

19 die in Lagos, Ondo, Plateau, Abia crashes

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• BRT buses collide, SUV, bus crush motorcyclist, passengers

Deji Lambo, Peter Dada, James Abraham and Sunday Nwakanma

Nineteen persons lost their lives in road crashes in Lagos, Ondo, Abia and Plateau states on Saturday and Sunday.

Several others escaped death when two BRT buses collided in the Ikorodu area of Lagos.

Five persons died in the crash that occurred in Awoyaya village on the Ondo-Ore Expressway, Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State.

It was gathered that three other persons sustained injuries in the crash, which occurred around 4am on Sunday.

According to an eyewitness, the accident involved a Volkswagen Sharon bus with number plate KTU 706 BW and a truck.

“The bodies of the deceased have been deposited in the morgue of the General Hospital, Ondo, while the injured are receiving treatment at the Trauma Centre, Ondo,” the eyewitness said.

He added that the pieces of luggage of the victims were recovered by the men of the Ondo State Police Command, Enuowa Division.

The Head of Operations of the state Sector Command of the Federal Road Safety Corps, Mr Olusegun Ogungbemide, who confirmed the accident, explained that the Volkswagen bus rammed into the truck and five of the bus’ occupants died on the spot, while the driver of the truck refused to stop.

He said, “Seven people were involved in the accident, five died and two were injured. Their vehicle rammed into a moving truck, which did not stop, but the impact on the Volkswagen bus made us to believe that it rammed into the truck.

“The victims had been taken to the General Hospital, Ondo.”

The Public Relations Officer of the state police command, Mr Femi Joseph, who also confirmed the accident, said eight people were involved and five of them died on the spot, including the bus driver, whom he identified as Sunday Dickson.

Similarly, a road accident that occurred in Jos on Sunday claimed three lives, while one person was critically injured.

One of our correspondents gathered that the accident, which involved a black BMW -X5 car with number plate EPE 662 EM and a TVC tricycle occurred opposite the Nigerian Air Force headquarters, Rayfield Road, around 9.30am.

It was learnt that the occupants of the vehicle and tricycle were on their way to church when the accident occurred.

The Public Education Officer, FRSC in Plateau State, Mr Andrew Bala, who confirmed the accident, attributed it to excessive speed.

Bala said, “Our Bukuru Unit Command responded to the unfortunate road crash, which occurred on Sunday opposite the Air Force headquarters, Rayfeld, in Jos around 9.30am.

“Details of the accident showed that two vehicles were involved, a black BMW-X5 with number plate EPE 662 EM, and a TVC tricycle.

“As a result, three people, two females and one male, lost their lives, while one person was injured. From our investigation, it was excessive speeding that caused the crash.”

In Abia State, an accident that occurred on Saturday in the Arungwa area of the Enugu-Port Harcourt Expressway before Umuikwa in the Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Area claimed 10 lives.

The Transition Committee Chairman, Isiala Ngwa South Local Government Area, Iyke Anyatonwu, however, survived the crash.

A former Commissioner for Information in the state, Ralph Egbu, said Anyatonwu’s Prado SUV collided with a bus conveying people who were returning from a burial in Imo State.

“Families, according to the news I just heard, were wiped out, including very brilliant and young graduates. Asa land is in mourning. I am devastated. A part of me is gone. Lord have mercy!” Egbu said.

Governor Okezie Ikpeazu, expressed profound grief and sadness at the news of the accident, and directed the health ministry to mobilise support for the victims’ families.

In Lagos, a borehole driller, Sunday Ayeni, died after a TATA bus with number plate AA 772 XY rammed him, his apprentice, Donald Njoku, and a yet-to-be-identified motorcyclist at the Majidun area of the Ikorodu Road.

PUNCH Metro gathered that a yet-to-be-identified SUV driver, who was said to be eating while driving, lost concentration and hit the motorcycle, which was conveying Ayeni and Njoku.

It was learnt that the impact of the crash made the motorcycle to suddenly veer into another lane, while the TATA bus that was on top speed ran over it and its occupants.

Eyewitnesses at the scene of the incident said the SUV driver rushed the motorcyclists to hospital, but Njoku was groaning in pain as a result of the injuries he sustained, while Ayeni was seen lying motionless by the roadside.

Ayeni was confirmed dead by officials of the Lagos State Ambulance Service, who attended to Njoku at the scene of the accident.

Njoku, while speaking to our correspondent, said he and his boss were close to the office when the accident occurred on Saturday.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Bala Elkana, confirmed the accident and said investigation was ongoing.

Meanwhile, no fewer than 16 people, including two drivers, escaped death on Sunday, when two BRT buses belonging to Primero Transport Service Limited had a head-on collision at the Agric bus stop in the Ikorodu area of Lagos State.

The buses were identified as No. 432, driven by Joseph Olayeni, and No. 336 driven by Wilson Anta.

PUNCH Metro gathered that Olayeni, who parked his bus at the bus stop, was picking up passengers when Anta, who was driving out of Ikorodu, rammed into bus 432, causing the passengers and the driver to sustain varying degrees of injury in the process.

It was learnt that a brake failure on the part of bus 336 was responsible for the accident.

An eyewitness, Emmanuel Aderibigbe, said nobody died in the accident, adding that when the buses collided, the people who sustained injuries were rushed to hospital for treatment.

“A BRT bus was coming from Ketu and another was coming from Ikorodu and they both collided at Agric bus stop around 3pm. The people, who were injured, were rushed to hospital and nobody

died,” Aderibigbe stated.

When contacted, the Chief Security Officer, Primero Transport Service Limited, Cletus Okodolor, said the company’s officials were on top of the situation, adding that all the victims involved had been taken to hospital for urgent medical treatment.

Okodolor stated, “The moment we heard of the accident, we ran to the scene and discovered that some of our passengers sustained minor injuries. The drivers of the buses also suffered bone fracture and internal injuries, causing general body ache. We have rushed 15 victims to the Ikorodu General Hospital and one victim to the Sanu Hospital in Ikorodu for treatment.

He said, “As I speak to you, my people are on the ground seeing to the welfare and the medical follow-up of our passengers, who sustained injuries in the accident. But those who were injured the most were the two busmen, Olayeni and Anta.

“The accident was caused by bus 336, because it veered off its lane to collide with bus 432. The driver said the bus suffered a brake failure, but we don’t take verbal defence; we will take the bus to our maintenance team to confirm if it was recklessness on the part of the driver or if it was a brake failure. The victims are getting attention at hospitals.”

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