

18 die in auto crash

KANO—A TRUCK packed with cattle and people collided with a car in northern Nigeria, killing 18 people and injuring 22 others, a road safety official said on Thursday.

The accident took place Wednesday when the truck driver lost control of his vehicle and rammed into an incoming car in the town of Talata Mafara, Lawal Abdullahi, a spokesman for the Federal Road Safety Commission, told AFP.

The injured were taken to a government hospital in Talata Mafara, Abdullahi said by telephone from the state capital Gusau.

Road accidents are common on Nigeria's poorly maintained roads and tend to increase in December when people travel to their villages for Christmas and New Year festivities.

Last weekend, 76 people died in three separate accidents in northern and central Nigeria, according to road safety officials.