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Horror in Aba, tipper driver crushes eight pupils during devotion

Our Reporter

December 6, 2013

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- God, why me, mum whose only child is among victims

From **OKEY SAMPSON, Aba**

Tragedy of monumental proportion struck the commercial city of Aba in Abia State yesterday morning when the driver of a tipper lorry lost control and rammed into a school block, killing seven pupils inside their classrooms and injuring over 20 Others. Another child died later in hospital.

The accident occurred when the driver of the lorry marked Akwa Ibom AA 702 KTA, said to be moving on a high speed from Aba and heading towards Azumini in Ukwu East Local Government, lost control and swerved to the opposite side of the road before ramming into Glorious International Academy along Opobo Road in Ogbor Hill, owned by the Apostolic Church.

The tragedy which happened around 9am as the pupils who are mostly in pre-nursery were already in their classrooms with their teachers, they were observing morning devotion.

An eyewitness who doesn't want to be named said as the lorry rammed into the wall of the school block which also served as the fence, the wall caved in, falling on the pupils who came to school yesterday for their end-of-the-year party as the school was to formally close yesterday for the Christmas break.

He said: "The driver was heading towards Azumini and all of a sudden, he veered towards the school fence and the next thing we heard was a loud bang on the school wall. It was after the loud noise that we began to hear the teachers calling for help as the children were crying.

"So far, we were able to rescue some of the pupils, but four pupils died on the spot while three died inside the tricycle also known as *keke NAPEP*, that was taking them to the

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hospital, 20 others sustained serious injuries.”

When *Daily Sun* visited the scene, some of the pupils’ bags, lunch boxes, scandals and biscuits meant for the party were scattered on the floor of their classrooms. There were equally traces of blood on the floor and some of the desks where the pupils sat and which were all destroyed.

A parent, who was seen holding a food flask she claimed belonged to her child wept profusely as she continued to make inquiry about the whereabouts of her ward, whose fate was yet unknown at press time.

Another woman in her late 50’s, who wailed uncontrollably at the premises of the school, lamented, “God, why should it be? After seven years of waiting upon you for a child, you gave me one, so my child has just died this way. God, why me?”

At a private hospital in Aba where most of the injured were taken, a doctor refused to speak to our reporter, but another staff who volunteered to talk on condition of anonymity, said one of the children brought to the hospital died hours later while another whose condition the hospital said it would handle was taken back to the school where she equally died.

Recall that tragedy also struck the church about six years ago when a former resident pastor was murdered inside the premises by people believed to be hired assassins.

A police Inspector, who gave his name as Kuro Sogugha and who was among security agents from Azuka station, who were at the scene for rescue operation said before they could arrive, the tipper driver had escaped, but assured that police had mounted a manhunt for him. About 24 hours before the incident, another accident involving a bus belonging to the State Environmental Protection Agency (ASEPA) and two tricycles occurred in less than 500 metres along the same road, killing three persons and injuring four others.

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Chidi December 6, 2013 at 1:36 am - Reply

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