

11 die as commercial bus explodes in Lagos

8:08 am



Scene of a crash at Otedola Bridge on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, Lagos ... on Thursday. Photo: LASEMA

Afeez Hanafi

About 11 persons were killed on Thursday after a commercial bus with 14 passengers on board went up in flames on the Otedola Bridge in the Berger area of Lagos.

It was learnt that the deceased comprised eight males and three females while three persons were rescued from the wreckage alive.

Our correspondent gathered that the bus was at top speed heading towards Berger from the Mushin area of the state when one of its tyres burst.

The bus was said to have somersaulted several times before it was engulfed in flames.

Officials of Lagos State Emergency Management Agency, the state Fire Service, Federal Road Safety Corps and the Nigerian police were on the scene of the crash.

An eyewitness, Ojo Daramola, said the accident happened around 6pm, adding that the driver had struggled to stop the bus but his efforts failed.

He said, "I wanted to buy a satchet of water when I heard the sound of a crash. A few seconds after, the bus exploded and all the passengers were trapped. The fire raged for some minutes before emergency officials came for rescue operation. People by the roadside fled to safety. I

learnt the bus was coming from Mushin. Most of the passengers died.”

The LASEMA General Manager, Mr. Michael Akindele, confirmed that 11 people died in the crash.

He said three persons rescued from the explosion had been taken to the Accident and Emergency Unit at Toll gate for treatment while the remains of the deceased had been deposited at the Mainland General Hospital’s morgue.

Akindele said, “A 14-passenger volkswagon commercial bus at top speed somersaulted after its tyre burst. The bus burst into fire afterwards. Eleven persons — three females and eight males — were burnt dead while three persons were rescued alive. They were taken to the Accident and Emergency Unit. We are on identification process to identify the deceased and hand them over to their families.”

The Director, Lagos State Fire Service, Mr. Rasaq Fadipe, said firefighters responded swiftly after receiving a distress call. He advised drivers to comply with the speed limit regulation to avoid loss of life.

The Lagos State Police Command spokesperson, SP Dolapo Badmos, said the bus driver, who escaped the crash, fled the scene.

She said, “The command’s operatives from the Isheri division received a call that an 18-seater bus heading towards Berger from Mushin was involved in a lone accident and caught fire. A total number of 11 people consisting three women and eight men were burnt to death instantly while four others have been rushed to the hospital.

“Investigation revealed that the driver of the vehicle escaped the inferno and later fled the scene immediately the accident occurred. Policemen and firefighters are on ground to put out the fire and clear the obstruction the accident might have caused.”

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