

## 30 passengers die in Maiduguri-Damaturu, Edo road crashes

Olatunji Omirin, Maiduguri

A motor accident that occurred along the Maiduguri - Damaturu road yesterday claimed the lives of 15 persons who were burnt to death.

In the same vein, 15 persons also lost their lives in two separate road accidents in Edo State, officials have said.

The Maiduguri-Damaturu highway incident occurred around 12:30 noon about two kilometers away from Mainok village.

A witness, Alhaji Babagana, said the accident happened when an Opel Vectra collided with an oncoming Sharon bus and went up in flames, burning the occupants.

"All of them died on the spot; we watched helplessly as the bus burned away, while efforts being made to rescue other passengers in the Vectra using an axe to open the compressed car, yielded little success. Many burnt beyond recognition," the witness said.

When contacted, the Sector Commander, Federal Road Safety Corps, Borno State, Sanusi K Ibrahim, confirmed that 15 persons were burnt to death in the incident, saying his men in conjunction with CJTF and police were at the scene to evacuate the remains of the victims to Benisheikh Hospital.

Our correspondent gathered that travellers moving along the Maiduguri-Damaturu highway usually over-speed for fear of attacks or abduction by insurgents.

One of the accidents in Edo involved a Mercedes Benz which rammed into six children who were playing football in a compound in Arue, Uromi in Esan North-East Local Government Area, while trying to dodge a pothole.

The other accident, which claimed nine lives, involved four vehicles in the Agbede axis of the Benin-Auchi Road.

Henry Benamaisia, Edo State Sector Commander of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), said the accident which claimed nine lives happened at about 11 a.m. in Agbede, in Etsako West LGA of the state.