third victim was killed in a crash around Tempo Umunya by Nteje-Awka Expressway.

When our correspondent visited the accident scene at Upper Iweka, he observed the corpse of the victim under the fallen container, which was conveying cartons of cosmetics.

While the contents of the container were being transferred into another truck, another trailer carrying cartons of alcoholic wine crashed at the scene, though without any casualty.

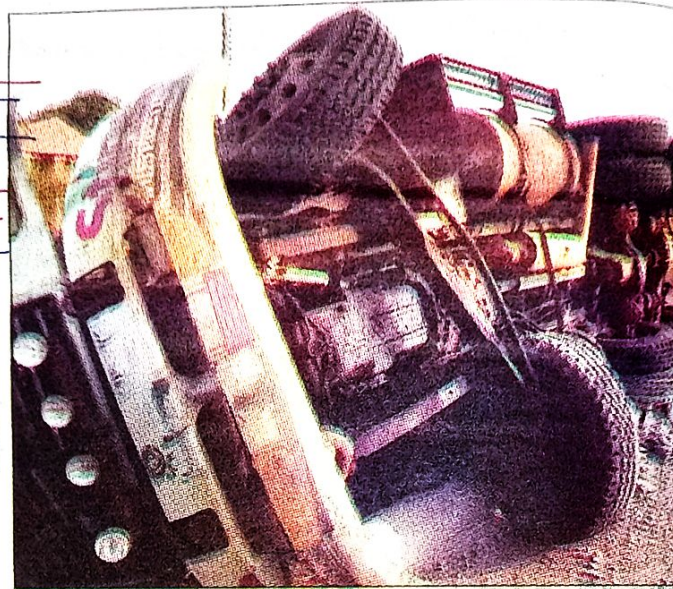
The secondary accident caused gridlock from Upper Iweka to the River Niger Bridge, as motorists and travellers contended for the small space left on the road.

The police battled to control the traffic, which was made worse by motorists who resorted to driving one way.

An eyewitness, who identified herself as Nkechi, said the container fell while the driver was trying to avoid the potholes on the road.

She said, "The container fell off the truck and crushed the man walking along the road. When the rescue team came, they had to wait for the contents of the container to be transloaded before attempting to rescue the young man."

PUNCH Metro gathered that the second accident at the St. John Catholic Church, Igboekwu-Oraifite Road,



• Scene of one of the accidents was a lone crash involving the driver of an ash-coloured

Toyota Camry with the number plate, ENU 63 AR.

Troops deployed as gunmen abduct

James Abraham, Jos

GUNMEN have kidnapped the traditional ruler of Gindiri community, in the Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State, Charles Dakat.

PUNCH Metro gathered that Dakat was abducted in the early hours of Sunday when the gunmen attacked his palace.

A resident, Helen Bulus, said, "The incident happened between 1am and 2am on Sunday. The gunmen came in large numbers.

"He was in the palace alone because his wife had travelled to Jos and the children were not also around. All through the wee hours, there was heavy shooting by the bandits in

his palace and people in the community were running in different directions.

"So, this morning at daybreak, we went to the palace only to discover that the gunmen had taken the traditional ruler away."

The lawmaker representing Mangu South in the Plateau State House of Assembly, Bala Fwange, also confirmed the incident.

According to the lawmaker, security operatives had been deployed in the community and were combing the bush in search of the kidnapped traditional ruler.

He said, "I just confirmed the kidnap incident from some of the security men. I also spoke with the paramount ruler of Mwaghavul,

against speeding

An eyewitness who did not identify himself said the car driver, Ekene Opaku, who was on speed, lost control and rammed into pedestrians in front of the church.

About 10 people, comprising three male adults and seven female adults, were reportedly involved in the crash.

Two people sustained injuries, while a female pedestrian was killed.

The third crash at the Tempo Umunya Junction by Nteje-Awka Expressway, involved a motorcycle and a hit-and-run tipper driver.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the tipper driver, who drove against traffic, rammed into the motorcycle and sped off.

Two male adults were involved in the crash.

The motorcycle rider was rushed to the Chira Hospital, Awkuzu, where he was confirmed dead and his corpse deposited in the hospital's morgue.

Our correspondent noted that men of the Federal Road Safety Corps were on ground to ensure free flow of traffic.

The Sector Commander, FRSC, Anambra State, Mr Adeoye Irelewun, sympathised with the families of the dead and wished the injured quick recoveries.

"The motoring public must maintain safe speed limit. Traffic rules and regulations must be obeyed at all times," he added.

Plateau monarch, lawmaker laments



• Plateau CP, Bartholomew Onyeaka

Mishkaham Mwaghavul, who also confirmed to me what happened. Right now, security men are in the bush trying to rescue the kidnapped traditional ruler."

The Military Information

Officer for Operation Safe Haven, Major Ishaku Takwa, when contacted, said troops of Operation Safe Haven at Gyambus had been mobilised to the area and were on the trail of the hoodlums.