

I was heartbroken when I saw my daughter who went for WASSCE in mortuary – Grieving father

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Aliyah

| By Taiwo Bankole

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Mosaku Saheed, film director and father of 18-year-old Aliyah, one of the candidates of the West African Senior School Certificate Examination killed by a truck driver recently in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State, speaks to BANKOLE TAIWO about the agonising experience

Where are you from?

I am from Imosan Ijebu in Odogbolu Local Government Area of Ogun State. I'm popularly known as Adigun Olori Odo, meaning Adigun, the youth leader.

Can you tell us about this unfortunate incident that claimed the life of your daughter?

It happened last week Friday, May 23, 2025. My daughter, Aliyah, an 18-year-old student of Seico Secondary School, Ikangba, Ijebu Ode, left home in the morning to continue with the writing of the ongoing West Africa Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination.

She was supposed to finish the paper they wrote on that day by 12 p.m., and being Friday, as a Muslim, I said let me rest a bit at home while I go for the Jumat service by 1 p.m.

While sleeping, I dreamt that I was preparing for the Jumat service, and I was holding the plastic kettle which I usually use to fetch water for ablution. So, I woke up because my mind was really on the Jumat service.

I checked the time and it was past 1 p.m., Aliyah's younger ones had come back from school, but she was not yet back. So, I was a bit restless because ordinarily, by that time, she ought to have come back from school.

Assuming they finished the exam by 12 p.m., if she got a motorcycle to bring her home on time, by quarter past 12, she would have been home. She was such a very responsible daughter, who never loitered or walked around aimlessly.

So, I took my bath and went for the Jumat service, but I left my phone at home. However, some minutes later, one of my children brought my phone to me in the mosque because it kept on ringing.

My child said that the person who called said that I should call him back, so I said that when we were done with the Jumat service, I would call back.

Not too long after, someone who is like a boss to me in the theatre profession also called me repeatedly, but I was just terminating the call, thinking that he wanted to talk to me about an acting job or something like that.

What happened thereafter?

Minutes later, one of my late daughter's teachers also began to call me repeatedly. At that moment, I could not ignore the calls anymore, so I went outside and picked it. He then told me that Aliyah had had an accident and had been rushed to the General Hospital, Ijebu Ode.

He said it wasn't much, but that I should come and meet them at the hospital. I was already trembling because the first thing that came to my mind was that if the accident wasn't much, why was she not allowed to receive medical care in the hospitals in the neighborhood but General Hospital?

I could not inform her mother because of the state of her health, but I told one or two people that I had just been told that Aliyah had had an accident, so I went to the General Hospital. On getting there, I discovered that it was even two students that were involved.

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So, the doctor asked if I came with anyone, and I said no. So, he said I should go and check one of the accident victims in the mortuary, and I found out that it was my darling daughter.

How did you feel when you saw your daughter's corpse in the mortuary?

I was sad and heartbroken because she was my hope. I am an adult, but I cried when I saw her corpse in the mortuary because she was an exemplary daughter. She was just 18 years old, but her sense of maturity and responsibility was extraordinary. I really missed her; she was a very promising child.

How did the accident happen?

According to what we heard, after the students finished their exam on that day, they did not see commercial motorcycles that would convey them home on time. So, they decided to trek a bit after which they hoped to get a bike to take them home.

It was while they were around the junction where they thought they could easily get these commercial motorcycles that the accident happened.

One of the police officers said the incident should not be classified as an accident but manslaughter because Aliyah and the other student killed were said to have run for their dear lives when they saw the truck coming towards them, yet this driver still went after these innocent children and crushed them.

They said the children would have run further but having got to where they met a church fence, they thought they were safe.

Being girls, maybe they were overwhelmed with fear and that was how they were hit. My daughter died on the spot but the other one died much later in the hospital.

What kind of a daughter was Aliyah?

Aliyah was a child everyone would love to have; she was a gift to me. She was so reliable, responsible, very focused, and generous to a fault. She had done the JAMB and the result was already out. She was just working so hard to pass the WASSCE and get her university admission before the year ends.

Has the driver who hit your daughter with a truck been arrested?

Yes, he has also been charged to court.

How old are you, and what is your occupation?

I am 43 years old, a barber and also a film director.