

Six children lose parents in road accident that claimed 16 lives in Ibadan

By Soji Ajibola

SIX children, between the ages of four and five, on Tuesday, lost their respective parents in an early morning accident that claimed 16 lives, with 17 injured at Agbowo end of Lagos-Ibadan expressway in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State.

The affected children, who are currently receiving treatment at Hamdala Hospital, Agbowo, are among the 17 survivors of the accident.

Their parents were among the 16 victims who died on the spot at the scene of the accident.

Also, another victim, identified as Kenneth Chukwuma, who has a fracture in the upper region of his right leg, has been referred to the University College Hospital (UCH),

Ibadan along with another survivor for proper medical treatment.

The Chief Medical Director of Hamdala Hospital, Dr Onasanya Olugboyega, in an interview with the *Nigerian Tribune*, said out of the 16 victims who were brought to the hospital, 12 had been discharged, while two others with serious injuries were referred to the UCH for further treatment.

He added that six children were brought to the hospital but "it is quite unfortunate that they have lost their parents.

"We are planning to send the affected children back to the Northern part of the country where their deceased parents hailed from.

"As for Mr Chukwuma, one of the passengers inside the Micra cab, his case has been referred to the UCH, Ibadan.

"Chukwuma had an accident on the same road six months ago and he had just been discharged from the same hospital that he is being referred to."

The Medical Director stated that 90 percent of the accident that occurred on the expressway are avoidable, arguing that most of the drivers are ignorant of the road signs.

He said the idea of driving on a single lane while the other one is closed to the traffic is not helping matters.

Meanwhile, the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) also confirmed 16 people dead and 17 injured in the accident.

The FRSC report stated that 35 people were involved in the accident, out of which 16 died on the spot, while those injured are recuperating at the hospital in Agbowo, in Ibadan North Local Govern-

ment Area

The remains of the deceased, as reliably gathered, have been deposited at the morgue.

An eyewitness said the truck loaded with roofing sheets rammed the four other vehicles.

Some people in the area, however, blamed the slow speed of the ongoing construction on the road for the accident, adding that vehicles plying the road are restricted to only one lane, which increases likelihood of accidents on such a busy road.

They also called on the construction firm handling the project to open up the other lane in order to ease the traffic congestion in the area.

Meanwhile, the FRSC has stressed the need for an enlightenment campaign for commercial drivers across the state.