

25 Perish in Road Mishap

More than 25 persons died in the Cross River State axis of the Calabar- Itu Road last week Wednesday in a multiple motor accidents which was allegedly caused by the convoy of the Akwa Ibom State Chief Executive, Chief Godswill Akpabio.

Akpabio's media aides, Usoro Usoro has however denied the governor's involvement in the mishap.

THISDAY gathered that the Governor was on his way to the Margaret Ekpo International Airport on the fateful day to board a scheduled flight when his security guard in an attempt to sweep or clear the road for the convoy to pass caused a Kia Vehicle which was ahead of them to apply automatic break before a narrow bridge on the road just after the popular Ikot Offiong or Itu Bridge.

The front tyre of the Kia vehicle reportedly burst because of the sudden and forceful application of the break and caused the vehicle to somersault several times. Some of the occupants in the vehicle allegedly died on the spot while others were in a coma.

Sources said Akpabio was shocked by the level of casualties and immediately instructed his ambulance in the convoy to con-

From Okon Bassey in Uyo

vey the victims to the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital in Cross River State.

Men of the Special Task Force code named "Operation MESA" from Cross River State were said to have arrived the scene to assist in removing the wreckage of the Kia vehicle from the road which had caused long queue and traffic jam from both ends of the narrow bridge to allow free flow of traffic.

THISDAY further learnt that in the cause of clearing the road, a petrol tanker that was on top speed from Calabar towards Akwa Ibom

stumbled on the scene of the accident and lost control. The tanker driver reportedly rammed into about six vehicles on the queue with their passengers or occupants.

Among the vehicles that the fuel tanker crushed or twisted beyond recognition were two buses, a Jeep and BMW.

One of the buses which was in the fleet of a private transport firm, The Petex Transport Service had 12 passengers crushed to death on the spot, the driver whose name was simple given as Ibonda had his legs broken while two passengers that sat at the front seat survived but with serious injuries.

Yar'Adua in Katsina for B

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua arrived Katsina State yesterday for the burial of Alhaji Othman Ladan Baki, a prominent son of the state and a descendant of the late Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko.

Baki, a former Minister of Trade and Industries in the First Republic, had died on Wednesday in an auto crash near Tafa, in Niger State along with three others notably his wife, Hajija Hauwa Baki, his son,

By Danjuma Michael

Mohammed Sagir, as well as his driver after running into a trailer truck.

The trio were reported to have died on the spot while the wife died at the National Hospital, Abuja. Baki was said to have been on his way to see his personal doctor at Aso Clinic in Abuja to diagnose temporary loss of memory he suffered recently after being beaten to