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## Controversy over missing money in banker's crashed car

DECEMBER 24, 2013 BY ADELANI ADEPEGBA

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**The wreck car**

A worker with Diamond Bank, Gwarimpa, Benjamin Idim, who died in a car crash at Utako, Abuja last week, was said to have about N2m in his car, but the bulk of the money has yet to be recovered.

Benjamin, 23, was believed to have lost control and crashed his Kia Soul car at midnight while coming from a visit to a friend.

He reportedly died at the scene of the accident and his body and the wrecked car were evacuated by the police. Benjamin's remains were buried in Calabar last Saturday.

About N800,000 and two phones said to have been recovered from the car were given to the parents of the deceased by the police, but family members and friends contended that Benjamin had about N2m in the car.

A friend, who identified himself simply as Kunle, said the late banker kept the money with him before he collected it later in the day.

He said, "Benjamin actually kept the money in my locker. Though I don't know the exact amount, I am sure it was more than N1m. It was therefore a surprise when we heard that the police recovered only N800,000."

The father of the deceased, Ita, said he and his wife were out of the country when they got a call that their son had died in a fatal car crash and his corpse was being kept in a mortuary. He added that he returned to the country immediately.

He said, "We went to the police at Utako and they handed over two phones and about N800,000, which they said was recovered from the car. Later we learnt that the money in the car was more than the amount the police gave us.

"The bank also confirmed that he had more than that amount with him. If the police can hand over N800,000, you can be sure he had more than that in the car. The Nigerian Police Force can't give all the money they recovered."

According to him, the boy plans to give N1m to his mother for the Christmas celebration and spend the rest on other things.

The bereaved father described his son as a careful driver who did not indulge in alcohol or drugs, adding that he was a devoted Christian and a chorister.

"To tell you how devoted he was as a Christian, his girlfriend wanted him to drive her to the airport, but he declined to do so because he had choir practice at that time," Ita said.

When our correspondent visited the Idims at the house, hundreds of people thronged the home to condole with the family.

A condolence register opened for him had been filled up with touching messages by his friends, former school mates and colleagues.

The FCT Police Public Relations Officer, Altienne Daniel, said she was not aware of the case, but noted that the police officers may not have been the first responders at the scene of the accident.

"I am not aware of the case, but are they sure the police were the first to arrive at the scene? Besides, saving the boy's life would be their priority, nobody would be checking the boot of the car to know whether he had money there or the amount of money in the car," she stated.

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