

Naval officer, 16 others die in Rivers, Niger auto crashes



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By **Emmanuel Masha**



About 17 people, among them a naval officer, yesterday lost their lives in motor accidents in Rivers and Niger states. **The naval officer and five others died in an accident which involved a passengers' bus and a heavy duty vehicle in Rivers State,** while the Niger State accident claimed 11 lives. Some other passengers in the bus sustained various injuries in the accident which occurred on the ever-busy East-West Road in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

The 18 seater-bus was said to have loaded from Port Harcourt and had reached Emuoha on its way to a destination outside the state. The accident slightly obstructed the flow of traffic on the road while good Samaritans and a few security operatives tried to deliver first aid to some of the injured passengers. Some others were rushed to the hospital.

A witness, Samuel Azundah, said that some of the passengers who lost their lives were burnt beyond recognition, while another source said that the bus collided with a paid loader, and went in flames with an unconfirmed number of casualties and survivors. Meanwhile, in

Niger State, 11 people lost their lives in the accident, which occurred at Maje junction in Suleja Local Government Area.

The state Sector Commander of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), Mr. Yusuf Garba, disclosed this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Minna yesterday. According to Garba, a trailer, with registration number KTG 100 ZZ, conveying animals, about 5.30a.m., was involved in the crash on Maje-Dikko Road kilometre 6, at NNPC 'Sharp Corner,' killing 11 people, while 14 others sustained injuries.

He said: "The probable cause of the accident was the rusted plate that made the body to be detached from the articulated trailer tractor." Bodies of the victims were deposited at the Sabon Wuse General Hospital, while the injured were receiving treatment at the same hospital.

Garba explained that the Lambata office would continue to effectively monitor the conduct and behaviour of road users, especially those of articulated vehicles. He said that officers and men of the FRSC in the outpost would continue to monitor drivers and discourage them against indiscriminate parking on the highway.

The sector commander advised drivers of articulated vehicles to ensure that their trucks were roadworthy and to adhere to traffic rules and regulations to avoid road crashes. He added: "We will intensify 24-hour patrol on all the federal highways and enforce traffic rules and regulations to ensure safety of road users."