

# A'ibom lawyer, two others killed in checkpoint crash

13th November 2024



Scene of the accident

By Patrick Odey

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A lawyer and two other persons have been killed and several others injured as an articulated truck conveying large consignments of flour rammed into shops at Utu Etim Ekpo, headquarters of Etim Ekpo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, *PUNCH Metro* learnt on Tuesday.

Our correspondent gathered that a woman, whose two legs were mangled in the accident, was rejected by medical workers at the nearby Divine Love Hospital at Utu Ikot Imonte, and the Utu Etim Ekpo Government Hospital.

She was later rushed to the referral University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, where she is being attended to.

When contacted, the state Sector Commander of the Federal Road Safety Corps, Commander Edward Odiete, could not be reached as his lines were switched off as of the time of filing this report.

However, the Corps Public Relations Officer in the state, John James, promised to reach back with an update “as soon as I reach the office.”

Meanwhile, a local source who identified himself as Gabriel Akpan confirmed the development to *PUNCH Metro* on Tuesday.

Another resident, Eno Umanah, a motorcycle operator, told our correspondent in Uyo that the sad incident occurred at about 8:00 pm on Monday when the truck driver fleeing from some bribe-taking security agents who mounted a roadblock at the Nkwot Ikot Ebo portion of the Iwukem-Etim Ekpo-Abak road lost control and rammed into shops, killing the victims instantly.

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He said, “The truck loaded with flour was coming from the Iwukem area of the road towards Abak, and was flagged down by soldiers mounting road block at Nkwot Ikot Ebo, but the driver refused to stop.

“The soldiers then pursued and overtook the truck, but the driver again refused to stop. The soldiers scampered away as the truck continued with speed and descended the sloop towards the roundabout, but couldn’t navigate away with the speed.

“The driver then lost control and veered off the road into several makeshift shops by the motor park, and crashed, killing the unsuspecting victims suddenly.”

*PUNCH Metro* gathered that the road had claimed several lives since it was constructed during the tenure of Godswill Akpabio.

Another resident of the area, Mr Akaninyene Umanah, said over 70 lives including about 40 church worshippers returning from a church convention, and other commercial buses and motorcyclists as victims had been lost on the road.

He blamed incessant accidents on that same spot on what he described as “poor and irregular road alignment by the contractors.