

Trailer loses brakes, kills polytechnic undergraduate

Samson Folarin

A 20-year-old undergraduate of Yaba College of Technology, Bukola Ajayi, sacrificed her life for her younger brother on Tuesday after the brakes of an overloaded trailer failed at the Ekoru junction, in the Abule Egba area of Lagos State.

The trailer driver was said to have lost control of the vehicle, which reportedly sped in the direction of a tricycle Ajayi and her brother boarded.

Ajayi was taking her brother to school around 7am when the incident happened.

She reportedly pushed him out of the tricycle and out of harm's way. She was attempting to save herself when the trailer ran into the tricycle, killing her.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the incident caused a traffic jam in the area as sympathisers placed the corpse by the roadside.

Policemen from the Oke Odo division, officials of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority and Lagos State Emergency Management Agency were said to have gone to the scene.

Our correspondent observed

the trailer being towed away by a crane belonging to the LASEMA Response Unit.

The trailer, which tilted sideways, appeared to be loaded with plastics and some tarpaulin-shielded materials.

A witness, who did not want to be identified, said the trailer had first crushed a Tata bus

before running into the tricycle.

He said, "The problem we have here is that the road slopes from Abule Egba to Ekoru Road. Around 7:15am, the trailer was coming from Abule Egba; it was supposed to turn towards Ile

Epo, en route to Oshodi.

"However, when the vehicle's brakes failed, the driver lost control and the trailer continued its downward journey. First, the trailer crushed a Tata bus and pushed it into a gutter,



• The trailer

Photo: Samson Folarin

At this point, everybody started scurrying to safety. The passengers in the tricycle, where the lady was, also jumped out.

"The lady had sat by the entrance, while the boy sat on her laps. The place where she sat was on the trailer's path. She quickly pushed her brother to the other side. As she moved to follow him, the trailer crushed her."

PUNCH Metro gathered that the suspect attempted to flee the scene, but was nabbed by a mob which assaulted him before handing him over to the police.

A family friend of the victim, who lamented the death, said she had just finished her Ordinary National Diploma and just started her Higher National Diploma when tragedy struck.

"She was the first child of a family of six. Her father is distraught at the moment. Her mother is also devastated," he added.

A LASTMA official told our correspondent that apart from the deceased, several others were injured in the accident.

He said no fewer than three tricycles were crushed by the trailer, adding that those

affected had been taken to a hospital.

He said, "The accident involved an overloaded 16-tyre trailer, which was moving from Ekoru junction inward Agbelekale. The trailer lost its brakes and ran into several vehicles and three tricycles. A life was lost. Those injured were taken to a hospital."

The spokesperson for LASTMA, Mr. Mahmud Hassan, said the agency had restored free flow of traffic, adding that LASEMA officials towed the trailer to the police station.

"Motorists must always check their vehicles before putting them on the road. The trailer affected had been overstretched with load and that was what triggered the accident," he added.

The Police Public Relations Officer, SP Dolapo Badmos confirmed the incident.

She said the driver was in police custody while investigation had started into the crash.

"We have deposited the corpse in a morgue for autopsy," Badmos added.