

allow the manipulation of the result of the psychiatric test to be conducted on Mr. Akolade Arowolo, the man, who

proposed

wives.

She said that protests from women in the state was no

provide telephone lines so that people could call to report any abuse," she said.

Policeman, two others die in road accidents

Kunle Falayi

Two men died, while one other was critically injured on Wednesday evening on the long bridge, near Wawa on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway after a truck they were riding in tumbled into a space between the bridges.

One of the victims was wearing a police uniform, while voter and national identity cards were found on the second victim. Officials of the Lagos Command of the Federal Road Safety Corps quickly rushed an unidentified survivor to the Lagos State Accident and Emergency Centre.

Eyewitnesses said the truck with registration number XO 501 LND was on a top speed on the outbound lane of the expressway when a Hiace bus speeding beside it side-swiped the truck leading it to derail and crashed into the deep space between the bridges. The truck, which was carrying wood shavings, was badly smashed.

But the bus which, was much smaller than the truck, was not dented. An eyewitness, Garba Dauda, said the truck derailed and went over the median because it was on a top speed.

It was learnt that the unidentified bus driver, who briefly stopped to see what had happened to the truck, hurriedly left the scene.

When officials of the Lagos and Ogun commands of the FRSC came to the scene, it was discovered that the truck belonged to a company called WEMPCO. An official of the Ogun command, who declined to give his name, said the company's management had been called and would come afterwards to identify the corpses.

A sympathiser at the scene, Mrs. Funmi Joseph, who said she was a managing director of a company on the expressway, broke down in tears as she frantically called all the phone numbers in a wallet found on one of the victims.

Joseph was, however, able to reach an unidentified woman who said she knew one of the victims. "This is very sad," she said.

As at 6pm, the officials of the FRSC were still battling to remove the corpse of the policeman, whose head was smashed against the truck's roof.

The official of the FRSC, who spoke to PUNCH METRO, said the policeman was likely to be the truck's escort.

"When they come and are able to identify the victims as their employees, we would release the bodies to them," he said.



Meanwhile, at the same time the accident occurred, another fatal accident occurred on the Obanikoro end of the Ikorodu Road, where an unidentified man died while two others were injured.

The scene of the crash
Photo: Kunle Falayi

Fear grips community over slow pace of work on canal

Waheed Bakare

For residents of Oladeinde; Olu Ajisegbede; Ajose and other adjoining streets in Shomolu area of Lagos, the rainy season comes with a lot of pains and agonies resulting in destruction of their property. So, as the rainy season approaches this year, the residents had prepared their minds for what has become a yearly ritual as a result of an abandoned canal spanning one kilometer in the area. So, it was a great relief when clearing work started on the canal early in March.

Although a cross section of the residents, who spoke with the PUNCH METRO, commended the state government for reviving the project, they expressed concern on the recent noticeably slow pace of the work.

A member of the community executive, Mr. Sunday Sodunke, who lives on Olu Ajisegbede Street, said, "Before the arrival of this expatriate construction company, Nigerian engineers have been doing it and there was no result. The result of flooding in those days was so enormous, that nobody could sleep at home. Houses, mosques, churches used to be flooded. So, many property

were damaged.

"We invited cameramen, that time to record the result of the abandoned projects by the Nigerian engineers. Thereafter, the expatriates were given the job to handle. Right now, the flooding has stopped. Rain falls now and flood does not get into anybody's house. The whole street has been cleaned up through the canal waterways.

"It is on the basis of this that we have written to the Ministry of the Environment and the government, commending the work of these expatriates. We are deeply impressed and we want them to continue.

"Another thing is that, as we heard from a reliable source, the project was about to be stopped. That is why we wrote to the ministry and the Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babatunde Fashola."

On his part, Pastor J.O. Owolabi of Christ Apostolic Church of Isegun, said the community was worried about the slow pace of work on the canal in recent time but urged the government not to relent.

"We suspect that the constraint of the release of fund to the people who are doing the work

was the reason for the slow pace. They are working day and night, but not as expected. We suspect that they are having constraints financially. Those who are in charge of releasing money should do so," he said.

Another resident, Mr. David George, from Ajose Street, however, urged the contractor to work on the bridge between Shodimu and Bankole streets, adding that Aladealafia and Ogunbadejo should also be linked to the other side to ensure complete deflooding of the area.

An auto mechanic, Mr. Bolaji Awofeso, who lives on Oladeinde Street, off Apapa Road, expressed optimism about the project, saying "I am sure by the time the canal is constructed and the Anifowose bridge is worked on, thing would not be the same anymore. The bridge is low and not large enough, which is why water does not get through easily."

A trader, Mrs. Silifatu Jimoh, who lives on Ajisegbede Street, also said, "We used to be confounded by flood in the past. But immediately the expatriates started the project, we have been able to heave a sigh of relief. The situation is better than before but we would implore them to do it perfectly."

Mr. Bob Wakeling, the Managing Director of Zapex Construction Company, the firm in charge of the construction, described the project as social and human rights issues, saying people had the right to live in a decent environment.

He said the firm had concluded the hardest part of the project, which most of the contractors that had earlier worked on the project avoided.

Allaying the fear of the community that the project might not be completed on time, Wakeling said, "As a company, we are looking to get more machinery. More machinery is coming in so that we can progress faster. We would get the project completed by the end of the year. That's a target I can guarantee at this stage."



Clearing in progress at the canal
Photo: Waheed Bakare