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## 130 Car Pile Up In London

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A rescue worker stands amongst the wreckage of some of the 130 vehicles involved in multiple collisions, which took place in dense fog during the morning rush hour, on the Sheppey Bridge in Kent, east of London, yesterday. London Evening Standard/London More than 130 vehicles crashed yesterday on a bridge covered in thick fog in one of Britain's worst pile-ups.

Eight drivers were seriously injured and about 200 hurt in a series of collisions, with witnesses saying they went on for 10 minutes.

One man caught up in the pile-up said it was "beyond miraculous" that no one had died.

Motorists were said to have been "driving like idiots" despite poor visibility on the A249 New Sheppey Crossing, which connects the Isle of Sheppey to mainland Kent.

Drivers were left dazed on the roadside as paramedics treated walking wounded among the mangled cars and lorries following the accident at 7.15am.

South East Coast Ambulance Service said 33 patients were taken to hospital, eight of whom suffered "more serious injuries".

Around 200 patients were assessed and treated at the roadside in makeshift field hospitals.

Martin Stammers, 45, from Minster-in-Thanel, Kent, said: "It's horrific. I've never seen anything like it in my life. All you could hear was cars crashing. We got out of our car and it was eerily quiet with visibility down to just 20 yards. Then you could hear the screeching of brakes and then a thud. It was all you could hear for about 10 minutes — crash after crash after crash. Cars thudding into each other, lorries crashing." He added: "It is beyond miraculous that there were no fatalities. There were cars underneath lorries, there was one car six feet up in the air. There was one lady sitting in her car who thought she was going to die. She said when she crashed into the car in front she thought that was it.

"People were in their cars. There were people lying down on the floor. Luckily there wasn't a fire." A lorry driver used his truck to block the entrance to the bridge and stop more cars piling into the crash. Chris Buckingham, another driver involved in the pile-up, said: "He was going the other way and what he managed to do, which has probably saved lives, is he's gone down to the end of the carriageway, gone across the roundabout and actually blocked off the road so no more cars could enter the dual carriageway before the emergency services got there.

"Whoever that guy is I'd like to shake his hand because he's probably saved lives today." Another witness told the BBC that "drivers were approaching the crossing with no lights" despite the thick fog. Some drivers remained trapped in their vehicles for several hours and firefighters used hydraulic cutting equipment to free them. The accident blocked the bridge. Fire crews went from vehicle to vehicle among the carnage marking in spray paint the windscreens of those that had been checked for victims.

Written by Gulf Times

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