

# Eight Libyan returnees die in auto crash



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Eight Libyan returnees from Edo State were roasted alive while seven others were injured when their vehicle crashed on the Ore-Ijebu-Ode-Sagamu Expressway in Ogun State. The victims' bodies were deposited at the Ijebu- Ode General Hospital mortuary while the injured were rushed to the same hospital.

The incident, which occurred near Omoo River, J4 area, involved a white Toyota Hiace 18-seater commercial bus with an inscription God's Care on its body marked AYB 479 XA and a blue and white Volvo truck with registration number KSF 79 XL.

The bus had left Benin late in the night with 15 male and female returnees from Libya after they had been profiled by the state Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration.

They were said to be on their way to Lagos to receive spiritual and financial assistance from the General Overseer of the Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN), Prophet TB Joshua, who has consistently been a benefactor to most trapped returnees and other less privileged members of the public.

However, the identities of the victims were not yet known as investigations revealed that there was no manifest from the

commercial bus to indicate their names and destinations. The accident occurred on Tuesday.

The Ogun State Sector Commander of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), Mr. Clement Oladele, who confirmed the incident in a telephone conversation with our correspondent yesterday, said the crash occurred when the driver of the truck drove against the traffic and had a head on collision with the commercial bus.

He explained that out of the 15 occupants of the bus, nine were adult males, five females and one female child. Oladele added that those who got injured were five males and two females while the other eight were roasted beyond recognition.

The sector commander blamed the accident on “route violation following driving against traffic by the truck, dangerous driving and over speeding”.

He said: “The injured were taken to Ijebu-Ode General Hospital and the corpses were deposited at the Ijebu- Ode General Hospital mortuary.

The burnt carcasses were removed from the road by the FRSC rescue team.”

Parents and relations of most of the returnees have been besieging the Motel Benin Plaza in search of their wards who returned to the state from Libya in the past one month. When contacted yesterday, the Special Adviser to Edo State governor on Media and Communication Strategy, Mr. Crusoe Osagie, said government was deeply saddened by the unfortunate incident.