

# Container-laden truck crushes driver to death in Lagos

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Scene of the incident

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A truck driver, Ibrahim Shagari, has been crushed to death by a fellow truck driver, Obinna Nzekwe, on the Apapa-Oshodi Expressway in Lagos State.

*PUNCH Metro* gathered that the 47-year-old Nzekwe and 33-year-old Shagari were both driving their container-laden trucks with number plates AKD 180 XP and SMK 402 XS, respectively, when they ran into a gridlock on the Apapa-Oshodi Expressway.

The gridlock was said to have caused both drivers and others plying the route to spend weeks queuing on the road in a bid to get to their various destinations.

It was learnt that Nzekwe was driving his truck ahead of Shagari, who was following closely behind. They had maintained the queue till they got to the MTN bus stop, where the tragedy that claimed Shagari's life occurred.

According to *PUNCH Metro's* findings during a visit to the scene of the incident, Shagari slept on the bonnet of his truck, but when the other vehicles in the queue were passed for movement, his motor boy woke him to drive the truck.

An eyewitness, Olayinka Shonibare, said Shagari was trying to gain his balance after jumping down from the bonnet when Nzekwe, who was attempting to drive out of the queue, suddenly reversed and crushed him to death.

Shonibare stated, "The accident happened around 2.00 a.m.; the driver was sleeping on the bonnet of the truck when the vehicles in the queue started moving, so his motor boy woke him up to drive his truck and he quickly jumped down from the bonnet in an attempt to start the engine. 200-level student arrested for participating in NYSC

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"But as he jumped down, he was still feeling sleepy and had yet to regain full consciousness when the truck in front of him reversed and crushed him to his truck.

"I was on the other side of the road and saw how everything happened; when I moved closer to assist, the man had already died, because he was trapped in between the two trucks that were laden with containers.

"The driver of the truck that caused the accident took off and abandoned Shagari's lifeless body. Other eyewitnesses and I tried to help him, but he was already dead. We later took the corpse away from the road and dropped it on the kerb."

An official of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority, who spoke on condition of anonymity, attributed the events that led to Shagari's death to the constant gridlock on the Apapa-Oshodi Expressway, adding that most drivers end up being exhausted after spending weeks on the road.

The LASTMA official said, “The vehicle was supposed to move to the front, but the space for the driver to move forward was not wide, so he needed to reverse and in the process, crushed Shagari. The accident was caused by the constant gridlock on the road as most of the drivers spend weeks on the road and as a result, sleep in their trucks everyday, which is not conducive for them.

“So, whenever the road is free for movement and the drivers are awoken, most of them are usually too weak to drive. The road is very bad and if there is a breakdown of vehicle on the road, it affects vehicular movement.

“About a week ago, construction work was going on the road and vehicular movement was obstructed and the accident happened around that period. But the road has been opened now.”

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Bala Elkana, who confirmed the accident to our correspondent, said Nzekwe had been arrested, adding that Shagari’s corpse was released to his family for burial in accordance with Islamic rites.

Elkana stated, “An anonymous caller informed the command that an accident occurred on the Oshodi/Apapa Expressway around the MTN bus stop. So, a team of traffic personnel, who were drafted to the scene, discovered that the driver of a Mack truck, with number plate AKD 180 XP, one Obinna Nzekwe, 47, while trying to reverse his truck, which was in the queue, hit one Ibrahim Shagari, 33, who was standing in between two trucks.

“The victim died on the spot, while Nzekwe has been arrested. The truck involved in the accident has been impounded for VIO inspection, while the corpse was later released to the deceased’s family as they insisted on burial in line with Islamic rites.”