

# Two die in fatal accident

Two persons, last Friday morning, lost their lives in a fatal auto crash at Masaka, Nasarawa state, *City News* gathered. Two other persons in the car also sustained severe injuries and are currently receiving treatment in hospital.

The accident, which occurred around 1.30am opposite Masaka police station, involved a Honda 2.0 EX car with registration number CK 985 JJJ and a stationary tipper with registration number XB 455 DUT.

An eyewitness account told the *City News* that the car, which was in a top speed, was negotiating a bend when it rammed itself into the parked lorry. The driver and an occupant behind him died

By Abubakar Yakubu

on the spot, he said.

A police man, who does not want his name mentioned, told our reporter that 'the bang of the accident attracted occupants of a trailer who parked opposite the scene. A few minutes later, police came to their rescue, and helped in conveying the casualties to hospital'.

The Honda Prelude car, with a Nigerian Army emblem, crashed beyond repair. Jimoh, a seller beside the accident scene, told *City News* that the car took off from Lagos en route to Maiduguri when it crashed.

He said: "I think the driver lost control of the car. This is because the tipper, though

parked in a sharp corner, was about three metres away from the road. And the road was a double lane, and wide. Considering the time the accident took place, I believe the road was not busy."

Other witnesses said the car must have been travelling at night. Shehu said: "That the accident happened at 1.30am indicates that they must have set off from Lagos in the evening, and had travelled all night. I suspect the driver slept on steering."

Shehu said 'it is high time we stopped embarking on night travels. Times without number, road safety officials warn us about the dangers of night travel, but we never harkened to their calls. It is at night that robbers operate

more; rescue of accident victims is also poor at night, so the wisest advice is to avoid night journeys'.

A relative of one of the survivors Mustafa told *City News* with tears that he was called on his cell phone early in the morning by his brother who was involved in the accident.

"He called me and I went to the hospital to see him. It was really serious, but in everything, we give glory to Allah who gives and takes life," he said.

Mustafa said he later called their relatives who came from Borno the next day and arranged for the burial of the dead.

When the reporter visited the scene of the accident,

there was a wedding invitation card on the driver's seat of the mangled Honda car. The contents were "Muktar Yaro weds Zainab on January 6, 2007. The windscreen of the car also bore a military sticker.

A policeman at Masaka police station said the two persons died on the spot while the other two are responding to treatment in a hospital. He added that investigations are on to unravel what caused the accident.

Accident rates at Masaka market junction has been on the increase of late. At least eight persons have been crushed to death in various road mishaps in the area from September to December last year. Residents attribute the accidents to over-speeding at the busy spot by motorists who never consider that pedestrians cross the road all the time.

"Even *okada* riders cause more havoc. At times, they cross the road recklessly; some even keep the lane they are not supposed to take," Charles Muo said.

Mrs Prisca rather blamed pedestrians over the constant road mishaps on the road. She said: "Gov Abdullahi Adamu of Nasarawa state knew all these when he

constructed many pedestrian bridges in many strategic areas across Abuja/Keffi expressway, but the problem is that pedestrians do not make use of the bridges. We always try to cross the road on foot, and at times some may not be lucky. I think we need to be more patient and endeavour to make use of these life-saving bridges."

She suggested that law enforcement agents borrow a leaf from Lagos where there is a task force, which compels pedestrians to make use of the bridges. A vulcaniser beside the scene Taiwo condemned the way motorists abandon their vehicles on the road whenever they pack up.

"Whether the driver of this Honda Prelude was guilty or not, if this tipper were not parked here, this accident would not have occurred. Even if it occurred, it would not have been a gory one like it is. Imagine that road safety officials still drive across here, but they do nothing. Also, this tipper is parked opposite Masaka police station, they should have impounded it, instead of allowing it to cause this havoc. Right now, the tipper and the Prelude are still parked there. What is the guarantee that another accident will not occur?" Taiwo asked.

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