

# 6 fear dead as tanker crushes commercial bus in Owerri

By Chidi Nkwopara

**O**WERRI—About six persons were feared dead as a petroleum-laden tanker crushed an intra-city commercial bus in Owerri, yesterday.

The crash, which occurred a shouting distance from Holy Ghost College, Owerri, grounded traffic across the Nworie River bridge as drivers heading to Port Harcourt Road, Onitsha Road, World Bank Housing Estate, the Industrial Layout and other adjoining communities, were forced to take alternative routes.

When *Vanguard* visited the accident scene at about 4.15 pm, two lifeless bodies were seen lying close to the wrecked vehicle, while sympathisers made frantic efforts to extricate other trapped passengers of the commercial bus.

Although *Vanguard* could not immediately ascertain the cause of the crash, an eyewitness said: "The petroleum tanker was conveying diesel to an undisclosed location. You can see two dead bodies from the bus lying on the ground (pointing at them). People are still saying that some other passengers are still under the tanker."

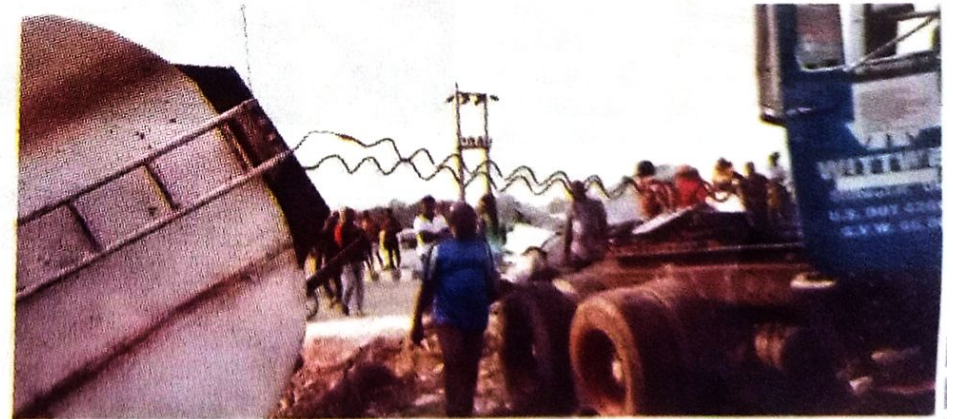


*The wreckage of the bus.*

As people were busy trying to rescue or extricate the other trapped bodies from the wreckage, some people were seen scooping spilt diesel from the scene.

What troubled some concerned citizens, however, was the near-violent way people chased away the fire fighting officers, security personnel, who arrived the scene to discharge their official duties.

*Vanguard* gathered that "the people opted to chase away the police and firefighters because they did not arrive early at the accident scene."



*The ill-fated tanker.*

An aggrieved commercial bus driver, who did not want his name in print, told *Vanguard*: "A lot of people

were throwing all manner of missiles at the security and fire service personnel that came to help salvage the situation."

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