

22 Perish in Auto Crash

No fewer than 22 people, among them six children, were feared dead in a fatal motor accident involving a Hiace bus belonging to Imo State Transport Corporation and an unregistered Jeep at Elele, Rivers State, Saturday evening.

The two vehicles were said to have had a head-on collision at high speed while it was raining, leading to the smashing of the bus to smithereens near St. Aquinas Secondary School, Elele.

The dead, which included six children, six women and 10 men, as well as three unidentified bodies that were smashed beyond recognition, have been deposited at the Mosco Memorial Mortuary.

Among survivors are three girls and one man who gave his name as Jones Ibe, a business man, while one of the girls gave her name as Chioma.

The girls were said to have head injuries and in critical conditions.

They were referred to Macdonald Teaching Hospital, Elele, and are being attended to by an Indian, Dr K. Jayarakn.

From Ahamefula Ogbu

in Port Harcourt

Ibe was being attended to in Apata Memorial Hospital, Elele, where he was still too dazed to comment on the accident except to say that the two drivers overspeeded.

The bus, with registration number HB 998 WER, was driven by Evans Anefi who died instantly with one of his legs cut off by the impact of the crash, while eyewitness account said immediately the accident happened, driver of the Ford Jeep jumped out and disappeared into thin air.

Personal effects littered the scene, while natives were seen helping themselves to items not taken away by the police like umbrella, hair weave-on, shoes and bread among others.

Also at the Elele Police Station, personal effects of the victims were in a heap, but officers on duty refused to speak to the press, insisting that the Divisional Police Officer was the only competent one to speak on the issue.