

**Jonas Agwu**

Road Safety Column

08077690055 122 FRSC Toll-free emergency number jonasagwu@yahoo.com

# Adieu Awodi!

**F**or the last three weeks I have beamed my searchlight on tragedies involving younger people and even those in their prime. While I was busy acting as the town crier, little did I know that tragedy was lurking around my own corner. Peter Awodi was my Head of Logistics while I was FCT Sector Commander. He was also the Officer-in-Charge of Villa operations before his serving as Aide de Camp (ADC) to the former Corps Marshal and Chief Executive, Gen Anthony Hananiya (rtd). Awodi had a stint as staff officer of the SERVICOM Unit at the FRSC National Headquarter. Sadly, this fine officer with impeccable track record with the FRSC, died painfully last Saturday, 29 March, 2014 along the Cukukau-Nyanaya-Gwandara road as a result of serious head injuries sustained from a hit-and-run motorcyclist. According to eye witness account, the Late Awodi had alighted from a motor bike and was about paying off the "okada" man when another motor cyclist suddenly sped from nowhere, knocked him down and sped away. Though, by-standers offered to rush him to the nearest clinic for medical attention, unfortunately, Awodi could not make it as he died from the serious head injuries and heavy loss of blood, leaving behind, a widow and three kids.

Awodi's tragic death through a road crash, is one among many tragedies that occurred last week. Some were reported, while others may have occurred unknown in remote parts of the country. In the case of Awodi, report said that the hit-and-run bike man did not even stop while first responders at the crash scene; despite their willingness to be of help, could not do much for lack of the appropriate skill and expertise in handling such cases. This plight has befallen many others and underscores a recent initiative by the Federal Road Safety Corps tagged "National Community Post Crash Scheme" which is a partial fulfilment of the 5th pillar of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety. This pillar seeks to focus on the need for improved methods for handling/attending to victims of road traffic crashes. Empirical studies show that the handling of road crash victims often poses serious challenges to such victims, thus worsening their situation on arrival at the hospital for further medical attention. For us in the FRSC, some critical cases such as spinal cord injuries are

best handled by specialists and this underscores the effort by the Corps to sponsor some of its paramedics to the Uthman Dan Fodio Neurologist Centre in Sokoto in 2010, to acquire rudimentary skills for proper handling of critical cases of injuries resulting from road crashes. Back to the recent initiative, it was a fulfilling moment on Thursday 14th March 2014 when the management of Shell Nigeria Petroleum Exploration Company donated extricating equipment and other rescue items to the FRSC to further enhance its drive to enhance the national community post-crash initiative.

In the words of the FRSC Corps Marshal, Osita Chidoka at the event, "It has been long that the FRSC conceived the idea of collaborating with first responders to crash scenes, particularly, in crash-prone areas which have been identified along the highways across the country. Having watched with concern how the residents of some of these crash-prone areas, in their desire to assist crash victims engage in rescue either with bare hands or inappropriate rescue materials that produce negative results, we felt compelled to take appropriate action to redress the trend."

Speaking further on the project which will witness the training of 540 volunteers, he added "That was why the FRSC initiated the program of bringing such volunteers together for basic post crash training that would equip them with the capacity to carry out the functions most diligently and under safe condition. The birth of the National Community Post Crash Initiative (NCPCI), which is being demonstrated today, is therefore a painstaking idea to resolve the shortcomings that go with rescue activities involving first responders across the country".

In addition "In the first phase of the comprehensive programme being put in place to address the challenges of crash victims handling, 540 volunteers have been carefully selected and would be presented with appropriate rescue materials after their training programme coming up between 24th and 28th March, 2014 in 27 corridors in 12 States. The National Community Post Crash Initiative, therefore, provides a veritable platform for tackling the challenges and restoring the hope of road users to the availability of prompt and appropriate post crash care"

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

“

*Awodi's tragic death through a road crash, is one among many tragedies that occurred last week. Some were reported while others may have occurred unknown in remote parts of the country*