

16 feared killed in Ekiti auto crash

• Two-month-old baby, pastor survive

*From Ifedayo Sayo,
Ado-Ekiti*

accident and a pastor.

A witness, Mr. Onatunde Onaleye, a member of staff of the Ekiti West Council, said the driver of the tanker was on his way from Ilesa when he suddenly lost control of the vehicle and ran into the *Toyota Hiace*.

The tanker, it was learnt, had initially developed a fault at Itawure when its break system failed. But the driver continued to manage the situation until he got to Aramoko where the accident occurred.

After the collision, the tanker dragged the commercial vehicle along for

more than 10 metres, in the process dismembering the bus.

It took three hours before the occupants of the commercial vehicle could be rescued. Meanwhile, the tanker driver had jumped out of his vehicle immediately after the collision and fled for his life. Efforts made to stop him failed according to Onaleye, who added that by the time help came the way of the victims of the accident, about nine of them had died.

He explained that the rescue team had to use axes and cutlasses to dismantle the commercial vehicle before some of the victims who were trapped could

be brought out.

He added that shortly after the rescue team left the scene, the tanker caught fire and men of the state fire service had to be invited to put it off. They were however unable to put out the fire for up to five hours after they arrived the scene.

At the scene of the accident, an Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Mr. Michael Adesanoye, who led his men on the rescue effort, said the fire could not be put out on time because of the inadequacy of water, as the fire fighters had to depend on the state water corporation to supply the much needed water to put the fire out.

Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Mrs. Abike Sonoiki, who visited the scene of the accident, sympathised with the victims and prayed for the repose of the souls of the dead.

A GORY sight it was on the Aramoko-Ilesa Road, at Aramoko-Ekiti, in Ekiti-West Local Council of Ekiti State. Burnt body parts, mangled vehicle parts and blood marked out the scene of an accident in which no fewer than 16 people were reported killed.

The deceased were occupants of a commercial vehicle, a *Toyota Hiace* with registration number OYO XA 352 LUY, which was heading for Lagos from Ado Ekiti.

The incident occurred at about 7.05 a.m. yesterday when a tanker carrying 15,000 litres of fuel rammed into the 18-seater passenger bus. The survivors rushed to the General Hospital for medical attention included a two-month-old baby strapped to the back of his mother who died in the