

Eight burnt to death in Edo auto crash

By Michael Egbejule, Benin City

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– Okomu oil confirms death of six employees in weekend's accident

Eight persons were burnt beyond recognition after the vehicle they were traveling in was involved in an accident on Sunday along the Benin-Ekpoma-Auchi expressway. The victims were reportedly returning from a ceremony in Benin City. This is coming two days after six persons who are employees of Okomu Oil firm died in similar circumstances in the Edo State.

Leaders of Udeni community in Uhunmwode local government area of Edo were among those who lost their lives at Egba junction along the Benin–Auchi dual carriageway. The victims were returning to the community after attending a funeral ceremony of an in-law to one of the community leaders in Benin City, the state capital.

Eyewitnesses said four of the occupants burnt to death on the spot while other victims died at the hospital. A survivor of the crash, who simply identified himself as Best, said: “We were heading home along Egba junction when a saloon car crossed the path of our

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18-seater bus. In an attempt to avoid hitting the vehicle, our driver lost control and hit the median on the road and in the process, our bus fell and burst into flame.”

This was corroborated by an eyewitness, who said a Toyota Hiace bus was speeding from Benin City and heading towards Edo North when a saloon car veered into the road from a petrol filling station and rammed into the bus.



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“What happened was that the vehicle after buying fuel at the petrol station hurriedly entered the road without looking at the other way for vehicles coming from Benin side of the road. The driver of the Toyota Hiace bus, while trying to avoid hitting the vehicle that came out from the petrol station, lost control, hit the pavement and burst into flames,” he said.

The Edo State sector commander of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Mr. Henry Benamaisia, confirmed the incident. He, however, insisted that the command recorded three deaths while others were rushed to the hospital.

Meanwhile, management of Okomu Oil Palm Plc yesterday expressed its condolences to the families of six employees who died in a grisly accident involving its staff bus at the weekend.

Managing Director, Okomu Oil Palm Company, Dr. Graham Hefer, said the accident claimed six lives from the company, not five as was earlier reported in the media. He expressed his condolences and sympathy to the families for the loss of their loved ones.



“On February 14, on the Siluko public road, a minibus carrying six Okomu Plc employees was involved in a head-on collision with a tipper lorry. Three workers were



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seriously injured when the mini-bus in which they were travelling collided with a tipper lorry carrying sand and subsequently burst into flames.

“Apparently one person also died in the lorry. The company doctor met the three employees injured at the hospital and together with his team, he will provide support to the injured employees until their recovery,” Hefer said.
