

ONE KILLED AS TRAIN DERAILS IN MINNA, RAIL SERVICE DISRUPTED

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Passengers on the recently reopened Lagos-Kano rail route are now stranded in Minna, Niger State capital, following the derailment of a cargo train at Kutuwongi village in Mokwa local government area.

This is as a South West bound train from Kano has crushed a man in Minna, whose identity could not be ascertained at press time.

Sources close to the Minna rail station told our correspondent that the commercial train, which departed Kano on Wednesday morning for Lagos with fully loaded passengers and merchandise, got stuck in Minna as a result of the closed Akere-Jebba rail route, following the derailment of a cargo train conveying cement from Lagos to Kaduna and Kano.

Our correspondent further gathered that before the South West bound train encountered the distress signal that halted its movement, it was involved in an accident as it crushed an unidentified man to death, a distance of less than 50 metres to the Minna station.

The incident, which occurred around 8.p.m on Wednesday night, threw residents around the rail line linking Mobil roundabout, a commercial hub of Minna metropolis, into confusion as news about the accident spread.

Timely arrival of policemen to the scene of the accident however forestalled breakdown of law and order, as they were able to check the already gathering crowd.

Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of the Minna railway police station, Sebastine Ayejime, an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), confirmed the incident.

He said the dead man was sleeping along the rail track and could not run for safety despite the loud blaring of the train's horn, describing the incident as unfortunate.

Ayejime said the police only succeeded in evacuating the man's body from the scene of the accident, while the passengers were waiting for the railway authorities who are currently doing all that is possible for them to continue their journey for a way out.

The DPO however expressed worry that the Medical Director of Minna General Hospital and his team refused to accept the remains of the man, because "so many corpses have been deposited in the hospital morgue without anyone coming forth to claim ownership".

In order not to allow the body decompose and constitute health hazards to the station, the DPO said the police and other relevant authorities are putting heads together with the intents of securing permit to bury the dead man.

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