Beat: Automobiles

Minibus accident in Zambia kills 16, injures 4

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USPA News - Sixteen people were killed Tuesday and several others were injured when a speeding minibus collided head-on with a truck in central Zambia, just months after another accident in the same region claimed the lives of more than 50 people, local authorities said. The accident occurred at around 6:30 a.m. local time on Tuesday along Kabwe Road near the town of Chisamba in the Central Province of Zambia. It is believed it happened when the passenger minibus, as it was speeding, burst a rear tire before crashing into an oncoming foreign truck.

Authorities confirmed sixteen people, including the minibus driver, were killed while four others were injured. All of the victims were on board the minibus that overturned and was almost completely wrecked, while the driver of the truck, which suffered relatively little damage, escaped without injuries. President Michael Sata said he was "immensely saddened" by the loss of more lives in yet another deadly road accident. "Allow me on behalf of my Cabinet, the First Lady and indeed on my own behalf to express my deepest condolences to the bereaved families in the wake of this heartbreaking loss," he said. Sata directed the Zambia Police Service and the Road Traffic and Safety Agency (RTSA) to urgently investigate the cause of the accident and allow the law to take its course. "Urgent practical interventions need to be undertaken to avert this continuous loss of innocent lives on our roads," he said. In February, 51 people were killed in a horrific accident in Chibombo, which is close to the scene of Tuesday`s accident. It happened when an elderly man driving a Toyota Land Cruiser tried to overtake a Zambia Postal Service bus, forcing an oncoming truck to take evasive action that caused it to slam into the bus. A police spokeswoman at the time said the driver of the Toyota Land Cruiser, identified as a 74-year-old man, had been charged with 51 counts of causing death by dangerous driving. Investigators believe the man misjudged the distance with the oncoming truck before he attempted to overtake the bus. The collision in February was the worst traffic accident in the history of Zambia, where road accidents are common and claim more than 1,200 lives every year. The vast majority of accidents are mainly caused by reckless driving, dangerous roads and the poor maintenance of buses which are often overloaded. In April 2005, 44 students from a high school were killed when the truck they were traveling in overturned at Kawambwa in northern Zambia. And at least 34 people were killed in July 2011 when an overloaded passenger bus collided head-on with a truck in Nyimba district of eastern Zambia.

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