

Police chase 17 commuters to death

IT was a day of tears, blood and sorrow yesterday in Abuja when a fully loaded 18-seater commuter bus being chased by the police collided with an Audi saloon car killing all the passengers including the driver and his conductor.

The woman who drove the Audi car also died.

Although the police had evacuated the dead when our correspondent visited the scene of the accident, fresh blood and personal effects of the victims littered the floor.

Sympathizers who continued to throng the scene could not hold back tears on seeing the loss even as at 1pm despite the fact that the accident occurred at about 9.30am.

Police from the Wuse police station were allegedly pursuing the bus, which was on its way to Area 1, when the driver lost control and rammed into the Audi car at the

From Sanni Ologun,
Abuja

Area 10, National Stadium Road intersection, close to Bolingo Hotel.

An eyewitness told *The Nation* that: "The police were chasing the bus and as the driver got to this place he lost control. I don't know what is wrong with the police. I think the police were supposed to take the number of the bus when it refused to stop for them.

"Look at it now, 17 people died in this accident," he added.

When contacted the Force Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Agerebi Akpoebi said he was in Lagos and directed our correspondent to contact the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Police Command saying that it was a local matter.

Efforts to speak with the FCT police spokes-

man Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Musa Ahmed proved abortive, as his phone could not be reached.

All the bodies of the dead were later deposited at the National Hospital while wreckage of the vehicles were removed by the police.

But for the iron rails on the concrete demarcation that wedged the bus it would have plunged down the road below.

Eyewitnesses blamed the driver for not stopping for the police when he was being chased and also the police for not attending to the victims immediately the accident occurred.

Some of the sympathizers at the scene called on the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) to erect speed break on the road to avoid future occurrence, as according to them the particular spot is prone to accidents.