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COVER STORYLast Updated: **Monday, December 21, 2009**

Kogi declares 3-day mourning ...for 90 killed in auto crash

From ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja |

KOGI State Government has declared three days of mourning for the repose of the souls of over 90 people who died in a fatal road accident in Alo in Dekina Local Government Area of the state at the weekend. The state Governor, Alhaji Ibrahim Idris who declared the three-day mourning also called on churches and mosques to pray for the deceased who lost their lives when a truck-load of fertilizer rammed into a local market in the town, killing about 90 people and injured many others.

The governor described the accident as a tragedy and last Saturday as the saddest day of his life. About 38 others who sustained various degrees of injuries during the accident, were under intensive care of various hospitals in and around the town.

Similarly, *New Nigerian* gathered that property worth millions of Naira belonging to the traders were destroyed as a result of the accident which was described as the worst of its kind in the history of the local government area and the state in general since its creation some 18 years ago.

However, the Sector Commander of Ankpa Unit of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), Mr. Abdul Adejo informed newsmen that the accident was as a result of reckless driving on the part of the driver coupled with brake failure.

Governor Idris who rushed to the scene of the accident to have a first hand information of the accident directed that the 38 people who were receiving treatment at the intensive care unit of the Dekina General Hospital should be transferred to the Federal Medical Centre, Lokoja and the state Specialist Hospital also in Lokoja for proper medical treatment.

Idris assured the families of the accident victims that the state government would foot the medical bills of all the 38 injured persons, while it would also foot the burial expenses of those killed during the accident.

The sector commander of the road safety corps while confirming the accident to journalists however stressed that the charred bodies of some of the victims were beyond recognition and would be given mass burial.

At the time of filing this story yesterday, there were no reported cases of death from those under intensive care of hospitals, particularly the State Specialist Hospital, Lokoja where the *New Nigerian* correspondent visited about 4pm as hospital sources said they were responding to treatment.

