

How groom, bride's sister died 30 minutes to wedding



■ Groom in white Babbar Riga and his friend, Misbahu Ahmed, who sustained injuries in the accident



■ Raihanatu Sulaiman, elder sister to the bride

From Yusha'u A. Ibrahim, Bauchi

When Abba Musa, a groom-to-be and four others set out for a short trip to Murno village from Boto in Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi State, nobody among them had a premonition that he and his bride's elder sister, Raihanatu Sulaiman would lose their lives minutes before the wedding fatiha.

Musa, Maryam Sulaiman (bride-to-be), Raihanatu Sulaiman (bride's elder sister), Misbahu Ahmed (groom's friend) and the driver were on their way to Murno, a community of less than 5 kilometers from Boto to greet the bride's relatives in accordance with Hausa tradition when they were involved in an accident that resulted to the death of the groom-to-be and the elder sister of the bride-to-be while the remaining three people on board the car, including the bride-to-be, sustained varying degrees of injury.

Weekend Trust reliably gathered that a lunatic caused the accident while trying to cross to the other side of road. The driver was said to have navigated in his efforts to avoid hitting the madman but lost control and hit a pediment and the car somersaulted, resulting to the death of two persons and injuring the others.

Further findings revealed that while the groom-to-be, who was hit in the head died on the spot, the elder sister of the bride-to-be died at the hospital while receiving medical treatment. The bride-to-be suffered a fracture in her leg and injuries in her hands and shoulder, while the driver and groom's friend sustained injuries in both hands and legs.

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An eyewitness account of the accident disclosed that it happened at the weekend about 1:35pm.

A brother to the groom-to-be, Alhaji Saminu Abubakar Boto, who confirmed the incident, described the atmosphere in the community as one of profound grief, saying, "It is an unimaginable loss. The entire community is mourning the death of my brother-in-law and my sister, Raihanatu. The families of the victims were thrown into a deep shock, with relatives and friends struggling to

come to terms with the sudden loss of their loved ones."

Boto explained that the bride-to-be's family home, which was filled with preparations for the wedding, was turned into a centre of tears following the unfortunate incident. Shortly after the news of the incident broke to the affected families, the groom's father instantly slumped and was rushed to a hospital.

"His blood pressure immediately rose to 260 over 220 at the time they arrived the hospital. Also, the groom's mother was said to have collapsed when she was told about the demise of her son. Up till the time I am speaking with you, my sister, the bride-to-be, is still in shock. I don't know how to describe the situation. It is indeed a pathetic one. Over 4,000 people stormed our house to console us over the unfortunate tragedy," he narrated.

He described the late Musa as "a kind-hearted and ambitious young man who had looked forward to building a new home with my sister, Maryam Suleiman, but as God would have it, that could not happen.

"The groom-to-be was residing in Buruku in Jos east, Plateau State. When he came to Boto from Jos for the wedding fatiha, we cracked some jokes together minutes before they took off to Murno village. He was jokingly telling me to go and wear babbar-riga. I replied him that if I wore it, many people would perceive me as the groom. We laughed together. Minutes after our conversation, they left for Murno to greet our relatives. Unfortunately, that was my last conversation with him.

"When it was time for the wedding

fatiha, I picked my dad and his friends in my car to the family house of the bride-to-be, and shortly after we arrived, I was notified that my attention was needed at the general hospital, which is not far from the bride-to-be's family house. I was told that the car conveying the groom-to-be to Murno village was involved in an accident.

"On my arrival, I found the lifeless body of the groom-to-be lying on a stretcher with a deep cut in his head, while the bride-to-be, Maryam, Raihanatu, Misbahu and the driver were receiving treatment at the Accident and Emergency Unit of the Hospital. Minutes after, Raihanatu was also confirmed dead.

"Raihanatu will always be remembered as a supportive sibling who had played a key role in planning the unfulfilled wedding ceremony. She joined the groom-to-be to Murno because only she and the bride-to-be knew the house of our relatives in the village; and traditionally, the bride-to-be will not open her face to guide the driver.

"The dual tragedy has cast a shadow over the community, with many residents calling it one of the saddest days in recent memory. We have never witnessed such a tragic memory in this community. It will take the affected families a very long time to overcome the shock," he said.

Weekend Trust gathered that both deceased were buried according to Islamic rites shortly after the accident, while the bride-to-be is said to be inconsolable following the devastating loss of her lover and sister on what was to be her happiest day.