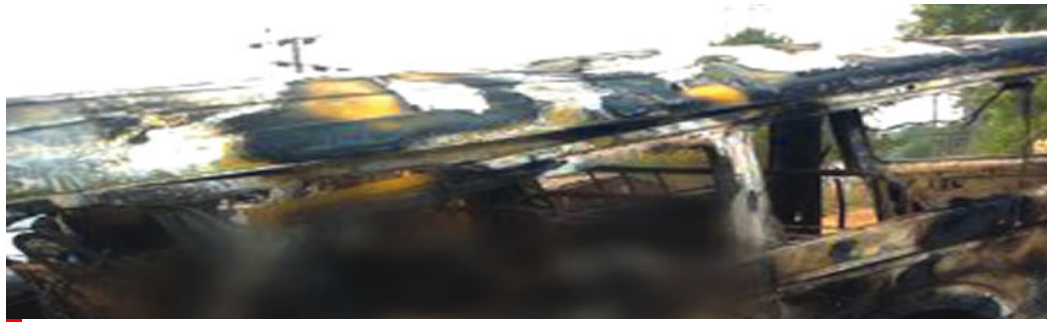


Eight varsity students die in crash, parent mourns

21st February 2023



Scene of the crash

By Samuel Bolaji

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Eight students of Madonna University, Elele, Rivers State have reportedly died in an auto crash on their way to Taraba State from Port Harcourt.

According to reports, the students were travelling home from school on account of the forthcoming general elections.

An eyewitness, Matthew Mbam, said the incident happened on Saturday, February 18, at the TTC/Special Science School junction, Abakaliki in Ebonyi State.

Seven other students reportedly survived the incident with varying degrees of injuries and were rushed to the Alex Ekwueme Teaching Hospital in Ebonyi State.

Mbam, who narrated the incident on his Facebook page, said, “While returning from Nwezenyi, Igbeagu, Izzi, Ebonyi State, Nigeria this Sunday evening where I went to pick some people, I met this horrific scene at exactly TTC/Special Science School junction along the trans-Saharan road.

“Seeing the crowd of persons with some Army officers around the burnt vehicle, I decided to park my car by the roadside and came out to find out what happened. I was told that the accident occurred yesterday twilight being Saturday, February 18, 2023.

“After asking some persons there who all declined to tell me what happened, I met the soldiers who accompanied the relatives from Taraba State, directly to ask them what happened with the burnt vehicle.

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“They briefed me that the bus was coming from Port-Harcourt, conveying some students from Madonna University with some of the parents who were returning to Taraba State for a break due to the upcoming elections.”

Mbam added that the seven persons that survived were in “bad conditions” while the eight that lost their lives were “burnt beyond recognition.”

“The story further has it that eight students/a parent are the bodies/ashes that were burnt beyond recognition. And about seven persons in bad conditions who are currently at Federal Teaching Hospital, Abakaliki, escaped from the bus when it caught fire after having a head-on collision with a Sienna car,” he added.

The father of one of the deceased students, Ezra Usman, expressed his sorrow in a Facebook post, attaching a picture of his daughter.

Usman wrote, “Grace Usman Ezra, I never knew sending you to Madonna University would lead to your untimely death. 18 of you left Madonna for Jalingo yesterday only to hear the news that your bus had (an) accident and caught fire, eight out of 18 came out from the bus. It is well with the 10 of you and the rest that are alive, I pray for your speedy recovery and may God comfort us all that lost our children.”

Efforts to reach the Vice Chancellor of the university, Dr Uchenna Anyanwu, were unsuccessful as calls to his telephone were not answered and he had yet to reply to an enquiry sent to his telephone through text message as of the time of filing this report.