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Police van crushes three persons in Lagos

By Kunle Adeyemi

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There was controversy on Wednesday over the state of health of three persons who were crushed by a police patrol van at Lawanson Road, Itire, Lagos, on Monday.



AJIBOLA ADEOSUN

Lagos State Commissioner of Police,
Marvel Akpoyibo

While the police claimed that the victims were still alive and had been treated at a General Hospital, eyewitnesses said they feared that the victims were dead.

The incident, which happened at 1.30pm at Lawanson Bus Stop by Cole Street, immediately attracted a crowd of sympathisers.

Our correspondent learnt that the three victims, two male and a female, were discussing at the bus stop when the incident happened.

The police van marked RRS 016 LA, was said to be travelling at breakneck speed while the driver tried to apply the breaks in order to negotiate another street.

An eyewitness told our correspondent that either due to a break failure or the inability of the driver to control the vehicle, he unavoidable crushed the three persons.

It was learnt that the driver eventually pulled up a few metres from the spot of the accident and the armed policemen hurriedly jumped off the vehicle.

People around the scene had promptly moved to the scene to see if they could be of any assistance to the victims, who were said to be lying motionlessly on the road.

The witness said, "I was very afraid when the armed policemen rushed to the spot and started shooting carelessly in order to scare everybody away.

"All of us ran away from the scene and the policemen quickly carried all the people into their vehicle and sped off. No one knows where they took them to.

"Although I cannot confirm the situation of the victims, but none of them showed any sign of life as they were being lifted off the ground by the policemen."

The victims' names were given as Kehinde Olatunji, Peju Aishat and Mutiu Sanusi.

However, spokesman for the Lagos State Police Command, Mr. Frank Mba, who confirmed the incident to our correspondent on Wednesday, denied any death.

Mba said it was a case "of a lone serious accident involving a police vehicle on routine patrol at Itire."

He confirmed that the van hit the three persons but added that none of them was dead.

He said, "Actually, the three persons sustained serious injuries and were rushed to the General Hospital at Randle.

"Two of them, Sanusi and Aishat, had been treated and discharged, but the third person, Olatunji, is still on admission in the hospital.

"As I speak to you, the police have spent about N120,000 to cater for the medical needs of the affected persons. We don't have anything to hide; it was an accident."

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