

Three feared dead in Ebonyi auto crash

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ABAKALIKI

Three persons were on Thursday feared dead in a fatal road crash, which occurred along Abaomege axis of the Enueke/Afikpo highway, Ebonyi State.

The incident, which occurred on Thursday evening, was said to have happened when a Peace Mass Transit vehicle skidded off the road and headed for the bush, pulling off a tree in the process.

The bus was damaged beyond recognition while a three month old baby, her mother and six other occupants of the vehicle survived.

It took a tow van many minutes to remove the bus from the gmelina tree it crashed into as it was gummed to the tree.

After this, an axe was used to break into the vehicle to enable policemen and sympathizers, who thronged the scene to rescue the victims. Unfortunately, three persons, including the driver were found dead. Two other deceased were sitting at the front seat with the driver while nine persons were rescued alive. One of them without any injury was a three month old baby.

The travellers were returning from Port Harcourt, Riv-

ers state when the incident occurred. The incident occurred 20 minutes to Abakaliki, its destination point.

An eyewitness, Chief Joseph Okoro, who is a retired police officer, told our correspondent at the scene that he was in deep sleep and was woken up by the loud noise from the incident.

He said: "I was in deep sleep when I had a loud noise which woke me up. Before I could notice it, dust was everywhere and I ran outside and saw vehicles parking by the road side to rescue the victims.

"A tow van was immediately brought to the scene and it towed the bus and separated it from the tree it hugged when it skidded off the road.

"After the bus was separated from the tree, three persons including the driver were seen dead, they died instantly. It was one of the front tyres of the bus that busted which caused the accident. The bus was returning to Abakaliki from Port Harcourt."

A serving policeman also told our correspondent that he was the one that carried both the deceased and the other victims find alive to a hospital in Abakaliki, adding that the corpses of the deceased had been deposited in the mortuary.