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•Scene of the accident

MC Loph, Osondi Owendi remix crooner dies

NIGERIA'S entertainment industry was yesterday thrown into mourning with the death of young, vibrant musician cum Disc jockey, Nwazo Obiajulu popularly known as MC Loph.

He made his mark in the entertainment industry with a remix of popular highlife hit track, Osondi-Owendi, originally recorded by Osita

Osadebe.

He died from injuries sustained in a fatal motor accident along the Benin-Ore road.

He was going for his traditional wedding in the eastern part of the country. His bride-to-be was said to be in the same car with him but there was no words about her safety.

Reacting to the news, Sound Sultan, a close friend and collaborator of MC Loph currently vacationing the in the US said: "It is just so sad; it is not easy to loose someone like that. I worked with him in 2010 and we collaborated on a song with thirteen other artists for the World Cup. We were also very close friends."

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Panic over death through GSM calls

CHARLES OKOH,
Deputy News Editor

PANIC yesterday gripped mobile phone users in Nigeria as news spread that people were dying after answering calls on their mobile phones.

Daily *Champion* investigations revealed that the places most hit by the reports included Abuja, five south-east states, Rivers, Lagos, Oyo and Ogun states. Relations were busy yesterday calling their loved ones and warning them to avoid any number that

begins or ends with 09114. Following the wide-spread rumours, the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), has debunked such claims describing them as false and advised members of the public to ignore them.

A press statement made available to *Daily Champion*, and endorsed by Head, Media and Public Relations of the commission, Mr. Reuben Muoka said the rumour must be the handiwork of some unscrupulous persons to

instill fear in the minds of members of the public.

"Technically, it is not possible for such a thing to happen because even the voice that you receive at the other end of the phone undergoes many conversions. It is therefore unimaginable that somebody will die while receiving a call. It is only very gullible people that will believe such a rumour," he said.

Muoka said all calls to phone users pass through

the switch of network operators where it is processed and identified for billing purposes and that no operator has issued this particular number to any user.

"In so far as this number is not issued by an operator, there is no way such a phone number will be able to call anybody in any of the networks," he said.

He said he had personally placed a call to this number and it showed it is not a valid number, and therefore, will not be able to make or receive calls.

He said the need to nip such rumour in the bud, justifies the rationale for ongoing SIM card registration exercise in the country which will ensure that all phone users will be identified with their fingerprints and digital photographs.

He urged subscribers to go about their normal businesses and ensure that they all register their SIM cards with either their service providers or NCC appointed agents before the end of the programme by month end.

"Some text messages were making the rounds yesterday, with a claim that 10 people have died in Wukari while receiving calls from a particular phone number... 09141, while another version claimed that seven people have died for the same reason," he said.

But the Commission in the statement, said that the claim is false and without any iota of truth, and that nothing like that could happen to somebody responding to the phone no matter the number through which such calls are made.

Also, Mr. Bolaji Adigun, Chairman, Police Community Relations Committee, Kubwa,

FCT, has debunked the rumour making the rounds in the area that people are dying after receiving calls from unknown telephone numbers.

He said the rumour was so widespread in Kubwa that it was alleged that people who received calls from unknown numbers on their mobile cell-phones were collapsing.

Adigun said the committee had contacted the police, who denied the rumour, saying they had yet to receive any such report.

He said the committee had also gone to Daughters of Charity, a non-governmental organization (NGO), where six persons allegedly died after receiving such telephone calls.

Adigun said the committee members were accompanied by a police escort to the NGO, where it was confirmed that no such incident occurred there.

He said the District Police Officer (DPO) for Kubwa, Mr. Mohammed Bosso, had also allayed the fears of the public on the rumour.

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The Loph in his stage name means "Lord of Pure Hip-hop". He never planned to be a musician, though he acknowledged that music may have been running in his genes as his late Dad was a choirmaster.

"Actually, music runs in my family; my father was a choirmaster before he died so I grew up listening to a whole lot of highlife music and Osadebe used to be my Hero," he said recently.

That is not to say that Michael Jackson and the rap culture did not catch his attention.

He once said in an interview: "While growing up, I listened to highlife from the collections my father had on one side and also had a feel of LL Cool J, Young MC, MC Hammer, Curtis Blow and all the likes but I never planned to be a musician."

At the University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN) where

MC Loph

he studied Sociology and Anthropology, his entrance into the game started though on a hobby level; nothing serious.

"During my undergraduate years, I used to perform in a whole lot of shows then. It was a hobby and I was paid like N1000 to do my thing. I was not doing it for the money but for fun."

His search for a job in Lagos proved hectic and strenuous as he was not lucky to reach any organisation that was hiring, which was discouraging; but he was determined to make it in music. He went back memory lane during our interaction how he participated in the maiden edition of the Star Mega Jam held in 2000; he was the only upcoming artiste that performed alongside Daddy Showkey and Awilo Logomba. That singular feat

gave him the strength with which to continue. His break came in 2006 when he came in contact with Eastsyde Record Label where he was signed. His first album entitled *Recognize* was released in 2007 and made little impact in the industry.

He said of that difficult time: "It is everywhere in the world; If I go to America now even if I am the best here, for the fact that you are new in that town, it will take time for you to blend so the case with Lagos is not isolated. I have been commercial way back even when I was in school; I had been doing this style of blending hip hop and highlife. Nigeria is not like America where you have the East Coast and West Coast; if it were like that, I would have been in the East doing my thing but because I play hip hop and Lagos is the hobnob of it all, I just had to come down here and coming here you will be a new artiste," he said.

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in the appropriation Act 2011.

But the Minister of Petroleum with officials of NNPC moved contrary to Appropriation Act of 2011 allegedly spent N931 billion on the subsidy between January to August 2011 which is about N771bn or about 700 per cent variance.

The sponsor of the motion, Senator Olusola Saraki in the motion that made available to our

Senate

correspondent which may be considered today said in the first three months of the year both NNPC and Independent Marketers did not exceed N62 billion monthly but within the last three months figures have ranged between N159 billion and N186 billion.

The former governor said the illegal spending of the NNPC on fuel subsidy may put the 2011 budget into trouble if the National Assembly refuses to look

matter as early as possible in the entire budget of 2011 may be affected and hopes of Nigerians that much would be achieved in this year budget will be a mirage.

He lamented that how can single agency spent such amount without the approval of the lawmakers which is saddled with responsibility of approving the nation's budget adding that there is urgent need to review the subsidy scheme in order to strengthen the institutional integrity and transparency and