

19 die in Okene-Lokoja highway crash

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By Gift Habib

A tragedy struck on the Okene-Lokoja Highway in Kogi State on Sunday as a fatal crash claimed 19 lives.

According to a statement signed by the Federal Road Safety Corps spokesperson, Jonas Agwu, on Sunday, the collision, involving a Dangote truck and a Toyota Hiace bus, occurred when the truck driver, who had wrongfully overtaken a vehicle, collided head-on with the bus.

The crash investigation report attributed the tragedy to route violation and wrongful overtaking, emphasising compliance with traffic regulations, such as the compulsory use of seatbelts.

“The crash investigation report revealed that the crash involved two vehicles: a Dangote truck bearing the following registration details NSH680YJ, and a Toyota Hiace bus with registration number KMC455ZE.

Accident scene
“The Toyota Hiace bus loaded from Kano was on its lane on the highway when the Dangote truck driver who drove from Port Harcourt wrongfully overtook a vehicle and collided head-on with the bus. The impact of the collision resulted in an inferno that burnt the victims to death.

“According to the report, the crash which was caused by route violation ‘One Way’ and wrongful overtaking, involved 22 male people. Unfortunately, 19 people out of the 22 victims were killed and one injured. The remaining two victims who got rescued by the FRSC operatives without injuries survived the crash because they complied with traffic regulations on compulsory use of seatbelts,” Agwu said.

The resulting fire engulfed both vehicles, leading to the loss of lives and destruction of property.

“The FRSC emergency rescue teams deployed to rescue the victims could not achieve desired results as the efforts they put into the rescue operations were unduly hindered by the fire inferno that engulfed the two vehicles,” Agwu stated.

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The incident underscored the urgent need for moral and ethical consciousness among road users, as highlighted by the Corps Marshal, Dauda Biu in a recent press conference.

Emphasising the importance of enforcing traffic regulations, the corps is committed to prosecuting drivers whose negligence leads to road crashes.

As efforts continue to restore order on the roads, the collaboration of the judiciary, transport unions, and other stakeholders is paramount in achieving swift and effective prosecution and preventing future tragedies.

PUNCH Metro reported on April 22 that 14 people lost their lives while 13 others sustained varying degrees of injury in an accident at Aloma community in Ofu Local

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Government Area of Kogi State.

The accident involved a Toyota Sienna bus heading toward Abuja from Port Harcourt and a Toyota Hiace bus heading to the Southern part of the country.

Eyewitnesses said the accident occurred when two commercial Toyota buses had a head-on collision.

The eyewitness had said, “The 13 persons including the driver of the Hiace Bus were completely roasted by the fire that engulfed it immediately after the head-on collision with the Sienna.

“But one out of the four surviving persons in the bus died in hospital from the burns suffered bringing the number to 14 that died.”

Gift Habib

The PUNCH journalist, Gift, has over three years of experience covering elections, security and foreign affairs.

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