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Monday, January 28, 2008

Ogun SSG, orderly die in road accident

- Five die in Ondo road mishaps
From Charles Coffie Gyamfi (Abeokuta) and Niyi Bello (Akure)

It was a tragic weekend in Ogun State as the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Olumayowa Olukoya and his orderly died in a motor accident.

Also in Ondo, two separate auto accidents at the weekend along the Akure-Owo-Ikare road claimed five lives while several people sustained injuries.

Olukoya will be buried today at 2 p.m. according to Islamic rites, Information and Orientation Commissioner, Mr. Kayode Samuel said.

The accident, which occurred on the Abeokuta-Sagamu road, threw the entire state into mourning.

The deceased was returning to Abeokuta from Bayelsa State in the company of the Finance Commissioner, Mr. Kehinde Sogunle and other top government officials. They were in Bayelsa to attend the burial of Vice President Goodluck Jonathan's father.

Sogunle escaped with minor injuries. According to sources, Olukoya had broken thighs while his orderly sustained a serious head injury.

The accident, which was caused by a burst tyre, occurred at Onipepeye, about three kilometres from Abeokuta.

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Immediately after the accident, the deceased, who did not die on the spot, were rushed to the General hospital, Ijaiye, Abeokuta where Olukoya reportedly battled for life for over an hour.

When The Guardian called at the hospital at about 5p.m. many government officials were seen weeping.

Olukoya, who was in his early 60s, was the immediate past Governor of Rotary Club International, District 9110.

He hailed from Ijebu-Ife, in Ijebu East Council. He was sworn into office in June last year.

The Ondo accidents brought to three the number of mishaps recorded on the busy road, the only one linking Ondo State with Abuja and the northern part of the country, in the last 10 days with a total of 13 deaths.

The first accident, which occurred at the weekend on the Akungba-Ikare stretch of the road, involved two vehicles, a Toyota Hilux van with registration number Lagos CP 300 LND and another bus marked Lagos CN 478 KJA.

One of the vehicles was heading for Abuja but an eyewitness said the Hilux lost control at a hilly bend on the road and rammed into the bus, which then plunged into a ditch.

The second accident, which occurred along the Akure-Owo stretch yesterday afternoon, involved a lone vehicle, a bus with registration number Kogi XQ 622 BDE. The vehicle reportedly somersaulted when its tyre burst on top speed.

Sector Commander, Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) Ondo State, Ahmed Hassan Kogari, who said the victims of the first mishap were evacuated by good Samaritans before his men got to the scene, confirmed the Akure-Owo accident.

He said the 18-seater bus belong to Richland Motors, adding that its victims had been taken to the Federal Medical Centre, Owo and the General Hospital, Akure for treatment.

According to him, the burst tyres were manufactured in 2002 for use in temperate regions and not good for the Nigerian

environment.

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