

Attic backs \$ for crash victims

By AZARD ALI Tuesday, May 12 2015

THE Association of Trinidad and Tobago Insurance Companies (ATTIC) welcomes the setting up an Uninsured Compensation Bureau but calls for more effective policing of errant motorists.

Drivers, says director at ATTIC Douglas Camacho, must be made to feel the full brunt of the law or “we might be spinning top in mud” with such a compensation bureau. Camacho said he supports such a bureau to compensate people like Morvant mothers, Joatha Philbert and Cynthia Corridon, but there is a dire need for more effective policing to find those drivers on our nation’s roads who are driving without insurance policies.

Philbert, 41, and Corridon, 54, obtained judgment Friday last for almost \$700,000, for the deaths of their daughters in 2010 in a car accident, but since the driver did not have insurance, the mothers have no recourse. The long-awaited compensation bureau had been in the pipeline since deductions for a six percent government tax on every insurance policy began in 2007.

The sum in the fund stands at over \$1 billion.

First it was known as a road fund, then, it was revealed by the then government that a fund to compensate victims, such as the two mothers, would be set up.

Philbert and Corridon lost their daughters in a taxi which broke the traffic lights on the Priority Bus Route at the Mausica Intersection.

Oniesha Victoria Lucess, 26, and Arsha Philbert, 20, were killed, but the driver had no taxi badge and no insurance.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has said in two judgments, the last in February, that this country must follow England and establish an Uninsured Compensation Bureau.

Camacho said, “We are all for establishing of the bureau, so victims can get their compensation.

But we have been calling for more effective detection of the hundreds of motorists who are driving on our nations roads without insurance.

I am not talking about motorists who forget their insurance policy certificates home.”

There are about 4,000 injuries, including deaths, from accidents annually and a third of that figure, involve vehicles in which the driver either did not have the relevant licence and/or insurance.

The law lords in England have ruled in two cases, that insurance companies are not liable if the persons driving a vehicle, is not named in the policy and/or does not fall in the category of persons listed to drive the vehicle in question.

Camacho reiterated yesterday that ATTIC would support the bureau, but “we wants more detection on the road of those errant drivers”.

Transport Minister Cadiz, in yesterday’s Newsday, said Government may have to fast-track legislation in order to have the Uninsured Compensation Bureau set up.

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