

Hit-and-run driver kills three in Calabar



....as commercial driver allegedly murders traffic official

By Emma Una, Calabar

An unidentified driver allegedly speeding in a Lexus SUV on Monday crushed three persons to death along Marian Road in Calabar.

The victims included a commercial motorcyclist and two female passengers he was carrying at the time of the accident.

Eyewitnesses said the incident occurred during evening rush hour as the Lexus SUV sped through the busy road before colliding with the motorcycle.

The motorcyclist reportedly died on the spot, while the two women sustained critical injuries and were rushed to hospital where they were later confirmed dead.

The body of the unidentified rider was deposited at the General Hospital mortuary.

A roadside noodles seller who witnessed the incident, identified simply as Daniel, said the motorcyclist managed to mention that he lived in Idang area of Calabar before dying.

“The okada had no plate number and the Lexus driver did not stop after hitting the motorcycle,” Daniel said.

In a separate incident, a commercial mini-bus driver allegedly killed a traffic enforcement officer attached to the Traffic Management and Regulatory Agency (TRAMRA) during an altercation in Calabar.

The incident reportedly occurred on Monday at about 10 a.m. around the Marian Hills area during a routine traffic enforcement operation by officials of the agency.

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The deceased officer, identified as Akerete Okon, was said to have sustained fatal injuries during the confrontation and later died in hospital.

A statement issued by TRAMRA management alleged that the officer was stabbed in the chest with a screwdriver by the commercial driver identified as Godwin Ukpai Okobo.

“The Traffic Management and Regulatory Agency (TRAMRA) announces with profound grief and outrage the killing of one of our officers, who was stabbed to death in the chest with a screwdriver by a commercial mini-bus driver while on

official duty,” the statement said.

According to the agency, the officer was unarmed and carrying out lawful traffic management duties when the incident occurred.

“He was unarmed, in uniform, and performing his lawful duty when he was attacked without provocation.

“Despite efforts to save his life, our colleague succumbed to his injuries. His death is a devastating loss to TRAMRA and to the public he served with dedication,” the statement added.

Confirming the incident, spokesperson of the Nigeria Police Force in Cross River State, ASP Sunday Eitokpah, said preliminary findings indicated that the commercial mini-bus driver was involved in an altercation with TRAMRA officials before the officer’s death.

“The Command is aware of the unfortunate incident. Preliminary information indicates that one Godwin Ukpai Okobo, a commercial mini-bus driver, was involved in an altercation with officials of TRAMRA around Marian Hills, Calabar, which allegedly resulted in the death of one Mr Akerete Okon, a TRAMRA officer, after he was rushed to the hospital,” he said.

Eitokpah stated that investigations had commenced to determine the exact circumstances surrounding the incident and assured residents that the police would conduct a thorough and impartial probe.