

17 perish in Nnewi road crash

JUSTIN OZUZU, Nnewi

AT least 17 persons, including two drivers and their conductors were feared dead yesterday in an accident involving two L300 Mitsubishi buses at about 11:30am on Nnewi-Onitsha axis, Nnewi, Anambra State.

The tragedy which triggered a peaceful protest on major roads

in Nnewi by youths of Uruagu community, however, paralyzed business activities in the industrial community as the protesters insisted on enforcing a 2-day ban on commercial drivers from plying the route.

Addressing journalists, spokesman of the angry youths, Prince Kenneth

Unachukwu said they took to the streets of Nnewi to protest the recklessness of Onitsha route drivers who, they said, kill commuters and other road users almost on a daily basis without remorse, attributing the major cause of road accidents in the area to the influence drugs and alcohol.

The group further decried drivers'

indiscriminate hand over of their vehicles to conductors who, according to them, are inexperienced to handle commercial buses, adding that most of these amateur drivers do not have drivers license.

"These charlatans in the name of drivers only bribe the police with N20

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or N50 which they interpret as green or white to allow them easy passage. We want to tell the drivers that there must be speed limit in Nnewi. They should stop handing over to conductors because half of them did not attend driving school".

Unachukwu recounted

Nnewi

that the two buses, one from Onitsha and the other from Nnewi axis collided and killed over 17 people. He said the one from Onitsha was overtaking a trailer and encroached on the lane of the one coming from Nnewi.

It was, however, gathered that some passengers who survived the accident were rushed to Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital (NAUTH), Nnewi for treatment while corpses of dead victims were deposited at both NAUTH and Akwudo Mortuaries in Nnewi.