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Daily Independent (Lagos)

Nigeria: Aso Rock Bans Night Travel By Staff

Chesa Chesa

27 January 2009

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Abuja — Aso Rock has banned night travels by its staff on official assignments following the death in a night car crash of three Vice Presidential aides on their way to Katsina for the wedding ceremony of President Umaru Yar'Adua's daughter at the weekend.

The ban affects all advance teams of both the President and Vice President.

The accident, which involved the advance team of Vice President Goodluck Jonathan occurred about 8.00 p.m. in Charanchi town, near Katsina.

The bus in which the aides were traveling was said to have suddenly veered off its lane and somersaulted. They had departed Abuja shortly before 4.00 p.m.

Eyewitnesses reported that the driver of the vehicle had dozed off twice behind the steering wheel before the tragic incident.

The three aides who lost their lives include the Assistant Chief Information officer, Brian Ata, a cameraman, Emmanuel Babarinde, and Security Officer, Thomas Adeyemi, all attached to the Vice President's Office.

Six other officials in the bus in which they were travelling sustained various degrees of injury and are now receiving treatment at the State House Clinic, Abuja.

Their family members have been visiting them in the hospital while those of the deceased have been to the Villa to clear the personal effects of their late loved ones.

Among those seen was the wife of late Brian Ata.

Vice President Goodluck Jonathan had expressed shock and sadness over the incident, according to a statement issued by his spokesman, Ima Niboro.

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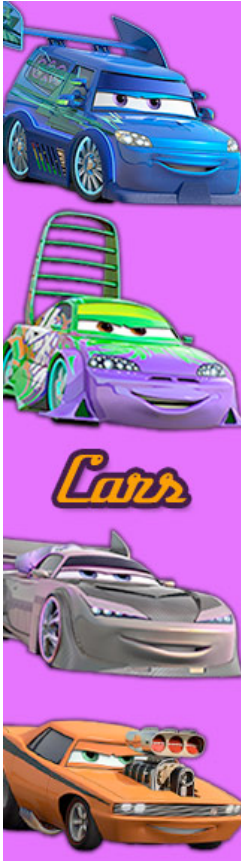
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