

Auto crash claims 16 lives in Calabar

By TOM MOSES, *Calabar*

A FATAL road accident on the Murtala Mohammed Highway, Calabar, Cross River State has consumed 16 lives said to have traveled from the central part of the state to Calabar for sundry reasons.

The unfortunate incident occurred yesterday in the afternoon when an 18-seater Hiace bus conveying the deceased 16 persons had a head on collision with a moving truck but left the other two passengers in a critical condition.

Eye witnesses noted that the Hiace bus ran into the truck while attempting to avoid another accident scene involving a cart and a motor cycle.

The bread-carrying cart, it was gathered, was crossing the highway at a very slow speed thereby causing the motor-cycle rider to run into it.

Just then, the sources said, the Hiace bus landed on the spot and in an attempt to avoid the accident scene, ran into the

truck in the opposite direction that was already occupying most parts of the road.

Sixteen of the 18 passengers in the bus, it was gathered, died instantly leaving the two survivors in critical conditions. The sources attributed the cause of the mishap to over-speeding by the Hiace bus driver as well as the recklessness of both the motor-cyclist and the cart pusher.

Also within the week, two persons lost their lives in an auto crash on the Marian/Big Qua junction in the Calabar town.

The two deceased persons who were on 'okada' were reportedly crushed by a trailer that came on top speed in the opposite direction.

Eye witnesses said there was no way of possible escapes by the 'okada' rider because of traffic congestion thus, leaving him and his passenger helpless in front of the trailer for a crush.