



Scene of the Lagos-Ibadan highway crash in which 30 people died. PHOTO: OLUWATOYIN MALIK.

30 die, 10 injured on Lagos-Ibadan highway crash

By OLUWATOYIN MALIK

THIRTY people lost their lives on Thursday night while 10 others sustained varying degrees of injuries when two commercial buses had a head-on collision at kilometre 95, Elebolo Village axis of the Lagos-Ibadan highway.

The incident was said to have occurred at about 8:00 p.m.

The vehicles, Mazda E2000 buses with registration numbers AKN 27 XA and SMK 959 XM were reportedly involved in the crash as a result of excessive speeding and were overloaded with passengers.

Speaking at the scene of the accident on Friday morning, the Sector Head of Operations, Oyo State command of the Federal Road Safety Corps, Mr Cyril Zango Matthew, said that road safety officials worked at the scene till about 3:00 a.m. to extricate the bodies of the dead and rescue the injured.

Explaining how the accident occurred to *Saturday Tribune*, Mr Matthew said that an Ibadan-bound commercial bus driver who was coming from Lagos and the Lagos-bound one from Ibadan left the lane opened for vehicular movement and plied the one closed as a result of its ongoing construction.

"This is a construction site. This lane was completely blocked and all vehicles were diverted to the other side of the road. But the two drivers were not disciplined, so they left the open lane for the one under construction.

"Aside from this, they were said to have been on a very high speed. This led to a head-on collision, resulting in the death of 30 people - 20 males and 10 females, including the two drivers, while 10 people were injured - nine males and one female.

"The impact and the number of casualties attest to this. According to one of the survivors, the Ibadan-bound driver was reckless. The victim said that the driver was

cautioned several times but he did not listen to the passengers.

"Even when the driver got to where vehicles were diverted to a lane, he insisted on driving on the closed lane, and even stopped responding to their complaints.

The driver overtook a trailer and a bus and could not manoeuvre to return to his lane because of speed, resulting in a head-on collision with the Lagos-bound bus."

He disclosed that the FRSC officials had to use extricating machine to cut the mangled buses to remove the dead and the injured.

The head of one of the female victim was said to have split open with part of it cut off.

The Ibadan-bound driver was also said to have been pinned to the steering with a N50 note clutched in his fist and hands folded to his chest.

Mr Matthew said that the remains of the dead victims were deposited at the State Hospital, Adeoyo, Ring Road, Ibadan, while the injured were taken to State Hospital, Adeoyo, Yemetu and Ibadan Central Hospital, Ososami.

He said that some of the injured were responding to

treatment.

He also said the passengers should caution drivers while speeding, saying that keeping quiet would mean that they decided to leave their fate in the driver's hands.

"This accident also shows the need for vehicle owners to install speed limiters in their vehicles, so as to prevent over-speeding even if the driver chose to do so," Matthew added.

When *Saturday Tribune* visited the injured victims at the Ibadan Central Hospital at Ososami, some of them could be seen in the emergency male ward, while it was learnt that the condition of the only female was critical.

One of the victims, Abiodun Dare, said he was sleeping when the accident occurred and didn't know how he got to the ground.

Another passenger in the Ibadan-bound bus, Busari Sulaimon, also said: "We were getting closer to Guru Maharaj Ji Village which is close to Ibadan Toll Gate when the driver started driving recklessly. I cautioned him to reduce his speed but he didn't answer.

"As I told him to allow me

to alight from the vehicle if he was not ready to reduce the speed, I heard a collision sound and saw the bus tumble."

A third survivor, Erinfolami Dauda, tried to explain how the accident occurred but was incoherent and groaning in pain.

A relative of another survivor, who gave his name as Falola Dayo, said his cousin, Falola Eniola, a 200-level student of Caleb University, who was in the Lagos-bound bus, had called his father at 8:29 p.m.

"We are based in Ilorin, Kwara State. My cousin, Eniola, called his father that he was involved in an accident. "His father called me and as we called my cousin back, we could only hear him and other shouting for help."

"We contacted our people in Ibadan and they called road safety officials who went promptly to rescue them. We got to Ibadan early this morning (Friday).

"He told us that he passed out after the accident and when he regained consciousness, he found himself on the ground," Dayo told *Saturday Tribune*.

Ogun to run new polytechnic as multi-campus — Amosun

OLAYINKA OLUKOYA-ABEOKUTA

THE governor of Ogun State, Senator Ibikunle Amosun, on Friday, said that the new state polytechnic located at Ipokia will be run as a multi-campus institution.

He stated this at the foundation laying ceremony of the school, that the school will have campuses at Imeko and Idiroko areas of the state.

The governor also hinted that his administration would work round the clock to ensure smooth running of the institution and also meet the October and mid-November deadline of infrastructure provision, as stipulated by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE).

He explained that lecture

rooms and some offices will be ready before the visitation team of NBTE.

He justified the rationale behind the establishment of the school, saying the state as a leading industrial hub in the country needs more science based institutions in the state.

Amosun expressed happiness that the new polytechnic will boost socio-economic status of the town and its environs.

The governor said, "The polytechnic was also a culmination of our administration's desire for even spread of socio-economic development and to produce professionals in technical education.

"It was a further realisation of the need to have more science based tertiary institutions in Ogun state to

meet up with the new industrial hub status of the state".

The governor, equally, assured that no existing villages within the institution, will be demolished to give way for the new polytechnic.

Saturday Tribune recalled that the state government had in 2016, sent a bill to the House of Assembly for the upgrade of the Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta, to Moshood Abiola University of Science and Technology and the establishment of Ogun State Polytechnic, Ipokia.

The bill was passed and signed into law the governor last March.

He appealed that traditional practices should be moderated so as to accommodate staff and students seeking admission into the school.