The State and the Management of Road Traffic Crashes in Nigeria: The Case of Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Katsina

Usman Bala Gwamki  
Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC)  
Sokoto  
usbalg9633@gmail.com

Abubakar Liman  
Department of Political Science  
Federal University Dutsinma, Katsina State  
aliman@fuDutsinma.edu.ng, abuliman211@gmail.com

Sagir Gambo Rumah  
Department of Political Science  
Federal University Dutsinma, Katsina State  
sgrumah@fudutsinma.edu.ng

Abstract
This research examined the role played by the Nigerian Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in the management of Road Traffic Crashes in Katsina metropolis. The study identified some of the causes of the crashes in the area like the lack of adequate training of drivers, the use of poor tyres by drivers, driving under the influence of drugs, poor roads as well as poverty and illiteracy on the part of majority of the drivers account for some of the major reasons responsible for the accidents experienced in Katsina metropolis. The study further examines the different strategies employed by FRSC to reduce the excesses of road traffic crashes like patrol, public enlightenment, rescue mission, etc. The study concluded that road traffic crashes will best be reduced if other government agencies like the Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON), Vehicle Officers (VIOs), Police, etc. complemented the functions of the FRSC by performing their functions diligently.

Keywords: Road Safety Corps, Road Traffic Crashes

Introduction
It is globally accepted that the protection of lives and property is a primary responsibility of all governments and without which no government can be regarded as a responsible and responsive and no state can be considered as orderly. It is view of this that governments established different agencies that will be responsible for the protection different areas of internal and external aggression. One of the most challenging areas to national security is the area of human security. From global warming to desertification, erosion, flooding and even armed robbery and kidnappings, etc. the human beings are now gradually turning into endangered species hunted down by the activities of their fellow men. One of the most threatening human activities that pose serious challenge to the lives and properties of humans is the high level of Road Traffic Crashes (RTC). Nigeria is not exempted from such challenges. Indeed Road traffic crashes have been a major source of worry and concern to the nation due to its destructive capability on human beings and resources that also pose challenges to the safety and security of the Nigerian state in general.
The above reality had attracted the attention of the then government of Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida to establish Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) in 1988 in order to serve the leading organization in road safety matters; policies and road traffic administration in general.

**Statement of the Research Problem**

Road crashes have been a major challenge to the socio-economic development of Nigeria and has made road transport a dangerous enterprise. Indeed, the alarming rate of RTC’s demanded for effective governance in the reduction and prevention such devastations caused by it. In fact, negative behaviour of drivers and other road users on highways that causes road accidents, poses serious challenges on government agencies. Particularly Federal Road Safety Corps for effective and efficient road traffic laws enforcement, effective traffic control, sound public enlightenment on road safety culture, rescue missions and first aid services to RTC victims as well as other safety management activities with the major aim of creating a safe motoring environment and eradication of road traffic crashes in Nigeria.

In a nutshell, it is based on the above statement the study seek to investigate various functions of Federal Road Safety Corps, Katsina Sector Command in road traffic crashes risk management which is the central issue of governance effectiveness.

**Scope and Limitations**

The study investigates the role of Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Katsina Command in managing Road Traffic Crashes (RTC) from 2009 to 2013. It as well examine some few and most important vehicular traffic flow routes in the state such as Katsina – Kano route, Katsina – Dutse/Minna, Katsina – Jibiya route, Katsina – Daura route, and Katsina-metropolitan road network.

The prevailing security challenges, poor state of economy and inadequate western education on the part of some respondents are major limitations in carrying out this research work. It is also limited by those FRSC data that are regarded as classified.

**A Background of Federal Road Safety Corps in Katsina State**

Before inception of FRSC in Nigeria, the Nigerian roads were in chaotic, unprecedented and indeed dangerous road traffic situation. This led to occurrence of several disastrous road traffic crashes in Nigeria. This led to the placement of Nigeria to be placed as one of the most Road Traffic Accident (RTA) prone countries of the world (only second to Ethiopia). The condition of RTA worsened to the extent that from 1971 to 1987 a total number of 510,132 with 119466 persons killed were reported in RTA (FRSC, 2013). Since government could not continue to fold its arms and do nothing while its citizens die carelessly it became necessary for the government to act. This was done at various governmental levels. The Nigerian army was the first governmental body to act. It invested in training its officers and men on road safety. By 1972 the Nigeria Army started public road safety campaign and initiated an annual road safety week. Additionally, in 1974 the then military government established National Road Safety Commission (NRSC) as the initial respond to fight the menace of RTA. Equally, in 1977 Oyo State military administration, created Oyo State Road Safety Corps which lasted to 1983 when it was terminated by the federal government. It was however, the military government of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida who created the FRSC on February 1988 under decree No. 45 of the 1988 and which was later amended by decree 35 of 1992 and which was passed by national assembly as Federal Road Safety Commission (establishment) Act 2007 (FRSC, 2013). At Inception of Federal Road Safety Corps in 1988, the Commission advanced into creating its components
By 1989, all states of the Federation have sector commands with Katsina sector commands being one. The Katsina sector Command was first created in 1989 with its office located at Dandagoro Katsina, presently Batagarawa Local government area and by the year 1996 the office relocated to premises of Sokoto Rima Basin Authority, along Murtala Muhammad way Katsina, within Katsina Metropolitan area (FRSC Katsina, 2014). Currently, Katsina Sector has four (4) unit commands under its supervision and hierarchical control order. These unit commands are RS1 31 Funtua unit command, RS1 32 Daura Unit command, RS1 33 Koza Unit Command (RTC help clinic) and RS 1. 34 Malumfashi unit (FRSC Katsina, 2014).

In essence, the power relation among the Unit Commands and sector command is decentralized one, in the sense that all the staff of the organisation are directly transferred from Road Safety Headquaters (RSHQ) Abuja to the component commands, the Unit Commander is equally appointed from RSHQ Abuja and cannot be directly removed, transfer or redeploy by sector commander. Equally promotion exercise is purely activities of RSHQ Department of Admin and Human Resources/corps secretary office and financial allocation is directly posted to each components unit commands from RSHQ Abuja. Therefore, Unit Commands have their mandated areas of Jurisdiction for Road traffic Administration and other Road Safety Management activities.

Moreover, the sector Command supervises the activities of all the unit commands and the channel of report has to pass through sector commander, Zonal Commanding Officer, and then to Corps Marshal and Chief Executive in RSHQ Abuja. The Katsina Sector command supervises, assesses, disciplines and makes commendation on the state of the commands. Indeed, the road Safety Management activities of the sector command cover all the 34 Local Government areas of Katsina state of total 24,192 km (9.34sqmm) with population of 3,878,344 according to 1991. It was estimated in 2005 that it has a population of 6,483,429 and it was ranked as 5th populated state out of 37 states including Federal Capital Territory of the federation. (Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katsina)

It is noticeable that Katsina state has a relatively good Road network of roads. This makes road transportation activities easier and RTC relatively lesser. The activities of FRSC further pose corrective measures on the roads since FRSC Officials have to control and correct the negative behaviour of drivers as well as to educate the general Public on proper utilization of Road transport facilities.

**Functions of Federal Road Safety Corps**

1. Prevention or minimizing crashes on all public roads
2. Clearing obstructions on all public roads.
3. Educating motorists and other members of general public on proper use of all public roads.
4. Providing prompt rescue attention and care to victims of road traffic crashes.
5. Conducting researches into causes of motor crashes and methods of preventing them by putting into use the results of such researches.
6. Determining and enforcing speed limits for all categories of roads and vehicles.
7. Co-operating with bodies, agencies and groups engaged in road safety activities or in the prevention of crashes on the highways.
Initiating laws and regulations capable of curtailing road traffic crashes

Servicing as advisory body to government on road safety matters and policies (FRSC SERVICOM, 2010:2).

Indeed, FRSC carry out these functions through its numerous operational strategies and other road safety management activities discussed above. However, the functions are broadly expressed by FRSC establishment act 2007:
An act to repeal the Federal Road Safety Commission ACT, CAP. 141 LFN, 1990 (As Amended) to establish the Federal Road Safety Commission with responsibility for traffic management preventing and minimizing accidents on the highways, the supervision of uses of such highways, the regulation of traffic thereon and clearing of obstructions on any part of the highways and for education drivers, motorists and other members of the public generally on the proper use of highways, and for related matters of safety on the highways (FRSC EST, ACT, 2007/section A569).

Katsina Sector and Road Traffic Crashes Risk Management
Katsina Sector Command as the lead agency in Road traffic administration and Road Safety management has been playing major role in Road Traffic Crashes Risk Management in the state. These roles include: enforcement of traffic laws and arrest of traffic offenders, public enlightenment, rescue mission and first aid services, etc.

Enforcement of Road Traffic Laws
Indeed, Non Road safety practices by the road users causes Road Traffic congestion which result to increasing Road Traffic crashes in the state. This Road safety crisis attracted the attention of Katsina Sector Command to employ several enforcement techniques in order to minimize the level of RTC through patrol operations that refers to Patrol is preventive enforcement techniques. The aspects of enforcement are control, surveillance and punishment. Road users are made to conform to traffic rules and regulations in order to minimize or prevent accidents. (Gajira KD, 2006). This usually carried out through the apprehension fining and prosecution of drivers who contravened traffic laws. This is usually conducted while on patrol operations, such as special patrol, mobile court, mobile speed control patrol, surveillance patrol and Night patrol operation. These operational strategies are being conducted in accordance with pursuant to sections 10 [4), 28 [2), of FRSC (Establishment) Act 2007. And Regulation 143 of National Road traffic regulations 2012. (Edibo OJ, 2014).

Indeed, presently there are 44 laws in notice of offence sheets which are also programmed in e booking machine. These offences are categorised into two: primary offences and secondary offences. Primary offences are those Road traffic laws violation that can be easily sighted and lead to arrest of such Road user; particularly motorist, motorcyclist, bicyclist and the pedestrian as the case may be. For examples; overloading(OVL), Road Obstruction(RO); speed limit violation(SLV), seat belt use violation(SBV), Light/sign violation(SV), attempting to corrupt marshal on duty, wrongful overtaking (WO), route violation(RV), dangerous driving (DGD) Use of phone while driving and number plate violation(NPV).

The above are examples of primary offences that a Road safety officer or any security agent can directly sight and arrest such Road user without detail investigation. On the other hand,
secondary offences are those road traffic rules and regulations violations which can be discovered or found when a road user is stopped by security personnel suspecting to commit Road traffic offence through investigation and inspection of the driver as well as the vehicle. For examples; Driver’s license violation (DLV), Driving under influence of alcohol/drug, driving with expired or without spare tyre, fire extinguisher violation, operating a vehicle with forged documents, passengers manifest violation and vehicle license violation and operating mechanically deficient vehicle as the case may be. (Umar, interviewed 2014).

This is achieved through arrest of the disturbing road users who contravened traffic laws. They are forced to pay fine into federation account in designated banks or be prosecuted to court of the law. In fact, many among Road users in Katsina are deficient in reading road signs as well as could not read and understand English written Highway Code, interpret Road furniture and understand road markings and signs. Therefore, they constantly violate road traffic rules and regulations and eventually cause Road traffic crashes in the state. In addition to above, many among the road users, particularly commercial drivers are always aggressive, lack of patient and drugs abused individuals as a result, they always hold to their rights, even against their lives while driving. Also they overload, use expired tyres and drive recklessness. (Edibo, 2014).

Other operational strategies employed in order to ensure road users conform to traffic rules and regulations are FRSC Joined patrol with police, officials of Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps and special patrols with other FRSC Officials from other commands. Indeed the special patrol operations are usually conducted on monthly basis. These have created fear in the mind of many road users and conform to some traffic rules (Edibo, 2014).

However, what pose serious challenges to FRSC operations include the negative attitude of politicians and their supporters. These politicians (many of whom hold political offices either at the federal, state or local government levels) organise unsafe political rallies that is characterized by over speeding, dangerous driving and road obstructions. Furthermore, politicians purchased vehicles and reward their untrained, inexperienced and drugs abused supporters. These categories of road users do obstruct security personnel on their lawful duties, violate traffic rules and cause accidents on roads. The worst part is that same politicians come to their rescue and sometimes use their political positions to threaten officers in patrol (Tukr, 2014).

Apart from these politicians and their recruits who pose problems to the smooth management of traffic laws, another big but widely spread challenge to the command is the low literacy level and economic power of the masses in the state. It was observed that the very classes of people that obey road traffic rules are educated class and middle class population. This group have shown better conformity to traffic laws than the other two social classes (highest and lowest). Those with lower income and education show little or no appreciation to safety rules. This is because many of them battle to satisfy their basic standard of the living than with safety equipments (helmet, fire extinguisher, triangle and even drivers license) (Sanni, 2014). Arrested violators often complained of ignorance and poverty as the main reason for their violation (Lawan, interviewed 2014, Ahmad, interviewed 2014).
The above statistics showed that a total of 15,737 road users that contravened traffic laws were apprehended with total number of 16941 traffic violations/offences. These are however just a shadow of the traffic offences in the sector since the statistics represent only those offenders that are directly apprehended by the FRSC officials. They did not represent those that escaped arrest nor those that were not reported. Despite the fact that FRSC activities cover the entire Katsina metropolis, only major selected road are covered at a time. Most part of Katsina are not touched. Hence, violation is most likely to occur at a wider scale than expected. This is the very reason why the officials adopt the strategy of leapfrogging. This strategy involves the frequent changing of positions to the extent that road users are made to assume that the FRSC officials could be found in place (fieldnote, 2014). This reduce the extent of road violation among many road users.

Public Enlightenment

The FRSC also play a significant role in Public education and enlightenment. These public enlightenment strategies include; Public education and motor parks rallies, advocacy visit and public enlightenment to primary and secondary students in their respective schools. Visit to central Mosques (Masallaci), churches and other worshiping homes whereby demanding for their Leaders participation in the promotion of road safety culture. Also, the corps visit traditional rulers and solicit for their support in fight against road safety crashes in the state. (Umar, 2014)

Additionally, educating road traffic offenders arrested on daily basis in order to improve driving culture as well as to change the negative behaviour of the road users for safer monitoring environment in the state. Moreover, the command uses Mass media such as companion FM 104.5, Katsina state Radio Corporation, Katsina Television (KTTV) and the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Katsina to enlighten the public. Indeed some of the programs are being conducted in Hausa language for better communication and involvement of the major road safety stakeholders (like NURTW, NARTO, etc) and general Public in the state. The program, include defensive driving techniques, observe traffic rules, safer Journey

In essence, the rampant road traffic crashes and need for its risk management compels FRSC to adopt public motor parks rallies in which commercial drivers, riders, barrow pushers and other road users are targeted in order to inculcate road safety culture thereby improving safer motoring environment in the state. Indeed, it has been discovered that most commercial drivers lack consideration for one another, they are impatient, highly greedy and drug abusers. As a result they tend to over speed, overload, drive with worn out and expired tyres and do wrongful overtaking which itself alone contribute to 45% out the total 90% of RTC Caused by human error or factor. (Muhammad H. 2014). In a nut shell, Katsina sector command had organized seven hundred (700) public enlightenment campaigns between 2009 to 2013. These motor park rallies are based on face to face teaching methods to commercial drivers on the techniques of defensive driving, and the need for attitudinal changes toward improve driving culture. (Maikasuwa 2014).

Additionally, in it conscious effort to eradicate Road traffic crashes through sound public education to Road users, FRSC/Katsina sector command from 2009 to Year 2013 had educated four thousand and one hundred (4100) road traffic offenders through its daily program on training of arrested traffic offenders. These offenders received sound Public enlightenment practically on proper utilization of road transport facilities and implication of Road traffic crashes to family psyche and National Development (Ya’u, 2014).

**Rescue Missions and First Aid Services**

FRSC Katsina experienced several rescue missions due to frequent report of RTC cases and demanding for its usual emergency services to relieve the victims by carrying out first aid activities at RTC Scene and works with first aid box. The contents of FRSC First aid box or bag are as follows: bandage Roll of adhesive plaster, Gauze, A pair of scissors, cotton wool, safety pains, iodine, wooden spatulas, Antiseptic liquid, Embrocation, Glove forcept, Eye pad and Ambulance vehicle for effective rescue and first aid services. (feildnote, 2014)

It is indeed mandatory for FRSC Rescue team to hold Axes, Fire extinguisher and others rescue missions and first aid kits. The axes is use to cut the crashed vehicle that trapped RTC victims in order to save them. While fire extinguisher and sand are used for fire fighting at RTC scene in order to save the victims. Additionally, FRSC Officials at RTC Scene identify and treat RTC Victims in order of priorities to injuries sustained. For instance, the critically injured and unconscious victims are to be given the first attention, the officials also do identify the types of injuries and handle them carefully in order to avoid the situation from getting worst, promote the chances for their survival and make them live in fuller lives not physically challenged individuals. For example, a victim with spinal cord injury needs such professional handling. In this sense and other; the unconscious victims are treated first with first aid services and carefully handle to nearby medical centre, then the victims with minor injuries and lastly the suspected dead ones should be evacuated to medical care for death confirmation and further medical action. In fact, through this Risk management activity, the command had accomplished a lot of RTC Risk reduction from the year 2009 to 2013 in the state. (Muhammad H. 2014).
It has been examined that within the five (05) years (2009 to 2013) a total number of 1,498 road traffic crashes occurred with a total number of 7,146 people involved in the crashes. Also, 4,909 people sustained injuries and total number of 694 people killed in the crashes. Meanwhile, 6,452 persons had been saved alive through FRSC Prompt rescue services and professional application of first aid services to victims in the state. (RS1.3/ Rescue and Medical Services 2014).

However, through rescue missions and other emergency services of the corps at RTC Scenes, such as clearing of road obstructions, effective traffic control with a view of protecting and easing the healthy movement of people, goods and services in affected areas. Also it carried out researches and investigations into the crashes arising from the use of motor vehicles on the Eight (8) routes covered by the Katsina sector command. Particularly the five most vehicular free flow routes under critical examination in this research work. The command data on RTCs Indicated the five prevalent causes of RTC from 2009 to 2013, along the following routes:

**Katsina- Kano (KTN-KN) Route:** The prevalent causes of Road Traffic Crashes along the route are: Speed limit violation (SLV), Dangerous Driving (DGD), Overloading (OVL) or OLV, Tyre Bust (TBT) and Loss of control (LOC). Or Lack of concentration.

**Katsina- Dutsinma Route:** The prevalent causes of the crashes along the route are: Route violation (RTV), Use of phone while driving (UPWD), Road obstructions (ROV), speed limit violation (SPV) and Lack of concentration while driving (LOC).

**Katsina- Daura (KTN-DRA) Route:** The prevalent causes of RTCs along the route are Dangerous Driving (DGD), Lack of concentration (LOC) Dangerous Overtaking (DOT) and Tyre Bust (TBT) KATSINA-JIBIYA (KTN-JBY) ROUTE: The following are prevalent
causative agents of Road traffic crashes along the route. Overloading (OVL), Tyre bust (TBT), Dangerous Driving (DGD) Speed limit violation (SLV) and lack of concentration (LOC) on part of drivers.

Katsina-Metropolis: (KTN-MET) Route: The prevalent causes of RTCs along the route are usually: Over speeding (SPV), Route Violation (RTV), Dangerous Driving (DGD), Lack of concentration or loss of control (LOC) and use of phone while driving (UPWD). (Muhammad, Interview, 2014)

Indeed, the role of FRSC Officials in RTC risk management more especially through rescue services, first aid applications to RTC victims and effective traffic control at vehicular density zones, there is need for an increase in the number of the personnel with sound ambulance vehicles in every 40 km. In fact, for a more effective RTC Risk management (Emmanuel A. 2013).

Therefore, FRSC’s as lead agency in Road safety matters and Road traffic crashes risk Management need to open offices and post their staff in every community of 5000 people or at least in each Local Government Area of the federation in order to ensure total safer motoring environment and prompt rescue services for safer roads fuller lives in the state (Ahmad, 2013) which currently lacking.

Other Safety Management Activities
Other safety measures like Road transport Safety Standardization Scheme (RTSSS), Driving School Standardization and Programme (DSSP) and the School Bus Standard Regulation are designed and adopted by FRSC with a view to reducing RTC Risk management in the state.

Road transport Safety Standardization Scheme (RTSSS) This safety standard deals with fleet operators with at least five (05) vehicles. These vehicles are mandated by the law to be registered and certified under the scheme. Indeed, the scheme regulates both government and other commercial vehicles in order to reduce the rate road traffic crashes in the country. Also, the scheme focused to deal with operators, Drivers, Terminals and Vehicle standards. In fact the regulatory policies according to FRSC Highway code (2013: 114) seek to achieve the followings:
A. Entrench a culture of safety consciousness in fleet management.
B. Ensure safe and standard fleet operations.
C. Check the excess of transport operators which often lead to loss of lives and properties.

It has been observed that under the scheme, 41 fleet operators were registered in which 10 were accredited and certified by the command and are strictly under supervision of RTSS officer. In fact, since their registration, it has been observed that the number of Road crashes among these groups of buses have reduced drastically. This may be attributed to the free safety training of the driver, constant supervisions and inspections of the terminals and vehicles in the state (Umar, 2014).

Driving School Standardization Programme (DSSP): Under this program, all driving schools are required by law to be registered and certified. On the other hand, all fresh drivers’ license applicants are mandated to go through FRSC approved driving schools before they obtain licence to drive on the roads. This is done in order to improve a good driving culture on the state roads and as well reduce the number of untrained drivers fleeting on Public roads
and above all, reduce Road traffic crashes. Moreover, in its concerted effort to accomplish Strategic goals for 2014 by reducing RTC 15% and fatality by 25%, the command certificated and accredited only two driving schools in the state. These are Hankali Driving School and Standard Driving School all in Katsina metropolitan area. (Agwams, 2014).

Conclusion
In conclusion, based on the forgoing examinations, the study found out that the level of road safety practices and level of poverty and illiteracy are among the key factors responsible for major causes of Road traffic rules violations and eventual Road traffic crashes in the state. In addition the study found that the strategic patrol operation which is preventive enforcement techniques has proven effective in making road users to conform to traffic rules. Moreover, the study found out that several public enlightenment strategies employed by FRSC in the area have significantly assist in accomplishing and promotion of good driving culture. Additionally, the study revealed that rescue missions and first aid services of the corps have also reduced the level of deaths and fatal injuries in the state. Road traffic crashes will best be reduced if other government agencies like the Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON), Vehicle Officers (VIOs), Police, etc. complemented the functions of the FRSC by performing their functions diligently.

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## APPENDIX I
### INTERVIEW LIST, 2014

<table>
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<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>NAME OF INTERVIEWEE</th>
<th>APPROX. AGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Abdurrahman Malam</td>
<td>35 years</td>
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<td>Abubakar Fudma</td>
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<td>Dutsinma town</td>
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<td>Ali Musa Ali</td>
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<td>A commercial tipper driver</td>
<td>Kofar kwaa Katsina</td>
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<td>Ahmad Ali</td>
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<td>A law student</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Ahmad Lawan</td>
<td>25 years</td>
<td>A commercial motorcycle</td>
<td>Katsina Daura route</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Bala Hamza</td>
<td>45 years</td>
<td>A road side mechanic and private driver</td>
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<td>Abdurrahman</td>
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<td>Public servant</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Emmanuel Audu</td>
<td>48 years</td>
<td>Civil servant and a private driver</td>
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<td>50 years</td>
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<td>Katsina</td>
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<td>Maikudi Ndodo</td>
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<td>Private</td>
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<td>Muhammad Haliru</td>
<td>40 years</td>
<td>Sector command rescue and medical officer</td>
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<td>Muhammad Ya’u</td>
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<td>Maikasuwa</td>
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<td>RSI.3 KTN public education officer</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
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<td>Occupation</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>Nasir Sani Mashi</td>
<td>49y</td>
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<td>Katsina</td>
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<td>Sani O.J.</td>
<td>37y</td>
<td>Sector command legal officer</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Umar Zakariya</td>
<td>36y</td>
<td>RTSSS</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Yahaya Daura</td>
<td>39y</td>
<td>Public servant</td>
<td>Katsina Daura route</td>
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