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Truck crushes 4 at petrol depot

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2

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1

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By Ifeanyi Okolie

FOUR persons were, yesterday, allegedly crushed, and six others seriously injured by a truck at a petrol depot in Apapa. The tragedy occurred during a clash between some marketers and officials of Nigeria Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers, NUPENG.

Vanguard gathered that trouble started around 9a.m., when some marketers and tanker drivers attempted to stop the NUPENG officials at the depot from allowing some trucks said not to be on queue into the depot.

It was gathered that a NUPENG official, (name withheld), allegedly ordered some trucks with logo of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC, into the depot, but others resisted.

In the commotion, a driver with registration number, BAU 440 XR, reportedly rammed into 10 persons standing close to the entrance of the depot.

Eyewitness told *Vanguard* that four of the victims died on the spot, while six others who sustained injuries were rushed to the hospital.

A marketer at the depot, who claimed to have witnessed the incident, alleged that the NUPENG officials were collecting huge bribe from each truck before allowing them into the Depot.

. The marketer, who identified himself, simply as Odion, alleged that the development reached a boiling point, when over 100 trucks that were not on queue were positioned to enter the depot ahead of those on queue.

According to Odion: "We and our drivers decided to protest. We stood by the entrance of the depot and in the ensuing melee one of the drivers started surging towards us and we all ran out of the road. By time we realized what was happening, the drivers had rammed into 10 persons standing very close to the gate.

"I managed to escape. Four of my colleagues were killed on the spot while six were rushed to the hospital."