

NO fewer than sixteen persons died in a ghastly motor accident along the Benin-Oluku by-pass in Edo state yesterday. Some of the victims were burnt beyond recognition.

Charred remains of the victims recovered from the scene have been deposited at the mortuary of the Federal Road Safety Commission's Medical Centre, on Ikpoba Hill, Benin.

The accident, involving a cement laden Mercedes Benz 1113 truck with registration number XA351NCA (Ebonyi) and a Mazda bus with registration number XA795 SKP (Rivers), occurred at about 1.15 pm. The vehicles were going from Lagos to the Eastern part of the country.

The Nation on Saturday learnt that the accident occurred when both vehicles

which were on top speed, tried to overtake a trailer, while descending a slope before the Ikpoba bridge along the Benin-Oluku by-pass.

It was gathered that the truck rammed into the bus in the process, crushing 15 passengers in the Mazda to death instantly and leaving two in very critical condition. The sheer impact of the crash saw fire laying up from within the bus, setting the vehicle and some passenger ablaze. Some of the crushed 15 were also reportedly roasted. The truck's driver also died on the spot while his conductor escaped death by

the whiskers.

It was a hectic time for men of the FRSC, Edo State Command who arrived the scene and began extricating bodies of the victims from beneath the overturned bags of cement.

A team of mobile policemen who had arrived the scene earlier, helped in conveying the injured victims to Guobadia Hospital, along Benin-Auchi Road, while the FRSC team deposited the dead bodies at the Mortuary of the commission's

■ John Mayaki, Benin ■

Medical Centre.

Speaking on the accident, the Edo Sector Commander of FRSC, Samuel Obayemi warned all motorists to desist from acts that could endanger their lives and those of other road users, especially in the Ember months when the flow of traffic get heavier.

He said the Command would flag off its "2006 Ember Months Campaign" with the theme "Road Traffic Reforms for Enhanced Highway Safety" September 20, 2006.

The ember months would be used for aggressive public enlightenment and strict enforcement of traffic laws, he said.

16 killed in road accident