

Road project claims 3 lives in 2 months

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By Isaiah Onifade

Tragedy struck early on Thursday morning, when residents of Ogo-Oluwa community in Amikanle, Agbado Okeodo Local Council Development Area of Lagos, woke up to discover the lifeless body of a taxi driver in a drainage under construction in their locality.

The death of the taxi driver, according to residents, was the third in the area in the last two months as two other people were said to have lost their lives in almost similar circumstance.

The deceased taxi driver was suspected to have brought a passenger into the community late at night when his car rammed into the drainage.

He was believed to have been making efforts to get the cab out of the drainage when he suddenly slipped and hit his head against the iron rods which hung out dangerously from the concrete drainage.

A check by our correspondent on his cab showed that the unidentified man was attached to Iponri Shopping Center Taxi Park, Surulere branch.

The taxi cab, a Toyota Carina with registration number BDG-203-XN was equally at the same spot when *Sunday Sun* visited.

Residents of the community who spoke to *Sunday Sun* complained about the slow pace of work by the contractor handling the project.

One of them, Ishola Olapade, told our correspondent that an elderly woman died few weeks ago in Amikanle area after slipping into the drainage and hit her head against the rods and concrete. Similarly, *Sunday Sun* gathered that a boy equally fell into one of the drainages and died in May.

"The problem is that those handling the project are not putting safety first in their work. If you go around you will see that the iron rods are left unprotected. They are supposed to be bent so as to reduce the risk of injuring people who may fall into the gutters especially during rainy season.

"In the last two or three months, three lives have been lost due to the carelessness of the contractor handling the project. An elderly woman fell and died inside the drainage some weeks back. The woman died because she hit her head against the iron rods and the concrete in Amikanle.

"Another incident happened also around the area when a boy of about 20 years fell into the gutter again. This is another one now," he lamented, referring to the dead taxi driver.

Residents also accused some officials of the company handling the project of demanding gratification before constructing the culverts in areas where they are needed.

"If you go around you will discover that some culverts have been done while some are yet to be done. These things are being done haphazardly, without following any logical order. So, what we found out is that those who are able to tip them are attended to first. Imagine if this one had been done the man would not have died, because his car would not have been stuck there," a resident lamented.

Irked by the death of the taxi cab, some irate youths in the community attempted to vent their anger on some of the drivers working with the construction company but for the timely intervention of some community leaders in the area.

When *Sunday Sun* correspondent called to get the view of the handlers of the project, the site engineer, Samsudeen said he was not in position to speak on the matter. He directed *Sunday Sun* reporter to Alausa.

