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Accidents claim 11 on Lokoja, Potiskum roads

Written by Hamza Idris, Damaturu, with agency reports

FRIDAY, 03 APRIL 2009

Six people were killed and ten others sustained serious injuries yesterday when a luxury bus collided with a pick-up vehicle on Lokoja-Okene road while another five died and 26 sustained injuries on the Kano – Potiskum road.

The Lokoja- Okene accident occurred at about 4 a.m. at Crusher village near Lokoja. Mr Uzoma Winwe, the conductor of the luxury bus, told newsmen that the pick-up vehicle was travelling in the night without functional headlights. He said the collision occurred because the driver of the luxury bus did not see the approaching pick-up vehicle, adding that all the six occupants of the pick-up vehicle died on the spot.

The FRSC Sector Commander in Kogi, Mr Yomi Asaniyan, confirmed Winwe's statement, saying that the pick-up vehicle caused the accident as it was using the lights of other vehicles to travel that night. Asaniyan told newsmen that the bodies of the six fatalities had been deposited at the morgue of the Federal Medical Centre, Lokoja. He said ten passengers of the luxury bus, who sustained injuries in the accident, were receiving treatment at the medical centre. Asaniyan, who warned the people against travelling at night, said that it was much safer to travel in the daytime. He also advised motorists to ensure that their vehicles were in good condition before embarking on a journey.

The Kano- Potiskum road mishap occurred when a heavily loaded trailer truck lost control and fell into a bush. The accident occurred at Dagauda Village, about five kilometers to Potiskum when the trailer with registration number XA 711 JRE carrying 40 passengers, 18 Motorcycles and 1,210 cartons of batteries c from Kano on its way to Maiduguri skidded the highway and fell in the bush.

Joel Tagwa, the head of operations at the state headquarters of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) confirmed the accident which he said occurred around 4:30 am yesterday.

"Apart from the fact that the vehicle was overloaded, the driver was over speeding when he lost control probably because he was sleeping...it's very unfortunate", Tagwa said, adding that the 26 people injured had been admitted at the General Hospital, Potiskum and were responding to treatment.

Tagwa advised rivers to desist from driving at night, stop overloading and carrying passengers on top of goods. "These are some of the causes of avoidable accidents, trailers are meant only to carry goods not passengers", he said, "we are also appealing to the contractors handling this road to assist in constructing hard cut shoulders beside the road, it is very important for accidents to be minimized", he added. He equally accused some passengers of deliberately subjecting themselves to danger. "We recovered about N65, 345 from some of the people on the truck...this shows the passengers can afford using other vehicles meant for carrying passengers", he said.

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