

12 die as bus plunges into river

John Ameh, Onitsha

ABOUT 12 persons have lost their lives after a bus plunged into River Idemili in Anambra State on Wednesday.

Investigation by our correspondent revealed that the accident occurred at about 12noon.

It was not clear as at press time whether the accident was caused by over-speeding. Our correspondent, however, gathered that the vehicle, which was headed for Onitsha from Owerri in Imo State, veered off the Onitsha-Owerri Expressway before it plunged into the river.

All the passengers were said to have died immediately in the river. The river cuts through Obosi, in Idemili-North Local Government Area; and Oba in Idemili-South, both in Anambra State.

Men of the state Sector Command of the Federal Road Safety Commission and police divers drafted to the scene were said have carried out rescue operations.

Investigations showed that up to 10 corpses had been recovered from the river by the rescue team.

The Commissioner of Police, Anambra State Police Command, Mr. Haruna John, confirmed the inci-

dent to journalists. He, however, said only four bodies had been recovered.

John said the vehicle somersaulted. He added that efforts had been made to contact the relations of some of the victims.

The Onitsha-Owerri road has recorded many accidents

lately, especially at the Oba junction, where the road connecting Oba town in Anambra State joins the expressway.

Two weeks ago, 13 persons lost their lives at the junction when the front tyre of a Mitsubishi L-300 bus burst and fell into a ditch.

Dearth of reading culture worrisome -Soyinka

Olaekan Adetayo

NOBEL Laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka, has described what he termed dearth of reading culture in the country as worrisome.

A statement on Wednesday quoted Soyinka as speaking at a ceremony to mark the 10th anniversary of Restral Consulting Limited, Lagos.

He said the decline in reading culture among the present generation was a source of worry to all.

Soyinka said, "I am glad that most of you realise the danger it (lack of reading among youths) poses to the country. But I am happy that the crusade to revive reading culture is gradually coming up. I was in Port Harcourt recently where I went to do a reading from my new book (*You must set forth at dawn*) and I discovered that the venue was a Reading Club where students are encour-

aged to come and read.

"There are some reading clubs in Ibadan and a couple of them in Lagos. But a lot needs to be done," he said.

The Nobel prize winner entertained the large gathering with a chapter from his latest book.

The firm's Chief Responsibility Officer, Mrs. Uwa Osa-Oboh, said the objective of the outfit was to positively impact society for the better.

"The Restral story is essentially a story of conviction, values and belief. The Restral spirit is one that infects and baptizes all those who come in contact with it... it has created a family of people who have something in common-a desire for excellence and to facilitate greatness in people and organisations everywhere," she said.