

# Six killed, 70 injured as train crushes bus conveying Lagos State workers

Sanwo-Olu declares 3-day mourning, suspends campaigns, calls for blood donation  
FG orders investigation, Gbagabiamila, Oyeibanji, Obasa mourn

When train was approaching, other vehicles stopped, but the staff bus driver continued moving —NRC MD



• Lagos State governor, Mr Babajide Sanwo-Olu, during his visit to the hospital.



• One of the victims of the accident in the hospital.

Bola Badmus, Shola Adekola, Tola Adenubi, Subair Mohammed, Kehinde Akintola, Tyavzu Saanyol, Olalekan Olabulo and Yomi Ayeleso

Lagos State governor, Mr Babajide Sanwo-Olu, has declared three days of mourning for those who died in the state staff bus that was rammed by a train on Thursday morning, expressing deep shock and sorrow over the incident.

A staff bus conveying workers of the Lagos State government to the state secretariat at Alausa, Ikeja early Thursday morning collided with a train at PWD bus stop at Shogunle area.

The bus, when the incident happened, was conveying 85 state government workers and was coming from Isolo at about 7:30am and heading to Alausa.

Two persons died on the spot, while four others later died at the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH), Ikeja.

At the PWD rail crossing, the bus driver had attempted to make a turning but was rammed by the oncoming train, which dragged it for some distance from the point of impact.

The Lagos State Emergency Management Authority (LASEMA) has confirmed the incident.

The statement by LASEMA reads: "On arrival of the agency's response team at the scene of the incident, it was discovered that a government staff bus with an unknown registration number and a train were involved in an accident at Shogunle area. Investigations gathered revealed that the immediate cause of the incident was due to reckless driving on the part of the bus driver who was trying to beat the train traffic signal before the moving train rammed the bus."

"Unfortunately, six adults were confirmed dead and several people seriously injured."

"The injured victims were administered first aid treatment by the agency's medical team (paramedics) and LAS-AMBUS officials, well-stabilised and transported to the trauma centre at LASUTH, Ikeja for further treatment."

Meanwhile, Governor Sanwo-Olu, who visited the victims at the hospital, announced the suspension of all political campaigns and ordered half-day work for state workers, starting from Friday beginning from 12:00pm.

The governor equally ordered flags to be flown at half mast.

The governor, who was at LASUTH in the company of the Commissioner for Health, Professor Akin Abayomi, and the Chief Medical Director (CMD), LASUTH, Dr Adetokunbo Fabanwo, called for blood donation for victims across different state government medical facilities.

He described the condition of the patients as critical just

as he also disclosed that six persons had been confirmed dead by emergency responders.

At the hospital, 42 people were found to have suffered moderate injuries, while the number of those with severe injuries was put at 29.

Eight persons had mild injuries, while six were confirmed dead.

Also in a statement made available to newsmen, Governor Sanwo-Olu expressed deep shock and sorrow even as he condoled with the families of those who lost their lives, while praying for God's mercy and protection for the state.

He said: "I am deeply saddened by the news of the accident. The vehicle was conveying staff of the Lagos State government, our staff who serve the state in different capacities."

"Let's say a prayer for the families and a prayer of mercy and protection for our state."

"My thoughts are with the victims and their families during this difficult time," he said.

The governor thanked Lagosians who joined the state's first responders in the search and rescue operation, saying the true spirit of Lagos must be sustained at all times, just as he promised to give updates on the incident.

"A big thank you to well-meaning Lagosians who immediately joined the rescue efforts. Our first responders and emergency services are on ground and we will share more information shortly," he said.

The governor also thanked the governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic

Party (PDP), Dr Abdulazeez Olajide Adediran, popularly called Jandor, and the candidate of the Labour Party (LP), Mr Gbadebo Rhodes-Vivour, for also visiting the scene of the accident.

Meanwhile, Dr Adediran has urged the state government to provide barriers at railway level crossings.

He made the call during a visit to the scene of an accident. Describing the incident as sad and unbefitting in a cosmopolitan state like Lagos, Adediran said safety and security of lives and property remained the primary function of any government.

Also, the Minister of Transportation, Mu'azu Laji Sambo, expressed sadness over the accident.

The minister then ordered an immediate and full investigation into the incident.

According to a statement by Henshaw Ogubike, the minister, while sympathising with victims, prayed for the repose of the souls of those who died and quick recovery for those injured.

"We are saddened by the news of the accident which occurred this morning [Thursday] which involved a train operated by the Nigerian Railway Corporation and a Lagos State staff bus conveying workers to their offices in the early hours of today [Thursday] in Shogunle, Lagos."

"We pray for those who have lost their lives that the Almighty God would grant them eternal rest and we pray for speedy recovery for the injured," he said.

The minister also commiserated with the families of

the victims as well as the government and people of Lagos State over the incident.

He appreciated the Lagos State government, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and members of the public for their cooperation in helping to clear the site of the incident and ensuring that the injured got immediate treatment.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Railway police command has taken over investigation into the incident following the directive of the minister for detailed investigation into the incident.

Also, the Minister of Aviation, Senator Hadi Sirika, has directed Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB) experts to commence investigation into the incident.

Describing the accident as unfortunate, Sirika assured the public of the capacity of the NSIB to unravel its immediate and remote causes and proffer ways of preventing such in the future.

While commiserating with the government and people of Lagos State, especially those who lost their loved ones in the sad event, the minister also prayed for the quick recovery of those injured.

Also, speaker of the House of Representatives, Honourable Femi Gbagabiamila, described the accident as regrettable.

Gbagabiamila, who said the accident was avoidable, expressed grief that innocent lives of people going about their legitimate businesses were lost during the incident.

He sent his condolences to

the families of the victims, the people and government of Lagos State over the incident.

Meanwhile, the managing director of the Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC), Mr Fidet Okhiria, has given an account of the brief he got on the accident.

Okhiria told the *News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)* in Lagos that: "According to the information I gathered at the scene of the incident, they said many cars stopped when they got to the level crossing, while the Lagos State staff bus driver continued moving, which I don't know why."

"Maybe the driver thought he could pass before the train got nearer to him. So when he could not pass, the train crushed the bus; that is what we gathered."

"The train was coming from Ijoko to Iddo."

Meanwhile, in the aftermath of the accident, speaker of the Lagos State House of Assembly, Honourable Mudasiru Obasa, suspended a political walk scheduled to hold across Agege constituency in honour of the victims.

The speaker met the thousands of youths, men and women at the Pen Cinema area of Agege on his way from an official engagement and abruptly stopped them.

He described the train accident as a sad occurrence, just as he sympathised with the families of the victims.

Also, the Ekiti State governor, Mr Biodun Oyeibanji, has commiserated with his Lagos State counterpart and the government and people of Lagos State over the accident.

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Military deactivates

THE Defence Headquarters said on Thursday that a total of 1,332 terrorists and their family members surrendered to troops of Operation Hadin Kai across North East in the last two weeks, the *News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)* has reported.

The Director, Defence Media Operations, Major-General Musa Danmadami, made this known during the bi-weekly news briefing on the operations of the armed

forces in Abuja. Danmadami said the surrendered terrorists comprised 222 adult males, 411 adult females and 699 children. He added that while eight terrorists were neutralised during the period, troops also apprehended 35 terrorists' logistics suppliers and rescued 19 civilian victims. He said the troops recovered 10 AK-47 rifles, one LMG, seven rounds of 5.56 ammunition, one LMG link containing 111 rounds of

7.62mm NATO. Others are 200 rounds of LMG ammunition, 46 rounds of 7.62mm special and 12 rounds of refilled and 7.62mm special. He added that troops also recovered two dane guns, four AK-47 magazines loaded with 102 rounds of 7.62mm special, 24 other AK-47 magazines, 36 hand grenades and one motorcycle. Defence spokesman said the air component of Operation Hadin Kai also eliminated

hundreds of terrorists in the enclaves during several air interdiction operations. According to him, feedback revealed that the airstrike dealt a heavy blow to the terrorists as several terrorists were neutralised with their logistics destroyed. In North West zone, Danmadami said the troops of Operation Hadarin Daji and other operations had continued to sustain their dominance over the menace of terrorists and other crim-



• The triage centre in LASUTH after it was disbanded following patients' admission into wards, on Thursday.

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(CONTINUED FROM PG 4)

Governor Oyeibanji, in a statement signed by his Special Adviser on Media, Yinka Oyebo, in Ado-Ekiti condoled with Governor Sanwo-Olu, as well as families and colleagues of victims.

Meanwhile, DRIVER of the Lagos State government workers' official bus that crashed into a train at PWD bus stop on Thursday morning has commenced psychiatric, psychological and drug tests.

The driver was also said to have ignored warnings to stop from the Nigerian Railway Corporation flagman and other drivers.

The driver of the bus was arrested after the incident by operatives of the Railway police command.

The Commissioner of Police in charge of the command, Yemunde Longe, confirmed the arrest of the driver to newsmen on Thursday evening at the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH).

The driver was on Thursday evening brought to LASUTH for the tests in preparation for possible prosecution.

Longe told newsmen that, "Presently, we are with the driver; we are handing him over for medical examination

because there was a flag officer at the railway crossing flagging him down, but he refused to stop."

"That's why we must subject him to thorough medical examination."

"The driver, if found culpable, will be prosecuted. We are working with the state Department of Public Prosecution. It is already gathering the evidence to prosecute him."

"The driver has been arrested and he is in our custody," Some of the victims, blamed the bus driver for the incident.

According to them, the driver ignored their caution when they told him not to cross the rail line.

One of the victims who had a cast around his neck said he sat near the entry door.

He said he and a few others saw the train coming while they were still on the Agege Motor Road.

"We warned him to allow the train to leave before crossing but he was adamant. Everybody was shouting, cautioning him but he moved. Half of the body of the bus had crossed the rail track before the train hit us."

"I knew nothing again

until I found myself here (LASUTH Emergency Unit)," he said.

A staff of the Lagos State Emergency Maintenance Agency (LASEMA), Anuloluwapo Musa, said he boarded the bus at Jakande.

Musa said he jumped down from the bus immediately it was hit by the train.

The LASEMA official, who injured his left arm, said: "I was at the back when the incident occurred. I just heard noise from the front row cautioning the driver. Not quite long, we were hit by the train. I was conscious enough to jump out of the bus while the train was still dragging our bus," he said.

Another victim said she also jumped out of the bus but landed inside a ditch. She suffered an arm injury.

She was told that she will be transferred to the Orile-Agege General Hospital with three others. Six victims had earlier been taken to the hospital.

It was gathered that some of those stabilised at the LASUTH were transferred to General Hospital, Lagos Island, Gbagada General Hospital and Orile-Agege.

How LASUTH managed mass casualties of train accident

For Thursday's accident, a triage centre was set up by the management of Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH) by erecting an emergency canopy.

Patients were triaged into mild, moderate and severe groups. Those with life threatening injuries were immediately transferred to operating theatres for stabilisation and fracture repair by specialists in the areas within the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH).

Moderate cases like simple fractures and lacerations were transferred to the nearest general hospitals such as Gbagada General Hospital, Orile Agege General Hospital, Lagos Island General Hospital and the Trauma Centre at the toll gate.

Mild patients were admitted to the surgical ward at LASUTH. Emergency blood transfusion service was activated by the state Blood Transfusion Service Agency, which mobilised blood and blood products from donors and storage to stabilise pre, during and post operation patients and procedures.



• A crane retrieving the bus from the wreckage.