

Auto crashes: Again, Ondo rehabilitates FG roads, calls for urgent actions to avoid more disasters

Following the loss of thirty eight souls in an accident along the Ilesha/ Owo/Benin expressway last week, the Ondo State Government on Wednesday commenced the rehabilitation of the bad portions which led to the crash just as it decried the insensitivity of the Federal authorities to road maintenance to avoid the perennial wanton loss of lives on our roads.

The State Commissioner of Works and Infrastructural Maintenance, Mr Gboye Adegbenro who was on hand to supervised the rehabilitation of the road on behalf of the State Government feared that unless concrete actions were urgently taken by the Federal Government to fix its bad roads, the heavy traffic build up on the roads especially during the coming Yuletide may result into more road disasters.

According to him, “I was told that the contract for this road has been awarded to a contractor for sometime now, up till now nothing had been done till this incident occurred. Recently we pleaded with the Federal Government to pay attention to the Ore-Sagamu-Benin road when people were complaining of the terrible situation, though they called us names, yet they promised of fixing the road. It has been an issue for some time now.

“Look at what happened now on another federal highway. FERMA should be more responsible and responsive to its functions and duties; they should also clear the road shoulders. The state government through the Ministry of Works decided to rehabilitate the gullies on this road to prevent unnecessary loss of lives on these federal highways that fall within Ondo State territory.

“We as responsible holders of the people’s mandate cannot compromise the sanctity of human lives hence our intervention in this matter. We cannot continue to wait for Federal Government, who knows what may happen next and the youths dying as a result of some people’s negligible acts are our future leaders. We cannot fold our arms and just be watching avoidable carnage happening on our roads; we have to do something quickly.

On the reimbursement tango of the estimated N12billion being owed the State by the Federal Government on roads rehabilitated on its behalf, the Commissioner said “for every road repair done by state government on behalf of the Federal Government, the state is supposed to be reimbursed, but payment used to be a difficult issue.

“We have worked for them, we have written them, recently after visiting Ore when the issue of who owes who, how much do they owe came up, Abuja sent a delegation here and we checked our records to determine the way forward. The issue is being tackled now” Adegbenro explained.

Indeed, the rehabilitation works exposed the burial site of the victims of last week’s the auto commuters and passers-by on the Ilesha-Owo-Benin Expressway wailed uncontrollably and hurled unprintable abuses on the road managers on sighting the site of the mass burial of the 38 victims at the at Ilu Abo town along the expressway.