

15 killed in Sagamu-Benin road crash

Emmanuel Addeh, Warri

THE Sagamu-Benin Expressway again claimed about 15 lives in an early morning crash on Monday.

The road linking the South-West to the South-East and South-South has claimed uncountable lives mainly due to its deplorable state.

Our correspondent learnt that the victims were on their way from Lagos when

their vehicle collided with an oncoming truck just after Ijebu Ode.

A source said the driver of the 18-seater bus was trying to overtake a stationary lorry when the accident occurred.

An eyewitness said the driver of the bus with number plate XW 375 AKD was driving on the wrong lane. The driver of the bus, who died with his two legs badly crushed, was

overtaking the stationary truck when he collided with the oncoming truck.

The vehicle was squeezed in-between the truck, with Lagos number plate XW 856 JJJ and the stationary vehicle. Only one person, whose name could not be immediately ascertained, survived the accident.

About 10 lifeless bodies were pulled out of the bus by

sympathisers and motorists in the accident that caused a severe traffic gridlock which lasted several hours.

There was no visible presence of emergency personnel to help the victims until about two hours later when passersby had evacuated and rushed some of the unconscious victims to an unnamed hospital.

FRSC officials, who

claimed they got the information "very late," later evacuated three lifeless bodies that were left at the scene including the driver of the bus who died instantly after 12 other lifeless bodies were taken away by sympathisers.

On August 6, 2007, the then Minister of Works, now Petroleum Minister, Alison Madueke, had while on a visit to the collapsed road, reportedly wept bitterly because of its deplorable state.

She had said, "I am actually very, very unhappy today at what I have seen. I am very displeased that this road was allowed to degenerate to this level. The deplorable state that I have found this road in is inhuman and unacceptable."

Also, a former Minister of Works, Senator Sanusi Daggash, had said during his inspection tour of the road in April 2010, that the N9.7bn contract for the road would be completed in November 2011.

He had described the road as "the worst on the planet and one of the most notorious in the world."

Scores of Igbo traders, who were going back to the South-East zone in a luxury bus, also recently met their gruesome death near Odogbolu, in Ogun State, along the road.

Eighteen persons were also killed on Thursday, January 20, 2011, following an accident involving an 18-seater bus, a truck and several other vehicles near Okada Junction in Ovia North East Local Government area of Edo State.

Eastern highlife artiste, MC Loph, famed for his hit single 'Osondi Owendi', lost his life early September, when he crashed his Sports Utility Vehicle along the infamous road on his way to Anambra from Lagos.



•L-R: Minister of State for Health, Dr. Mohammed Pate; Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Health, Mrs. Fatima Bamidele; and Director, Health Planning, Research and Statistics, Dr. Tolu Fakeye, at a meeting on improving quality and efficiency through better clinical governance, in Abuja...on Monday. Photo: Sam Adeko.

GCIOBA president fears extinction of alumni associations

**Akinwale Aboluwade,
Ibadan**

THE National President of the Government College, Ibadan Old Boys Association, Mr. Banwo Smith, has lamented the high rate of failure in schools in recent times.

Smith said at a press conference to mark the 82nd anniversary of the college on Monday, that danger was ahead considering the rate of students' failure in the

what is put in the system to educate the school children."

Smith said the results of the school certificate examinations in the recent past were an indication that education was at the brink and that there was no future for the old students' associations as the students that failed and dropped out of school would, certainly, distance themselves from such unions.

He also urged parents to endeavour to play a significant role in monitoring their children rather than blaming their teachers for their failure.

The Principal of the college, Mr. Solomon Oladele, said he was optimistic that the school would be taken to a greater heights.

He added that he had set before himself a three-point agenda of academic

excellence, moral and ethical discipline and sports development.

According to Smith, activities lined up for the college anniversary include a public lecture to be delivered by Senator Femi Okurounmu on Tuesday (today); a novelty football match between GCIOBA and GCI team on Friday while the ceremony will be rounded off with a luncheon and merit award on Saturday.