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7 die as tipper lorry runs into market in Anambra

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By Chimaobi Nwaiwu

Nnewi—No fewer than seven persons lost their lives, Saturday evening, when a tipper lorry ran into an evening market near 33 Junction, leaving 13 more with injuries.

Confirming the incident, the Police Area Commander for Onitsha, Mr. Abubakar Yahaya, said only three persons died in the accident, while some people were injured and taken to hospitals around the area.



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He said they are on top of the situation to avert break down of law and order.

The accident happened when some vigilante operatives from a housing estate at Tobis Junction area of 33, allegedly pursued the tipper driver for an undisclosed offence. The driver lost control of the vehicle and it veered into the market.

The incident was said to have infuriated youths in the area, who mobilised, burnt the vehicle, while the vigilante operatives who were said to be chasing the vehicle vanished.

The youths blocked the road, causing tension until the intervention of the Onitsha Area Commander, who personally led his men and those of the 33 Police Station, to the scene. He spoke to the youths, urging them not to take laws into their hands.

Eyewitnesses

Some eyewitnesses, who spoke with *Vanguard*, lamented that the vigilante operatives in that area were noted for harassing, intimidating and subjecting the residents of the area to all kinds of punishment and even physical assault at the slightest provocation or no provocation at all.

A human right activist, who spoke to *Vanguard*, said he had had cause to confront them on one occasion for slapping a man who was taking his radio for repairs.

He said they demanded for the receipt of the radio from the man, who produced it, yet they slapped the man for not parting with some money.

The youths mobilised again, yesterday morning, to destroy the vigilante operatives' camp, but police from Onitsha Area Command and their counterparts from 33 Police Station, had already cordoned off the area before the youths' arrival.

The youths were chased back and warned against any act of lawlessness in the area.



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