

Commercial bus crushes man to death while running from task force in Lagos

•We are not responsible for his death - Chairman

27th January 2021 *in* National

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By **Christopher Oji**

There was pandemonium yesterday morning at the Oshodi area of Lagos when a commercial bus driver running from operatives of the Lagos State Environmental and Special Offences (Enforcement) Unit (task force) crushed a man to death.

The accident forced sympathisers, especially commercial bus drivers and their conductors to declare war against the task force.

The drivers and their conductors, who took over the road, complained bitterly about the excesses and high-handedness of the agency.

A commercial bus driver, Akin Ayinde, aka Eko, blamed the task force for the death of the man. He said: "We are afraid of task force; they engage in open day robbery, chasing us as if we are criminals. There is no mistake in their dictionary. They lay ambush on us as if we are criminals. They seize our vehicles at any slightest mistake and auction them. They have target of vehicles to impound for auctioning everyday.

"This was the reason the driver that was trying to escape from them and ran over an innocent man.

"The state government should look into the issue and caution the task force; the same thing with the Lagos State Traffic Management Agency (LASMA). They chase us as if we are criminals. The driver knocked down the man because he was running away from the task force, because he knew what he would suffer in their hands if he was arrested. Many innocent lives have been lost in similar occasions."

In a swift reaction, the task force said it was not involved in the death of the young man.

In a statement, the task force chairman, Shola Jejeloye, stated: "Early this morning, a commercial bus driver was illegally loading passengers by the roadside in Oshodi and, on noticing the presence of a Lagos task force vehicle, took off recklessly at a high speed, knocking down the innocent young man who was trying to cross the Oshodi Expressway.

"Despite warnings and enlightenment campaigns about the dangers of violating traffic laws, commercial drivers have continued to flout the law and put the lives of commuters at risk. This violation of the law led to the death that occurred in Oshodi.

"No gunshot was fired within the vicinity as being rumoured in the social media.

"Members of the public are advised to refrain from believing false information released online by mischievous individuals who are out to cause public disorder and unrest in Lagos.

"The Lagos State Government sympathises with the family of the deceased young man. The reckless commercial bus driver will be apprehended and prosecuted in accordance with the law."

