

MOTORING

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ROAD RAGE CAN KILL YOU

BY STELLA NAIGINO

Stephen Mutebi, not real name recently had an incident near Hardware World in Ntinda, a Kampala suburb. As he tried to join the main road, a motorist in an Escudo tried to block him and in the process bashed the side light of his Toyota Corona. The driver of the Escudo then sped off. Luckily, there was traffic jam and so he could not get far.

Mutebi parked his car by the roadside and walked to the Escudo driver, who did not show any sign of remorse. Instead of trying to settle the matter amicably, perhaps because he was in company of a woman, he began to argue and blame Mutebi for the accident. Enraged, Mutebi lifted his right hand to administer what he considered justice on the driver's right cheek. Frightened, the Escudo driver stepped on the gas pedal to escape the assault, but ended up knocking another vehicle in front of him.

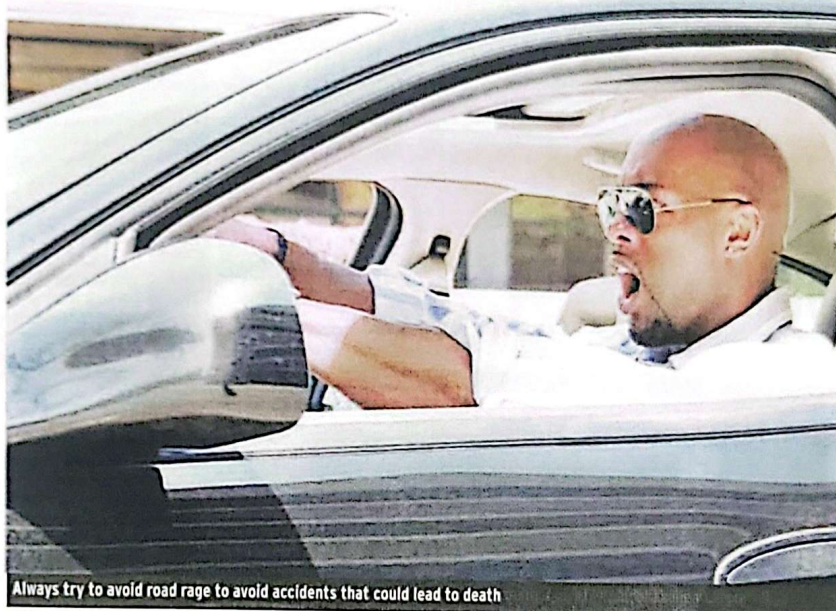
"To my surprise, the motorist denied being responsible for denting my car and out of anger, I wanted to slap him, but I did not. I wanted to escape my wrath, he ended up knocking another person's car. This time, he could not get away with it, because the lady's car was badly damaged," Mutebi says.

Mutebi walked away, since he felt justice had been swiftly delivered. Yet, all this could have been avoided had it not been for both parties allowing anger to get the better of them. Mutebi is not alone. Rita Akampulira is another motorist, whose dislike for taxi drivers is palpable.

"I was a learner and probably trying to develop some confidence on how to drive on a highway and I lost count of how many taxi drivers could hoot loudly scaring the hell out of me or hurling obscene insults at me," she says.

"When it comes to road rage, sign language is the order of the day, but most of the signals motorists' uses are to insult fellow motorists. The commonest is that of being stupid and that of not being able to reason. Others call us dogs, sluts and many more," she notes.

She adds that on extreme cases of road rage, motorists park, get out of the car and do verbal and physical attacks something that puts them into serious trouble that some end up in court.



Always try to avoid road rage to avoid accidents that could lead to death

MOTORISTS SPEAK OUT

■ **TONY KASUJJA, A BUSINESS MAN:**

Road rage is common. Motorists insult and abuse each other at any given time. The law should penalise those who abuse others on the road.

■ **NAIRA NAMUDDU, THE DIRECTOR OF SMK TYRES:** I think traffic authority should sensitise drivers to avoid road rage and learn how to control their emotions.

■ **MOSES KAYIIRA A MECHANIC:**

Words like 'oli musilu' meaning (your stupid) is commonly used which annoys motorists.

■ **GERALD KATO, A MECHANIC:**

It is real and unavoidable, but the outcomes are not easy. I have witnessed a driver in court with another driver over road rage. The taxi driver had to pay heavily.

However, experts note that road rage is common among motorists, but it is not good because it can lead one into trouble in the following ways.

Accidents
Wilson Waako, a driving instructor at Ebenezer Driving School, says road rage can end up in an accident. "You have probably seen someone drive fast past you at a dangerous

corner because they want to get back at you or to enrage you for a mistake they perceive you did," he says.

Traffic offences

Waako says when motorists get angry on the road, their way of reasoning changes. Some resort to fighting each other, while others drive without respecting the traffic rules and they end up being



Stephen Kasliima

arrested by traffic Police. This costs them a lot because they have to be penalised for disobeying the rules and they are charged.

Change your mood and mess up your day

Traffic Boss Steven Kasliima notes that road rage is a common practice on the road, but if motorists pay attention to it, there is a possibility that it can change their mood for the day.

"Desist from paying attention to the insults and violent drivers on the road or else they will mess up

DANGER

Consequences of road rage

▶ **ACCIDENTS**

Waako notes that much as it is normal to get angry and emotional, its time motorists manage their anger while they are behind the steering wheel. Actions that come in response to road rage can make one cause an accident, which can damage your car, your life, your passengers and the life of other road users.

"To fix all this, you will have to pay a high amount of money, which might leave you in a financial crisis, to avoid that, pay little attention to road rage and always be on defensive driving," he advises. He cautions motorists not to rub shoulders on the road because this puts the life of motorists and other road users in danger.



your way of driving and you will see as a bad driver on the road he says.

How to deal with road rage

"When you are insulted, do not hold into the insults, but rather into your car and play some music that you like. This will help you relax and slowly you will forge incident," John Ndyomugenyi, chairperson of Uganda Taxi D Association (UTODA) says.

He adds that also parking your car somewhere so you grasp the air can help you digest the insult so you do not carry on your back other drivers on the road.

However, he says that the best way is to pay no attention to rather focus on defensive driving to avoid bad drivers on the road you feel someone has knocked and they are not complying, take use the law to deal with matter.