

Pregnant woman, 3 others die, 15 wounded in Aba auto crash

A tipper lorry lost control and smashed over 10 vehicles including tricycles, killing four persons, among them a pregnant woman and wounding 15 other persons in Aba last Friday.

It was gathered that the tipper with registration number Rivers: BER 27 XA was coming from the Akwa Ibom State end of the ever busy Ikot Ekpene Road when the accident happened about 7pm.

The accident occurred when the tipper, which was descending the Ogor Hill slope, developed faulty brakes and as the driver lost control of it, the vehicle which was loaded with stone chippings smashed over 10 vehicles and tricycles before veering to the other side of the road where it used two commuter buses as wedge.

An eyewitness blamed the accident on the presence of police checkpoint on the Aba River Bridge spot popularly

...Tipper trailer smashes over 10 vehicles

known as waterside.

He said if not for the policemen who stopped vehicles at the checkpoint that formed long queue of vehicles on the road, the accident could not have been in such magnitude.

One of the victims, the pregnant woman whose husband cried uncontrollably at the scene was said to have gone to a nearby market to buy some food items for the weekend when on her way back, she was hit by the trailer and died instantly.

It was gathered that immediately the accident occurred, policemen at the checkpoint vanished, leaving only the personnel of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) and passersby to battle for over four hours to bring out bodies trapped under the trailer.

The mangled body of one of the

two women killed in the accident was brought out from where it was buried under the axle of the trailer about 11pm while a three-year-old boy was brought out alive from under a commuter bus that was completely smashed.

Emenike Kalu, an Aba-based legal practitioner had God to thank as eight members of his family including four kids who were involved in the accident all came out unhurt except the sister who had little bruises on the face. His car was smashed beyond repairs.

While the dead were taken to a private mortuary in the city that night, the injured were rushed to various hospitals for treatment. Those who spoke to our correspondent blamed in accident and others that have been occurring in the area on the police checkpoint at

the Waterside bridgehead.

"We know that police checkpoints have been dismantled all over the country, but we do not know why that of Waterside is still there despite the fact that the area is prone to accident," some of them said.

When contacted, the Aba unit commander of FRSC, Akachukwu Chika who led his men to rescue the accident victims, blamed it on the rickety nature of the truck.

"The truck is not less than 30 to 40 years old and such vehicles are prone to accidents and in that regard, drivers should make sure such vehicles are thoroughly maintained."

Akachukwu advised people against using the road sideway as motor-park and trading post to avoid re-occurrence of such carnage.