

13 passengers attempting to beat Monday sit-at-home die in Enugu auto crash

From Lawrence Njoku, Enugu

It was tragic in Enugu on Sunday night, as 13 passengers travelling in a Toyota bus were burnt to death at Four-Corner Junction, Enugu South Local Council, near Enugu State metropolis.

The Guardian gathered that the victims were apparently attempting to beat the Monday sit-at-home in the Southeast region and decided to board a 14-seater bus on Sunday night from Imo to Adamawa State.

However, they were involved in a head-on collision with a trailer and their bus immediately exploded at the Four-Corner junction in Enugu State.

An eyewitness said the accident occurred at about 10:50p.m. close to an army checkpoint.

It was learnt that soldiers, who made futile effort to rescue the victims, also alerted officials of Road Safety and Fire Service.

Their intervention however could not save the victims who were burnt beyond recognition. The witness said most of the occupants of the bus were in deep sleep when

the accident happened, resulting to their inability to scamper to safety quickly. "One of the occupants who survived, jumped out from the window of the bus and was rescued by security operatives.

"He was rushed to the nearby University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH) Enugu. "Officials of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) took the charred bodies of the victims to the morgue of the UNTH," the witness said.

Confirming the incident, the Sector Commander, Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Enugu State Command, Mr. Joseph Toby, said he could not give the number of casualties until they finished work at the scene. Toby said he and his men rushed to the scene immediately he received information about the accident and stayed there with the men of the fire service till 2:00a.m. yesterday morning.

He added that they had to return to the scene in the morning to evacuate the wreckage from the road despite the sit-at-home situation in the state.