

## Adamawa, Bauchi accidents claim 20, two-year-old killed in Ogun Customs, smuggler clash

Hindi Livinus, Armstrong Bakam and Daud Olatunji

At least 21 persons, including a two-year-old girl have been killed in separate incidents in Adamawa, Bauchi and Ogun states.

While 20 persons died in road crashes in Adamawa and Bauchi, the little girl was reportedly killed by a stray bullet during a clash between customs officials and some suspected smugglers at Itawaya, Yewa South Local Government Area of Ogun State.

City Round learnt that 12 persons were burnt to death in the Adamawa accident which occurred around 3pm on Thursday after a head-on collision between two vehicles at Golontabal in the Song Local Government Area of the state.

It was gathered that a hummer bus with the number plate GME 944 XC and a Toyota Corolla with the number plate YLA 388HS were involved in the crash.

The bus was reportedly heading for Yola, the Adamawa

State capital, from Uba LGA in Borno State, while the Toyota Corolla was on its way to Mubi from Jabbi Lamba, in the Girei LGA of Adamawa State.

While eight persons including the driver died in the bus crash, four occupants in the Toyota Corolla lost their lives.

The spokesperson for the Adamawa State Police Command, DSP Suleiman Yahaya, confirmed the incident, saying that the deceased were taken to Song Cottage Hospital. "The cause of the accident is still being investigated," he added.

Yahaya commiserated with the families of those who lost their lives and cautioned motorists to desist from reckless driving.

In the Bauchi accident, which occurred around 11.30pm on Thursday at Kafin Liman village, along the Bauchi-Kano Road, in the Ganjuwa Local Government Area of the state, eight people died, while four persons were injured.

This came barely 11 hours after seven persons were killed and two others injured in a crash at Haka Yafi village,

along the Bauchi-Jos Road in the Toro Local Government Area of Bauchi State.

The crash involved two commercial vehicles, a Sharon Galaxy bus with the number plate YLA 88 ZY driven by one Mustapha Adamu and a Toyota Hiace bus with the number plate KUJ 182 TU.

It was said to have been caused by speed limit violation, which resulted in loss of control and head-on collision, with the Toyota Hiace bus going up in flames.

Confirming the second accident, the Sector Commander, Federal Road Safety Corps, Bauchi State Command, Yusuf Abdullahi, told our correspondent that it involved three vehicles – a DAF truck with the number plate KMC 95 YU, a Ford Galaxy bus with the number plate NNG 21 MG, and an Opel Vectra car with the number plate BAU 490 AA.

Abdullahi said the vehicles were being used for commercial purposes, while the names of the drivers had yet to be ascertained.

He added that the crash was caused by an obstruction on the road.

He stated, "I was informed that the truck got spoiled on the road and it was while they were trying to fix it that the crash occurred. Although there was a caution sign on the truck, it wasn't put on the ground some metres away to caution anyone coming that a vehicle had broken down on the road.

"Eyewitnesses said the driver and some people were trying to put it right when the incident happened. The Opel Vectra car ran into the truck and the Ford Galaxy, which was coming behind, rammed into the car, further pushing it under the truck.

"The two damaged vehicles are still there and we are trying our best to clear the obstruction. It was really unfortunate. The Opel was a write-off, while the Ford Galaxy was badly damaged.

"A total of 12 persons, nine male adults and three female adults, were involved in the crash. When our men got there, they rushed the victims to the Kafin Madaki General Hospital. A medical doctor pronounced eight persons, five male adults and three female adults, dead. Four others sustained varying degrees of injury."

Meanwhile, a stray bullet allegedly fired by an official of the Nigeria Customs Service during a clash with suspected smugglers at Itawaya in Ogun killed a two-year-old girl.

Another stray bullet also reportedly hit the mother of the deceased while a young man allegedly sustained gunshot injuries in the incident.

The incident, which happened on Thursday while the President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retd.), was inaugurating projects in other senatorial districts in the state, created tension among residents of the area.



An accident scene

## Dad seeks help for daughter forced out of school by broken leg

Afeez Hanafi

Her sorrowful mien is palpable. Firdaus Apo is lost in pensive mood every day, watching her peers leaving home happily for school in the morning and returning to meet her almost on the same spot.

That has been the fate-inflicted boredom the 14-year-old girl on crutches endures since she suffered a broken leg about two years ago.

A primary five pupil as of 2019, her education has since been put on hold with some of her ex-school mates now in Junior Secondary School 2.

It was learnt that Firdaus had undergone a surgery at the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital, Kwara State but her parents could not afford to pay for the second major surgery estimated at about N2m.

Her father, Musa Apo, said she always complained of pains and felt lonely when other children had gone to school.

He appealed to members of the public to help in raising the funds for the second surgery.

She spent three months on admission without any improvement. We then asked the doctor to refer us to the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital.

"When we got there, a surgery was recommended for her. After the surgery, there was some improvement but the doctor said she would need to undergo another one which is major. He said the surgery would cost about N2m. We were helpless and didn't have the means to

raise the money. She had been discharged. She is now on crutches."

The father explained that the doctor advised that Firdaus should come for the second surgery on time so her condition would not become worse.

He added, "She could not go to school because of her condition and she always feels sad about it. She is supposed to be in JSS 2 now. We are appealing to Nigerians to assist us."

Donations for Firdaus' treatment can be sent to her father's First Bank Account with the name Salman Musa Apo, and account number, 317184629.



Firdaus

A source told our correspondent that the child was rushed to a hospital, where she was pronounced dead having lost too much blood. "There were gunshot injuries near the girl's armpit, suggesting that the bullet penetrated through that part into her body," the source said. It was alleged that a Customs man had opened fire while chasing a suspected rice smuggler.

The source said, "Those Customs men thought the man was smuggling rice, so they opened fire on him. It was one of the stray bullets that killed the child and also inflicted injuries on her mother."

"It was after the girl died that they realised the man they were chasing did not carry rice. That's what we face here all the time. Unfortunately, it happened the day President Buhari was in the state to inaugurate projects."

The NCS spokesperson in Ogun 1 Area command, Ahmed Oloyede, confirmed the incident, describing it as highly devastating.

He said the command was saddened by the development, adding that investigation had commenced into the incident.

Oloyede said, "We are sad and devastated that this happened in the line of duty. It is not our joy. This incident is highly pathetic. We sympathise with the family of the minor and the command is making efforts to contact them. The controller has also ordered an investigation into the incident towards putting an end to similar incidents going forward."

He added that the management of the NCS in the state visited the Olu of Ilaro, Oba Kehinde Olugbenle and paid a condolence visit to the deceased's family. Oloyede said there was a mob action against the NCS officials, noting that attempts to escape from the smugglers determined to kill them led to the stray bullet.