

9 pupils, 2 others, die in auto crash

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...28 others injured

By Dayo JOHNSON

ELEVEN persons including nine pupils of Aricent Nursery and Primary School in Ore , Odigbo council area of Ondo State perished in an auto crash while 28 other pupils sustained injuries late Wednesday along Ondo/Ore Expressway.

The pupils according to an eyewitness account were aged between six and 12 years.

Forty two persons were in the bus that was conveying the pupils, the proprietor of the school and one corp member back to Ore from Idanre Hills where they went for an excursion.

Saturday Vanguard learnt that they lost their lives when the bus in which they were traveling collided with a truck killing nine pupils on the spot while two others, including the proprietor, popularly called Alhaji, and the corps member, died hours later in the hospital.

The drivers of the bus and the truck involved in the crash only sustained injuries.

It was gathered that a mother lost three of her children in the crash while another lost her only child.

But the state police authorities in the state confirmed the death of the pupils and adding that several others sustained various degree of injuries.

The image maker of the Command, Adeniran Aremu told Saturday Vanguard in Akure that the accident occurred at about 9:20pm on Wednesday.

It was gathered that the bus, a Mazda marked XD676JTN conveying the pupils was driven by one John Japhet and was coming from Idanre heading back to Ore after the excursion.

The truck marked XC555REE was driven by one Sunny Muhammed, who was coming from Ore and heading for Ondo.

It was learnt that the driver of the bus in a bid to overtake another vehicle collided with the truck.

Immediately the crash occurred, policemen from Ore and members of the FRSC mobilized and helped in rescuing the victims of the crash.

Some of the victims were rushed to the Ore General Hospital while those that died were deposited at the same hospital.

Parents of the pupils that died in the crash rushed to the hospital late Wednesday to collect their bodies amidst wailing and crying.

Speaking with Saturday Vanguard, the Information Commissioner Ranti Akerele, described the accident as shocking and unfortunate.

Akerele said that the state government “was deeply touched by the accident which sent many promising children to early graves.

He added that “the government had sent the Commissioner for Education, Mrs. Nike Fatogun and her counterpart in Vocational and Non-Formal Education Ministry, Mrs. Kehinde Momoh for an on-the spot assessment.

The Commissioner pointed out that it was discovered that the school was not registered by the government and was operating illegally.

Akerele said the school breached the regulation of government that any school going on excursion to any part of the state or country should have a tour guard.