

CITY NEWS



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Abaji speaker denies rejecting N200m loan

By Itodo Daniel Sule

THE Speaker of Abaji Area Council, Alhaji Usman Jiya, yesterday refuted media report that the council's legislators rejected a loan presented by the executive to finish developmental projects.

A national daily had on Tuesday quoted an anonymous councillor of the council as saying that elected councillors in Abaji Area Council rejected moves by the council's Chairman, Alhaji Yahaya Musa Muhammad, to obtain a N200 million bank loan to complete the proposed Trailer Park/Container terminal and Agyana- Pandagi road project, which was initiated by the council. The report also stated that the chairman visited the speaker in his home to persuade him but his request was rejected.

When asked to respond to the allegations yesterday, Speaker Jiya told our reporter that he was never consulted on the matter by the reporter to balance the news report. He said the council's executive arm was given approval by the legislators to obtain loan facilities to carry on with the laudable projects without hesitation.

"A copy of the approval is in my office and office of the council's legislative clerk," he said.

The speaker also denied discussing official matters with the chairman in his house, adding that the normal process is for such matters to pass through the clerk of the house to his office.

He expressed satisfaction with the projects which he said will generate revenue to the council and also commended the council Chairman, Yahaya Musa Muhammad for his people's oriented projects, which he listed as water supply, rural electrification, primary health care centre and road network.

"The Abaji Water Scheme is currently ongoing and will serve the people of Abaji town and nearby villages such as Agyana, Naharati, Kekeshi, and Nuku respectively," he added.

Also speaking on the allegations, Press Secretary to the council Chairman, Umar Salihu Kombo, said the sought loan was meant to finish projects that will generate revenue for the council.

He said when completed, the Abaji Trailer park and Container Terminal will increase and boost economic activities in the FCT, adding that the project contains a trailer park, mega station, chalets, dry port, shops and other facilities.

He said the motive behind the project is to create job opportunities for youths, increase council internal revenue generation and transforming Abaji into a business centre.

Three crushed to death at Kubwa

PIC: EMMA ELEKWA



A Sienna van burnt by irate mob at Kubwa on Sunday.

By Emma Elekwa

THREE persons on a motorcycle were on Sunday evening crushed to death at Kubwa by the driver of a Sienna van. A witness said a commercial motorcyclist was carrying a man and a lady at the same time, when a van that lost control, crushed them at 8:30pm.

He said the cyclist rider died on the spot, while the other two died on their way to the hospital.

Our reporter gathered that the driver, Chidubem Anyanwu, took his friend's vehicle for a drive and abandoned it after the accident.

"The driver ran after the accident and commercial cyclists present set the vehicle ablaze, before carrying their colleague's corpse," the witness said.

Reacting, Divisional Police Officer of Kubwa, Deputy Superintendent Berge Bosso, confirmed the incident and said the suspect is already in their custody and the case charged to court.

Police take over case of brutalised girl, arrest suspect

By Hussein Yahaya

THE FCT police command yesterday said they have arrested a nursing mother, Mrs Ifunnanya Onyenagecha, accused of abusing a seven-year-old girl, who was looking after her twins.

FCT Police Spokesman, Superintendent Moshood Jimoh, said the woman was arrested with bruises on her body, allegedly inflicted by her husband. He said the police took the abused girl, who is a younger sister of the suspect's husband to a hospital for treatment and later handed the victim over to an uncle for better up keeps.

According to him, the case has been transferred to the criminal investigation department for detailed investigation.

The police learnt about the case when a civil servant, Gloria Justin, took the badly battered victim to a radio station to tell the public about her plight.

The woman, who is a neighbour of the suspect, stated during the programme that the girl was allegedly tortured, denied food as well as overworked on a daily basis and she decided to make it public so she wouldn't die in their compound.

When the programme was being aired, the husband of the suspect was accused of coming to the station to collect his junior sister, which was resisted by officials in the place, who called in the police from Mpape Division.

...As accidents claim 5, injure 55 during Easter

By Hussein Yahaya

THE FCT Federal Road Safety Commission has said there were 17 accidents in the territory involving 43 vehicles during the Easter celebrations.

The Sector's Head of Operation, Mr. Sunday Ajayi, who disclosed this to our reporter yesterday, said the accidents claimed five lives and injured about 55 persons.

"We have not gone to sleep, as our men are still on the highways even after the yuletide to check drivers' excesses on the roads," he said.

Mr. Ajayi said overloading and use of mobile phone while driving are some of the traffic offences the sector contended with during the five-day special patrol embarked upon by the FRSC for the Easter.

He warned that the command will soon clamp down on commercial motorists, who load or offload passengers on expressways, adding that such stops are only allowed on feeder roads.

Whirlwind damage facilities, uproot trees in Abuja

AN hour rain, accompanied by strong winds and hail, on Tuesday night uprooted trees and fell many giant advertising billboards in Abuja.

A NAN correspondent, who went round the city on Wednesday, also observed that some electricity poles and street lights had fallen.

The correspondent reported that three major billboards at Karu junction were pulled down.

Some PHCN electricity poles fell in Lugbe, a satellite town, leaving the area in darkness.

Roofs of some residential buildings were blown off.

Mr Adamu Abuja, the Deputy Director, Amenities and Aesthetics, Department of Development Control, Abuja Metropolitan and Management Council (AMMC), said the body had begun an investigation into why the billboards fell.

He said the council had been supervising the erection of billboards in the city, adding that it considered many factors before billboards were erected to avoid damage to lives and property.

"We are carrying out investigations to know the root cause of the problem because at times, some of these problems are natural and there is nothing one can do about it."

"We cannot just assume until thorough investigations are done so that we will know whether it is a professional error or not."

He said that the engineers, handling the erection of billboards, must be registered with the Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN), stressing that "companies must go through a registered COREN engineer before approval is given to embark on billboard erection."