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### Truck Kills Six School Pupils in Lagos

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Chiemelie Ezeobi

Pandemonium erupted Monday at the Ikota area of Ajah, along the Lekki-Epe Expressway in Lagos, when a truck laden with water ran over six pupils, who were trying to cross the expressway, killing them on the spot.

The children, who were said to be on their way to school, had for lack of pedestrian bridge in the area, tried to cross the road like they had always done on daily basis when the truck came out of nowhere and crushed them.

According to eyewitness account, the driver of the truck and the conductor had initially absconded, leaving behind their truck for fear of their lives, but were later caught by passers-by.

THISDAY gathered that the accident involved a blue Mercedes Benz truck with registration number XZ87JJJ and a black Toyota Prado SUV with registration number CB690AKD.

It was gathered that the SUV driver had on sighting the school children slowed down to allow them pass but the tanker driver in his haste, was said to have overtaken the parked SUV and crushed the pupils.

The incident sparked off a protest that lasted for hours and caused serious traffic snarl in the area until policemen from the Ajah Division were mobilised to help to disperse the mob.

But before police intervention, some hoodlums had allegedly hijacked the peaceful protest and unleashed mayhem in the area, setting up blockade with used tyres and empty drums.

When the news filtered back to the school, the proprietors of other schools in the area immediately drafted text messages to parents and guardians of their students, stressing that they should also ensure that they drop off the students at the school gate.

Also, the schools in the area were closed up for the day as the different proprietors called on parents to come to the school to pick up their children because of the riot.

Confirming the incident, the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) Ngozi Braide, said the police immediately swung into action when they got the distress call, adding that it was only one pupil that died, while two others were receiving treatment.

One of the text messages read thus: "Dear Parents, we just got the news of about six school children who were knocked down as they were trying to cross the road at Ikota this morning.

"This has led to serious riot and traffic/road blocks. We will therefore not drop off the children till the road is clear and safe, but kindly pick up your children this afternoon if you can."

She said, "The divisional police officer and the divisional traffic officer raced to the scene and on getting there, they discovered that it was an accident involving one blue colour Mercedes Benz water tanker with registration number XZ87JJJ and a black Toyota Prado SUV with registration number CB690AKD.

"Preliminary enquiry conducted showed that while the Prado SUV gave way for school pupils to cross the road, the water tanker ran into the kids, killing one of the pupils instantly while two were injured and currently receiving treatment at the hospital."

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