

Overhead Water Tank Crushes 6 School Children in Asaba

Tragedy struck yesterday at Boji Boji Agbor metropolis in Delta State as six pupils of the College of Education Agbor Model Primary School were crushed to death following the collapse of an overhead water tank in their school.

Over 20 other pupils of the school, aged between eight and 15 and with serious injuries, were admitted at the Emergency Unit of the Central Hospital, Agbor.

Meanwhile in Yobe State, multiple auto accidents have claimed the lives of 33 persons including two drivers when two buses in which they were travelling had a head-on collision.

Eyewitnesses told THISDAY that the school children were in their class studying when the tank gave way and fell on them.

They said about 100,000 litres-capacity iron made tank was erected in between an already dilapidated classroom blocks by the school authority several years ago but it suddenly buckled and collapsed on the classroom while the pupils were receiving lectures. It instantly killed the six pupils in the process.

When THISDAY visited the scene of the incident, parents and sympathizers were seen crying while others were trying to locate their children. There were blood stains on the floor, while books, school bags and sandals littered the school premises.

The state Commissioner for Higher Education, Dr. Hope Iyahyah, who rushed in to the school to see the extent of the accident, took time to check the school children rushed to the hospital for medical treatment.

He expressed shock at the incident, while praying to God for the repose of the souls of the children who died. He said government would take up the medical bills of the pupils hospitalized, adding that a marching order had been given to the hospital management team to transfer those children

...As auto accident kills 33 in Yobe State

From Victor Efeizomor in Asaba and Michael Olugbode in Damaturu

with serious cases to the University of Benin Teaching Hospital (UBTH) for further treatment.

Iyahyah said government would commence investigation into the immediate and remote causes of the incident to prevent future occurrence.

There was crying and wailing in the school as parents besieged the premises in search of their children, while scores of others headed for the hospital to know if their wards were on admission there.

The Zonal Administrator of the hospital who simply identified himself as Mr. A. Praise told THISDAY that only two pupils were on danger list, adding that the hospital's medical team had risen to the challenge to ensure that adequate medical treatment was administered on the injured children.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Mr. Charles Muka, said the cause of the mishap was yet to be established by the police.

In Yobe, THISDAY learnt that the two buses involved in the road accident were those of Yobe Line and Plateau Riders Transport Agency, owned by the governments of Yobe and Plateau States respectively.

They were said to be travelling in opposite directions conveying passengers to Maiduguri and Abuja when they had the head-on collision at about 2 pm at Jigawa-Potiskum Bridge along Damaturu-Jos road.

An official of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) said immediately the accident occurred, the two buses caught fire and the 33 people were burnt on the spot.

FRSC Unit Commander in Potiskum, Boyi Ali Maigari, while confirming the accident said when the two buses driving in opposite

directions on the Potiskum-Jos road collided and burst into flames, no less than 33 passengers and drivers were killed.

He said the accident could have been prevented by the two drivers if they had been very cautious, as the road is in a poor state with lots of pot holes.

Maigari said the FRSC rescue team could only give the dead persons mass burial beside the highway because they could not identify them in order for their families and relations to come forward and pick the bodies for proper burial.

He gave the cause of the accident as dangerous driving on the part of the two drivers.

Most of the roads in the North-east geopolitical zone of the country are in bad shape with lots of pot holes.

The 535-kilometre dualization Potiskum-Jos road project which had been awarded since 2005 is yet to be completed by the contractors handling the work.

NITEL: BPE Issues Payment Deadline to New Generation

The demand letter of notification issued by the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) to the New Generation Consortium, the preferred bidder for the privatisation of Nigerian Telecommunications Ltd (NITEL), and its mobile arm, M-Tel, to pay a 30 per cent bid security on their bid of \$2.5 billion, amounting to \$750 million, will expire tomorrow.

BPE spokesperson Chukwuma Nwokoh in a statement yesterday said the New Generation Consortium received the letter on Monday, October 25, 2010 following the approval given by President Goodluck Jonathan on October 12 for the

By Efem Nkanga in Lagos and Chineme Okafor in Abuja

The balance of the bid amount of \$1.750 billion will thereafter be paid within 60 days from the date of the issue of an offer letter.

The Consortium had on February 16 emerged the preferred bidder with an offer price of \$2.5 billion during the opening of financial bids for the privatisation of NITEL and M-Tel.

The reserve bidder, Omen International, came second with an offer of \$956,996,091. Brymedia emerged third with \$550 million. Other contenders who bid for the acquisition of 75 per cent NITEL and its M-Tel

knowledge of the deal.

This controversy eventually consumed the job of the then Director-General of the BPE, Dr Christopher Anyanwu, and led to the National Council on Privatisation (NCP) setting up a seven-man committee in March to conduct further due diligence on several bidders.

The NCP had at its meeting of March 12, 2010 set up an eight-member ad hoc committee under the chairmanship of the Attorney-General of the Federation to review the NITEL/M-Tel sale transaction.

The committee after further due diligence found out that the transaction complied strictly