

# Dangote truck crash: Fasting, prayers saved me from death, says BRT trainee driver

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Shinyanbola

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Before the clock ticked on the hours of seven Monday morning, Adesina Shinyanbola was already at the head office of Primero Transport Services Limited, the operator of Bus Rapid Transit vehicles, beaming with zeal for his new job.

Dressed in a white shirt and black trousers, the new driver joined his senior colleague, Samuel Akpochi, on a trip en route to Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos Island, from the takeoff point in Ikorodu Garage. Little did he know that death was lurking around, less than six kilometers away at Ogolonto.

Suddenly, the driver of a Dangote truck loaded with 45 tons of cement lost control of the vehicle and veered into the BRT lane, crushing the bus in the process.

The BRT driver, Akpochi, and two passengers died in the crash while 69 others sustained injuries.

Reports initially stated that the trainee driver, Shiyanbola, also died in the accident.

But *City Round* gathered on Thursday that he survived with head bruises and a broken thigh. He is currently on admission at the Gbagada General Hospital.

“I think the truck driver was sleeping. We were on our lane. He veered into our path and hit the bus. I was by the front door. People had to cut through the wreckage of the bus before I was brought out,” the native of Ede, Osun State, told our correspondent while preparing for treatment Thursday morning.

“I am still on treatment. The result of an X-ray on my legs showed that I had a broken thigh. My family paid for the medical bill when I initially came, but I was promised that it would be refunded. Subsequent bills have been free,” he added.



The late BRT driver

He said the accident might have claimed his life but for fasting and prayers.

He explained, “My pastor told me on Sunday to pray and fast for three days. I started the fasting on Monday and was supposed to end it on Wednesday. It was on my second day at work that the accident happened. I thank God I am alive.”

Another survivor admitted at the hospital, Sofia Idris, a hairstylist, said she was going to her workplace on Victoria Island when the accident occurred.

“I am getting better now. I had a fracture in the leg. I was at the back of the bus. I boarded it from Ikorodu. I was going to TBS from where I would board a cab to my shop on VI,” she added.

Sadly, the incident has left the family of the late Akpochi devastated.

Survived by a wife and four kids, Glory, five; Victoria, three and one-year-old twins, Daniel and Daniela, Akpochi's death had created a huge vacuum in the family.

His wife, Blessing, 32, was inconsolable when our correspondent visited the family's residence on Adeniyi Avenue, Ajegunle on Thursday.

"My husband left home around 4.30am on Tuesday and we bade each other goodbye," she began after a long silence.

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"I was expecting him to return home in the evening. It was his brother that broke the news of his death to me. I am not doing any work. We lived on his salary. I don't know how to take care of the children he left behind. Glory and Victoria have been asking for him; I told them he is dead," Blessing lamented before she burst into tears.

The deceased's elder brother, Peter, said he was at work when he received a call from his office that Akpochi was involved in an accident.

"I asked them about his condition, but they insisted that I should come. I rushed there with one of my brothers and discovered that he was dead," he added.

The Chief Security Officer, Primero, Mr Cletus Okodolor, said the company did not immediately have the information that Shiyanbola survived the crash.

He said, "Earlier, there was no proper communication. It was on Wednesday that we knew the new driver was alive. They took him to the Gbagada General Hospital. He was attached to the driver that died. It was one driver and two passengers – a male and a female – that died.

"We have had a meeting with the family of the late driver. We have also visited the survivors at the Gbagada General Hospital and the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, Ikeja. Those in LASUTH would undergo surgeries."