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Enugu Railway Crossing where people are routinely killed by trains

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By Dennis Agbo and Chinedu Adonu

ENUGU— The Nigeria Railway Corporation, NRC, has said that it was not liable for the killing of a middle-aged man who was run over by its train in Enugu on Tuesday, October 25, 2016.

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It said that both the federal and Enugu State government was owing the NRC about N32 million, hence it stopped maintaining the level crossings pointing out that those who trespassed on railway lines were on their own.



Ogbete Railway Crossing in Enugu where people are routinely killed by over-speeding trains

The victim who was simply identified as Ikechukwu was killed by the train which was returning from Port Harcourt during the “rush- hour” in the evening when traders had closed their shops and were going home.

The train driver rammed into buses and traders at the popular Ogbete Main Market, killing the man even as several people were also left with various degrees of injuries as the train got to the area without the usual blaring of horns to alert other road users.

However, the Eastern Railway District Manager, Mr. Ola Adeeyinwo, who spoke on the issue, said that the level crossing was not a creation of the railway corporation but that of the owners of the various roads that intersect the rail, adding that the owners of the roads had the responsibility to maintain such crossings and provide vehicle barriers to stop as trains approached and not the NRC.

Adeeyinwo further said that the state and local governments which built such roads across the rail line had refused to pay their charges for over 25 years now, pointing out that as such, the level crossings could not be maintained.

Eyewitness told the *South East Voice* that the train, barely missed a tricycle rider at the Zik Avenue intersection before getting to the Ogbete Market, where it killed Ikechukwu.

Some years back, one Mr Augustine Eke who was running away with his family over information that armed robbers had threatened to raid his home ran into a train on the same spot.

Eke who was said to be unaware that a train was passing since there was no horns and the roads were not barricaded lost his beautiful wife and children as the train dragged his car carrying the entire household for over two kilometres before “dropping” the junk in the bush.

Today, Eke who spent over two years in hospital before he realised what happened to his family is a human vegetable, unable to continue with his timber business as he can no longer add two and three together.

His case is just one of the several others who had either died or been permanently maimed along the several railway intersections in Enugu or its environs just as those who narrowly escaped death, are praising their God for saving them from untimely death.

But, distancing the NRC from the deaths and accidents on the intersections, Adeeyinwo, further said that the “railway is permanent and nobody enters the rail corridor without permission, otherwise it would amount to trespass.”

On the train that killed Ikechukwu while over speeding, he said: “Train can come at any time and only the railway workers know the schedule, so we don’t allow people on the rail line.

“Level crossing keepers are paid by charges made from those crossing the rail like the governments that build roads across the rail line and for over 25 years they