

8 Family Members Die In Kaduna-Zaria Auto Crash



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A tragic accident on the Kaduna-Zaria highway on Monday evening has left eight members of a single family dead and two others battling for their lives in the hospital, after a speeding vehicle lost control and rammed into pedestrians waiting by the roadside.

The heartbreaking incident occurred at about 6 p.m. in the Barakallahu area along Kaduna-Zaria highway, during the Eid-el-Kabir festivities.

Among the victims were women and children who had gathered at the roadside after visiting their grandmother’s house for the holiday.

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The vehicle, an ash-coloured Mercedes GLK Jeep, was reportedly being driven by a boy from the Rigachikun community, who fled the scene immediately after the crash.

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It was believed the boy's father is a prominent politician in the community.

"We lost eight members of our family that evening," said Malam Jamilu Usman Mai Yadi, a grieving father and husband who resides in Sabon Gari, Tudun Wada. "My wife, Khadija Umar, my two children – Sadiq, 16, and Muhammad, 9, her younger and elder sisters, and their aunt all died. In total, ten members of my family were hit; eight died and two are still in the hospital."

Mai Yadi said the victims were standing by the roadside, hoping to catch a ride home, when the vehicle suddenly veered off the road and plowed into them.

"The driver must have been speeding because my wife's leg was broken beyond repair. Sadiq's body was only brought back to us later by Road Safety officials," he said with visible anguish.

Among the dead was Zainab Muhammad, who was eight months pregnant with twins. Her husband, Sulaiman Abdulkadir Mai Shinkafa, a cleric from Hayin Rigasa, described the aftermath of the accident in harrowing detail.

"She was due to give birth very soon. All the baby items were ready. We even named the unborn twins Hassan and Hussaini. Our 6-year-old son Khalid was also hit," he told reporters. "Her body was crushed. My son's bones were shattered. We had to use planks to gather their remains before burial. It's something no family should ever witness."

Mai Shinkafa, like other grieving relatives, expressed deep disappointment over what they described as government and community neglect.

"No one from the boy's family whose father was a prominent politician in the community or from the Kaduna State government has come to condole with us. Not even a word," he lamented. "Even the father of the driver didn't show up. It's as though our lives don't matter."

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) confirmed the accident, attributing it to over-speeding and loss of control on a rain-soaked road.

Sector Commander of the Kaduna Road Safety Corps, Tijjani Iliyasu, gave details of the response.

"What happened is that the driver lost control of the vehicle. It was raining heavily, and the road was slippery. From our assessment, he was over-speeding and rammed into people standing by the roadside.

"Six people died on the spot. We immediately rescued the injured and rushed them to the hospital. By the time we arrived, the driver and others inside the vehicle had fled. They used the cover of night to abandon the vehicle. We don't know who exactly was driving," he said.

He added that the case has been transferred to the Nigerian Police for further investigation.

"As of now, the vehicle has been handed over to the police, and they should be able to trace the owner," Iliyasu noted. "Our focus at the scene was to save lives, and we did just that."

Kaduna gov't, police silent

However, the Kaduna State Police Command has remained silent on the matter. Repeated attempts to reach the Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Mansir Hassan, were unsuccessful as his phone line was not reachable at the time of filing this report.

No official statement has been issued since the crash occurred on Monday from the state government also.

Residents react

Community members have joined the bereaved families in calling for swift justice and government intervention.

A Barakallahu resident and a community leader Imam Rabi'u prayed to Allah to forgive those that died during the incident.

"The whole community was shattered by the incident. That night the whole town was quiet because it was a terrible incident for 8 family members to die at once. May Allah forgive them," he said.

Adam, a resident of Barakallahu, also described the incident as terrible and painful.

"It was a terrible incident because many lives were lost," he simply said.

For now, Mai Yadi says the family is left to mourn in silence. "We've buried our loved ones. We've said our prayers. But the pain remains. The least we expect is empathy from those in power and those responsible," he said.