

Truck crushes 17 schoolchildren in Lagos

• FRSC denies officials' involvement in accident

By **Christopher Oji**

1 **THERE** was pandemonium yesterday at Ogba area of Lagos as a truck crushed 17 students to death and injured many others.

The truck was being chased by the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) officials for violating traffic law, and the driver of the truck sped off to avoid arrest.

It was during the process of trying to escape from the FRSC operatives that it crushed the students of Millennium Secondary School and Ojodu Senior Secondary School.

On seeing the magnitude of the carnage he caused, the truck driver increased his speed, but was chased by over 500 commercial motorcycle riders (Okada) who eventually caught up

with him adjacent to Excellence Hotel Ogba, where hell was let loose.

A police traffic officer who was at the roundabout in front of Excellence Hotel said: "When the driver was caught, he was being manhandled, but the quick intervention of the police from Area G, Ogba, saved the man from being lynched.

A witness, Jim Udi, said the rescue of the driver did not go down well with the Okada riders and some students of the two schools whose colleagues were killed as they quickly bought fuel and used lighter to set the vehicle ablaze.

They also attempted to set other trucks ablaze, but the massive reinforcement of the police from the Rapid Response Squad, Area G Command, Iju and

Ojodu Divisions saved the situation."

A student, Damian Ugo-agabra, said the casualty figure may have risen as many people were badly injured.

However, Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), CSP Adekunle Ajisebutu, said the number of casualties was yet to be ascertained at the time filing the report, while normalcy had returned to the area.

Meanwhile, the FRSC has denied any involvement of its officials in the accident.

FRSC Public Education Officer, Route Commander Olabisi Sonusi, in a statement, said: "An articulated truck was said to have lost control at Grammar School Bus stop, along Ogunnusi Road, Lagos,

today, Tuesday, December 7, 2021, which caused the death of unverified number of students and left many injured.

"The men of FRSC were called upon by passersby to help intervene after the crash had happened.

About seven of the victims were rescued and immediately taken to the Lagos State Emergency Centre, Ojota, by FRSC personnel, while another road user helped in carrying about seven, also, to the same emergency centre.

"The general public should disregard the disgruntled information being circulated by some unscrupulous elements that FRSC men caused the crash.

We want to place on record that our men were not in any way involved in the cause of the crash, as patrol activities were not ongoing along that axis at the time of the crash.

Party chair: S'Court orders substituted service on PDP members in Secondus' appeal