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Makurdi-Enugu road accident claims 21 lives

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WRITTEN BY HIR JOSEPH, MAKURDI

Two months after a fatal accident claimed 17 lives along the Makurdi-Enugu road in Benue State, another accident occurred yesterday on the same road, claiming 21 lives.

The Public Relations Officer of the Federal Road Safety Commission in the state, Mr. Samson Audu who confirmed the accident in a telephone interview with Daily Trust said 15 out of the 21 passengers were burnt to ashes as one of the two mini buses that collided caught fire and got burnt. He said the accident occurred at about 5.30pm, about two kilometers after Ikpayongo market along Makurdi-Otukpo road.

Audu did not give details of the vehicles and the deceased because the rescue team had not completed its work at the time of filing in this report. However, he said one of the vehicles was a Ford, and the other a Toyota Hiace. He also said one of the vehicles was attempting to overtake at a tight point and could not complete before the other on-coming vehicle collided with it.

The Benue Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Samuel Jinadu also confirmed the accident, but refused to speak further since he had not received signal on the incident at press time.

Daily Trust inquiries showed that while one of the busses was conveying traders who were returning to Makurdi from the nearby Aliede market, one was heading to Otukpo from Abuja and was conveying an association of Iggede people of Benue-South.

Our correspondent who visited the mortuary at the Federal Medical Centre in Makurdi where the charred remains of the dead were deposited, witnessed a surge of wailing persons particularly market women from the adjoining Wadata market. The medical doctor on duty at the emergency ward, Dr. Paul Aganye confirmed that 21 bodies were brought in by men of the FRSC.

He said seven persons who did not die were also brought in and were being attended to by a team of doctors. The Deputy Speaker of the Benue State House of Assembly Mr. William Edor who also visited the mortuary refused to speak at the time.

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