

Corps member, three others die in Yobe crash

Govt pays N420m pensions, gratuities

From **Njadvara Musa**, Damaturu

FOUR passengers, including a female National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) member, were killed yesterday in an auto-accident involving a DAF truck and a luxurious bus on the Damaturu-Potiskum road in Yobe State.

The crash occurred in Fune Village at about 4.30 a.m. Eyewitnesses told *The Guardian* that the driver of the truck with registration number XW 94 AG2, was travelling to Lagos but hit the bus coming from Aba, while trying to avoid an asphalt ridge on the road.

Meanwhile, following protests by pensioners over the non-payment of gratuities and pensions by the Yobe State government, Governor Ibrahim Geidam has approved the release of N420 million to settle the pensioners' claims, as well as the workers' leave and transport allowances for the past two years.

The approved release was disclosed at the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) political rally in Gashua, to kick-start the 2011 electioneering campaigns in Yobe-North Senatorial District.

Fatai Muraina, the driver of the crashed truck, said: "I could not control the truck immediately I dogged the asphalt ridge. Before I knew it, it was too late, as the body of the truck hit this bus to cause this fatal accident".

He said apart from the loss of four lives, about 15 passengers from the bus and truck sustained head and limb injuries.

The remains of the dead pas-

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sengers were deposited at the Damaturu Specialist Hospital, while the injured ones were taken to Potiskum for treatment by the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) rescue team.

Yobe State President of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Rev. Godwin Teru, died last month on the same road.

Geidam said he had received several text messages on the non-payment of gratuities and pensions to retired workers in the state, stating that this has caused him great concern.

He said out of the approved N420 million, N270 million

had been set aside to offset the backlog of pensions and gratuities of retired workers in the state.

Besides, he added that N150 million has also been approved by the State Executive Council (SEC) to offset pending workers' leave and transport allowances.

The governor said because of the failure to pay, most civil servants in the state could not proceed to their villages for their yearly leave.

He urged the pensioners and workers to be patient, assuring that their pensions, leave and transport allowances would be paid within three weeks.

Ogun monarch asks govt to monitor

From **Charles Coffie-Gyamfi**, Abeokuta

WORRIED by the way constituency allowances are being spent by some lawmakers, the *Oniselu* of Iselu, Ogun State, Oba Akintunde Akinyemi, has appealed to the Federal Government to devise an effective way of monitoring how such allowances are spent by all legislators across the country.

Oba Akinyemi, who spoke in Abeokuta, the state capital at the weekend, submitted that evidence abound that some

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