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## Student dies in Customs chase

Posted by: EZEKIEL EFEOBHOKHAN in Campus Life ⌚ 5 days ago

**A final year Political Science student of the University of Benin (UNIBEN) died in an accident last Thursday. The deceased, who was driving an unregistered vehicle, was said to have rammed into a truck while being chased by Customs officers on the Benin-Ore Road. EZEKIEL EFEOBHOKHAN (400-Level Pharmacy) reports.**

His mates had gone home for the Yuletide, but he chose to remain in school. Osaretin Meshach Nohuwa, a final year part-time Political Science student at the University of Benin (UNIBEN), stayed back to make some money. But, before he could do that, he died in an accident.

He died last Thursday while being chased by Customs officers in Isior, a community close to the university's Ugbowo campus.

CAMPUSLIFE gathered that the late Osaretin was driving an unregistered vehicle about 11pm when some Customs officers stopped him. Rather than stop, Osaretin sped off.

An eyewitness said the Customs officers chased him. He rammed into a truck as he tried to overtake a bus.

The eyewitness said: "The car, which the victim was driving, was on high speed. He tried to overtake a commercial bus, but he did not know a truck was in front of the bus. He rammed into the rear of the truck. The truck dragged the car to a distance before it stopped at a spot close to Eddygrace Filling Station.

"The victim died on the spot. When we got to the scene, we discovered that the vehicle was not registered. Then, another person with the same type of unregistered car later came to the scene and told us that the victim was being chased by Customs officers."

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Police investigation showed that the late Osaretin was contracted by an Edo-based car dealer to bring Tokunbo vehicles from Lagos to Benin.

A police officer, who declined to give his name, confirmed the accident, saying policemen on patrol saw the accident. His words: "There was an accident involving a red unregistered Mazda coming from Oluku side and a truck. The victim, who was occupant of the car, died instantly but I cannot confirm if he was a student."

The policeman said after Osaretin's body was deposited at University of Benin Teaching Hospital (UBTH) morgue, his parents came to retrieve the body for burial.

"We advised them to wait until investigation and autopsy are completed. This is because there could be court case later and given that the victim was the one, who hit the truck from behind, we would have charged him for the damage he caused to the truck if he were to be alive," the policeman said.

It was all quiet at the Noma Hostel in Ekosodin, where the deceased resided. When our correspondent visited the hostel, the building was shut, as most of the occupants were said to have gone home for Christmas; those around fled to avoid what they consider police trouble.

An occupant, who spoke to CAMPUSLIFE on condition of anonymity, said the late James was yet to finish his examination before he died. "He was supposed to write his final paper last Saturday morning," the student said, describing the deceased as lovable and hardworking.

Some colleagues were surprised that the late Osaretin was involved in vehicle delivery business because he had a thriving barbershop and boutique.

A part-time student, who simply identified himself as Omorege, said: "The late Osaretin had a barbershop and boutique. It was through that salon that he got his popularity among students. When he was about to travel, we told him not to go but to write his final examination, which came up on Saturday. Osaretin did not listen to us. I was shocked when I learnt about his death."






Osas Osarogiwu, a student living close to the late Osaretin's barbershop, said: "I never saw him sitting idle. If he was not going to school for lectures, then he would be in his barbershop attending to customers. He was loved by everybody.

His brother, Osas Nohuwa, said Osaretin's death brought sorrow to the family. "His death has brought sorrow to our family because it was sudden and hit us like a thunderbolt. He lived an unforgettable life and I pray that his soul should rest in peace till we meet to part no more."

His close friend, Vincent Aifuwa, said: "Osaretin was a good friend and a brother. Everyone likes to associate with him. We love him but God loves him most."

A family source told CAMPUSLIFE that the body was buried on Monday. When asked if the late James' parents knew about what he was doing, the source said: "I don't know if he told his parents but we have buried him. We had gone to pack up his property in his barbershop and the things in his hostel. I won't want to make further comment on it because the family is bereaved and we want you to respect our right to mourn."

However, the Zone C command of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), could not be reached for comments at the time of this report.

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