

BONNY AMADI

THE dream of a young girl to become a medical doctor so as to help provide the medical needs of her community has been dashed by the recklessness of a hit and run bus driver in Lagos.

Beautiful Chiamaka Cynthia Onyejiobi had perished with her dreams, as she has been sent to her untimely grave on Sunday July 8 by a recklessness driver behind the wheels who disappeared as soon as the ugly incident took place.

10 years old Chiamaka primary four pupil of Perfect Standard School Lawanson, Lagos had no premonition of what fate had in store for her when she woke from sleep that Sunday morning.

In her usual characteristic jovial manner, young Chiamaka on waking up that black Sunday morning greeted her aunty, the husband and cuddled the baby in the house.

As the house tradition demands every Sunday, Chiamaka after taking her breakfast, prepared for the Sunday service and within few minutes the whole family were at the S.S. Mulumba and David Catholic Church, Lawanson where the household offered prayers for God's protection, guidance and provision.

While in the church, Chiamaka was full of life as she junketed from one part of the church to the other and when the service was over the enthusiasm that she expressed to get home early for her to prepare for school the next day being Monday was overwhelming.

Part of her preparations for school on Monday was putting finishing touches to her home work, plaiting a new hair style and ensuring that her school uniform was in order.

Sources from Chiamaka's house at No. 199 Mushin Road Lawanson, Suru-Iere said when she returned from church that fateful Sunday she plaited her hair preparatory for school on Monday.

However, her entire life was brought to an abrupt end soon after about 6.15 pm while returning from where she had gone to buy pure water. She was knocked down by a hit and run commercial bus driver almost in front of her house.

The dastardly act was said to have taken place opposite Eleja Primary School along Mushin road and was committed by a driver of bus marked XZ 180 KJA, as at the time of filing this report the whereabouts of the driver, still remained unknown to the officers of Itire police station who are investigating the case.

Eyewitness account and a relative of Chiamaka, Mr Peter Dike who spoke to *Daily Champion* stated that the driver on sensing that the young girl had died abandoned his vehicle at the accident scene and fled.

But the said driver was reported to have re-surfaced at the middle of the night with some "area boys" to tow the vehicle out of the location, but were overpowered by eagle-eyed residents who mobilized to chase them out after which the vehicle was pushed into a compound for safety that Sunday night before it was finally towed to the nearby Itire police station.

Narrating to *Daily Champion* how the bus driver escaped, an eyewitness, Peter said: "The driver was there and after some time he walked away a bit to lean on a car, I was watching him carefully.

"Suddenly he started running and I pursued him, shouting thief! Ole! The people around did not know what was happening then. While pursuing the driver, at the time he got to a junction where he mounted a waiting okada and fled.

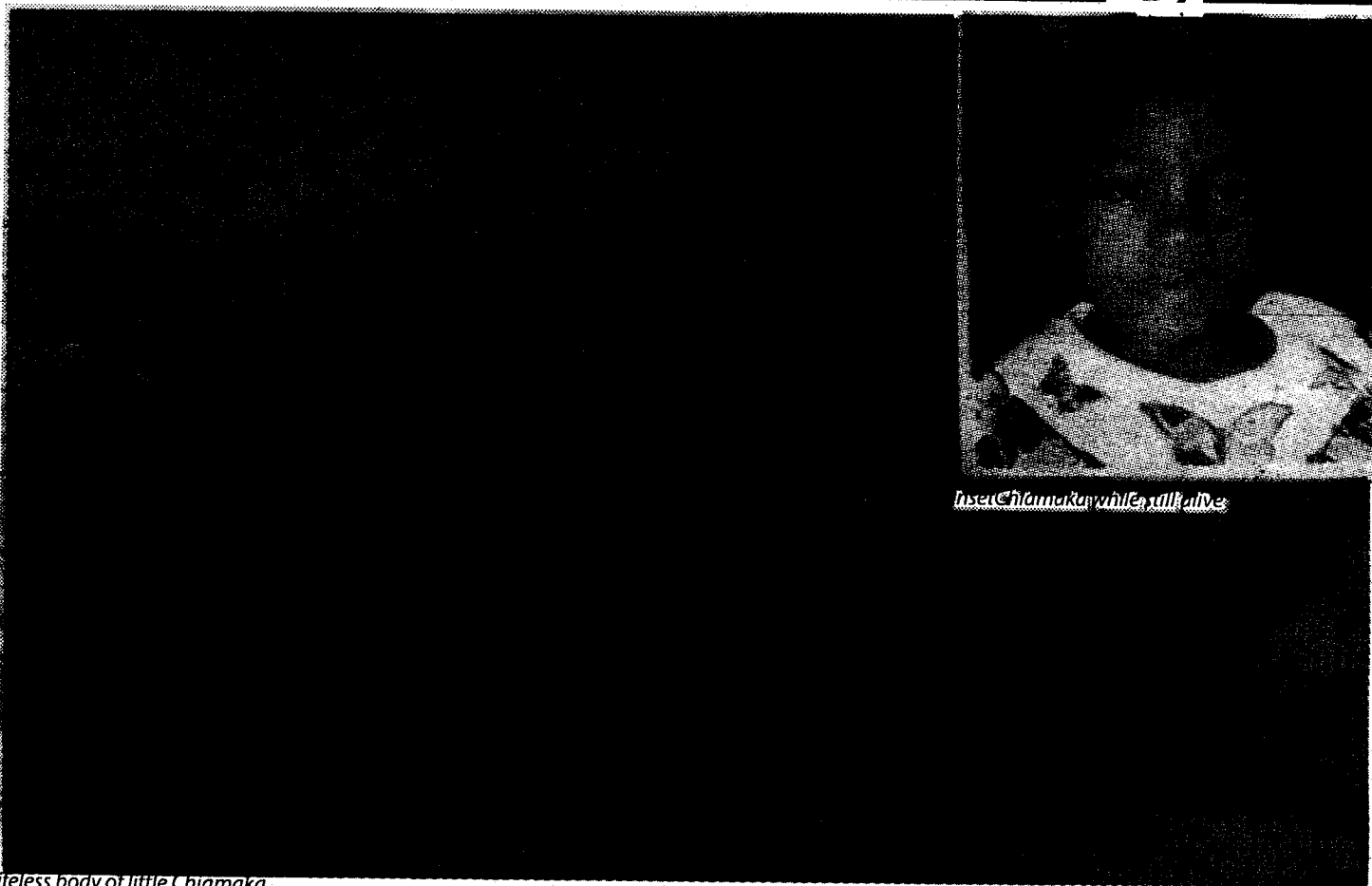
Peter maintained that the driver escaped because there was no okada for him at the junction to pursue him.

Guardian to late Chiamaka Mr. Gab Dike Obialor who spoke to *Daily Champion* on the incident said when the accident occurred it generated a loud noise that startled everybody in the neighbourhood.

This he said made him to rush out quickly to the scene and surprisingly the person that laid in the pool of her own blood was his little Chiamaka.

"I was mad, restless and confused, my wife too who had equally rushed out the same time was weeping uncontrollably."

Obialor said *Daily Champion* that with the aid of motor bikes, Chiamaka was rushed immediately to the nearby hospital



Lifeless body of little Chiamaka.

Inset: Chiamaka while still alive.

For ₦5 pure water, this little girl was killed by reckless driver

"Betlem Clinic at church bust-stop along the same Mushin road but the clinic refused to admit her because of the severity of the wounds sustained.

Obialor continues: "We then took her to another clinic where the doctor referred us to Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH), when we got to LUTH, the doctors after examining her, told us that she had died."

An eyewitness account told *Daily Champion* that the accident that claimed the life of Chiamaka happened on Sunday July 9 about 6.20pm.

The account further stated that while young Chiamaka was walking on the part way, one of the buses en route Mushin from Pako while trying to out speed another commercial bus trying to overtake it knocked Chiamaka down from the rear, just two buildings away from her house located at Eleja bus-stop.

When *Daily Champion* visited Chiamaka's house, the house was moody as sympathisers were seen coming in large numbers to condole with the family.

Nkeiru Obialor, Chiamaka's aunty was met crying sitting on a sofa in the sitting room surrounded by friends and relatives

who came to condole her.

Nkeiru described Chiamaka as a loving daughter, intelligent, resourceful with bright ambition to become a doctor.

She described Chiamaka as one of the gifted children based on her high level of intelligence, beauty and constantly wearing a permanent angelic smile that could melt the heart of any body privileged to set eyes on her. Saying that it was because of her intelligence that she decided to bring Chiamaka to Lagos to achieve her ambition.

Narrating her last encounter with Chiamaka, Nkeiru said "That Sunday evening, I met her at the gate going out of the house while I was coming in, little did I know that would be the last time I would see her alive."

Further, she narrated that because there was heavy traffic on the road then, she had no premonition that Chiamaka was to die.

She maintained that it was because of the heavy accidents recorded on that road that she ensured that Chiamaka's school be located where she would not have to cross that road.

"Now all that we tried to avoid had eventually happened" she lamented.

Chiamaka's father, Mr Marcel Onyejiobi Obineche when he learnt of the daughter's involvement in an accident rushed to Lagos the next day from his Isieke Autonomous community, home in Imo State.

He had remained num since then as *Daily Champion* attempt to extract a word from him failed. But according to reports, the distraught father still believes that his daughter is still alive. "Is this not Chiamaka, she just entered this room now and you told me that she is dead," he was reported to have said.

Mr Obineche was reported to be attached to Chiamaka, her first daughter and first child of two children.

Another resident of the area, Mr Nwaogu who spoke to *Daily Champion* stated that Saturday morning preceding that black Sunday, an accident that involved a family of six happened in front of his house, which stood four buildings away from where the accident that claimed Chiamaka's life occurred.

Nwaogu said the high rate of motor accidents along Mushin road was as a result of overspeeding by some drivers of commercial buses plying the route.

His words: There is no particular day without a report of accident on this road."

The death of Chiamaka through motor accident has indeed added to the skyrocketing number of people who had died as a result of motor accidents across the country.

In a recent release by the Federal Roads Safety Commission (FRSC), it was reported that over 14 million Nigerians had died through motor accident in the past 19 years.

According to the report most of the accidents were attributed to pot holes, over-speeding, disobeying traffic rules and regulations, drunkenness as well as mechanical faults.

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