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Nigeria: Tragedy - 20 Die in Accident on Way to Wedding

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BY KEHINDE AKINYEMI, 7 OCTOBER 2012

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Abeokuta — It was a black Saturday for a group of wedding-bound guests as no fewer than 20 of them died in an auto crash along Abeokuta-Siun-Sagamu expressway in Ogun State.

The accident involved an 18-seater Hiace bus belonging to Lukdos Transport Company and an articulated lorry

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marked Lagos JJJ 489 XB. It occurred at Ototo village, few meters away from the Ogun State capital, Abeokuta.

The passengers of the ill-fated Lagos-bound bus were said to be members of the African Church Solution camp at Ewang Estate in Abeokuta, travelling to attend a wedding ceremony of one of their members.

The accident occurred at about 7:30am when the truck, coming from an opposite direction, lost control and rammed into the bus. At least, 18 of the passengers died on the spot, while two others died on the way to hospital.

A two-year-old girl, who was also on the bus, miraculously survived, but she sustained head injury and was being attended to at the State Hospital, Ijaiye.

The sector commander of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Ayobami Omiyale, said only nine adults and an infant lost their lives.

The Traffic Compliance and Enforcement Agency (TRACE) co-ordinator, Mr Sola Bamidele, blamed the tragic accident on the truck driver for "reckless driving".

He said the bus took off from Abeokuta less than 30 minutes before the mishap, adding that authorities were still trying to get in touch with the transport company for the manifest of the bus.

Also, the director of state ambulance service, Dr Hassan Adedokun said the casualty figure was high as victims were rushed to the General Hospital, Ijaiye and the Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Idi Aba.

Officials of the FRSC, State Fire Service, Ogun State Ambulance Services, Police and TRACE were seen evacuating the victims when Sunday Trust visited the scene of the crash.

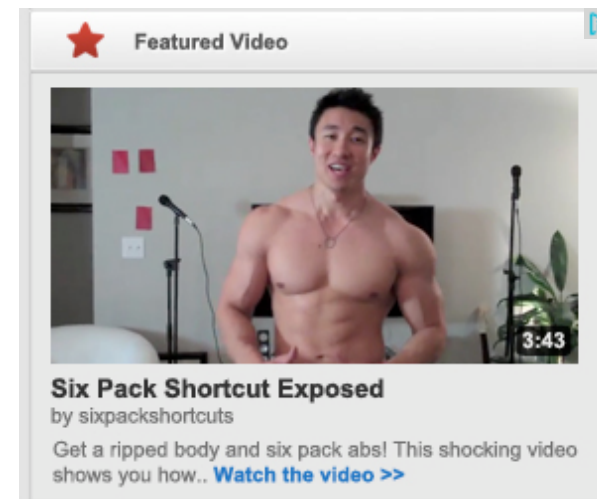
The remains of the passengers were deposited at the state hospital, Ijaiye and the Federal Medical Centre, Idi-Aba, Abeokuta.

When our correspondent visited the church, about 10 kilometres away from the scene, grief was palpable.

Members were unwilling to talk, but one said the victims left the church in high spirit without any premonition of calamity.

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