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Doctor's strike: Two die, 15 injured in Abakaliki auto crash

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•Victims refused admission as strike continues

Felix Uka / Abakaliki

Two persons died, while 15 others sustained varied degrees of injuries Tuesday, when two mass transit buses belonging to the Enugu Transport Company (ENTRACO) and EMEM mass transit collided at the Ezilo axis of the Abakaliki-Enugu express.

Drivers of both buses died on the spot.

Survivors of the accident were however refused admission by the nearby Federal Teaching Hospital, Abakaliki due to the ongoing strike by Nigeria Medical Doctors Association. They were rushed to the privately owned Felix Memorial Hospital and Christ the King Hospital, all in Abakaliki where they are receiving treatment.

Acting Sector Commander, Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), Ebonyi State Command, Elemchi Ibekwe confirmed that of the 15 passengers involved in the fatal accident, 15 were injured and are receiving treatment at both Abakaliki-based hospitals.

He identified the vehicles involved as: Toyota bus with

registration number, AFK 195 AA, belonging to EMEM and a Hiace bus with registration number, XH 759 KTU belonging to ENTRACO mass transit.

He blamed the road crash on over speeding, dangerous driving and dangerous overtaking, adding that the accident would have been averted if the drivers exercised patience and considered the risk involved in dangerous driving.

Ibekwe told our correspondent on Wednesday:

“Yesterday being the 08th of July 2014 at about 03.30pm along the Ezillo farm axis of the Enugu-Abakaliki Express road, our team at Nkalagu unit command on patrol got a distress call that a Toyota bus belonging to ENTRACO and a Hiace bus belonging to EMEM mass transit had a head on collision and immediately they rushed to the scene of the accident and were able to rescue some of the victims. From their report, the drivers died at the spot while the others 15 passengers who sustained various degrees of injuries were rushed to the Felix Memorial Hospital and Christ the King Hospital Abakaliki.

“From the observation of our men who had to rush to the scene of the accident to help in rescuing the victims, they attributed the accident to dangerous driving by the drivers. 17 persons were involved in the accident, 13 male and 4 female, unfortunately, 2 of the drivers died.”

The Acting Sector Commander added that the command has started a sensitisation programme that would ensure that all commercial mass transit vehicles in the country use speed governor in their different buses. He commended the management of Peace Mass Transit Company and ABC Transit for complying with the directive, adding that it would reduce the level of road crashes in the country.

When *Daily Independent* visited Christ the King Hospital Abakaliki where four of the victims were receiving treatment, it was observed that the bus conductor, Ndubuisi Onuoha, and Stephen Nwankwuda, a passenger, were in a dismal condition and needed further medical examination to save their lives.

Narrating his experience, Nwankwuda told our correspondent that the vehicle he boarded, took off from Nkwo-Jaki market along the Enugu-Abakaliki