

Benin auto crash leaves 9 dead

By Ozioruva Aliu

RESIDENTS of Sokponba Road, Benin City, Edo State capital were thrown into mourning yesterday, as an early morning motor accident claimed the lives of about nine persons.

The accident, which occurred at Ogbelaka Junction, involved two commercial vehicles and two trucks loaded with sand.

It was gathered that the tipper involved in the accident was trying to overtake another tipper, but lost control and collided with the two minibuses, killing many of the passengers on the spot.

Among the dead was a lady, who reportedly stayed overnight at the Edo Specialist Hospital attending to a family member and was on her way home to freshen up when the bus she boarded got involved in the accident.

An eyewitness stated that the fatality would have been more if the Bureau De Change operators by Erie Junction did not run for safety when vehicles that were trying to avoid the scene almost crushed them.

The accident caused a traffic jam as the exit routes to Asoro Street, Eri and Ogbelaka were completely blocked, leaving commuters to trek long distances to their destinations.

While witnesses claimed to have counted at least nine corpses at the scene, the Sector Commander, Federal Roads Safety Corps (FRSC), Henry Benamaisa, said four people died.

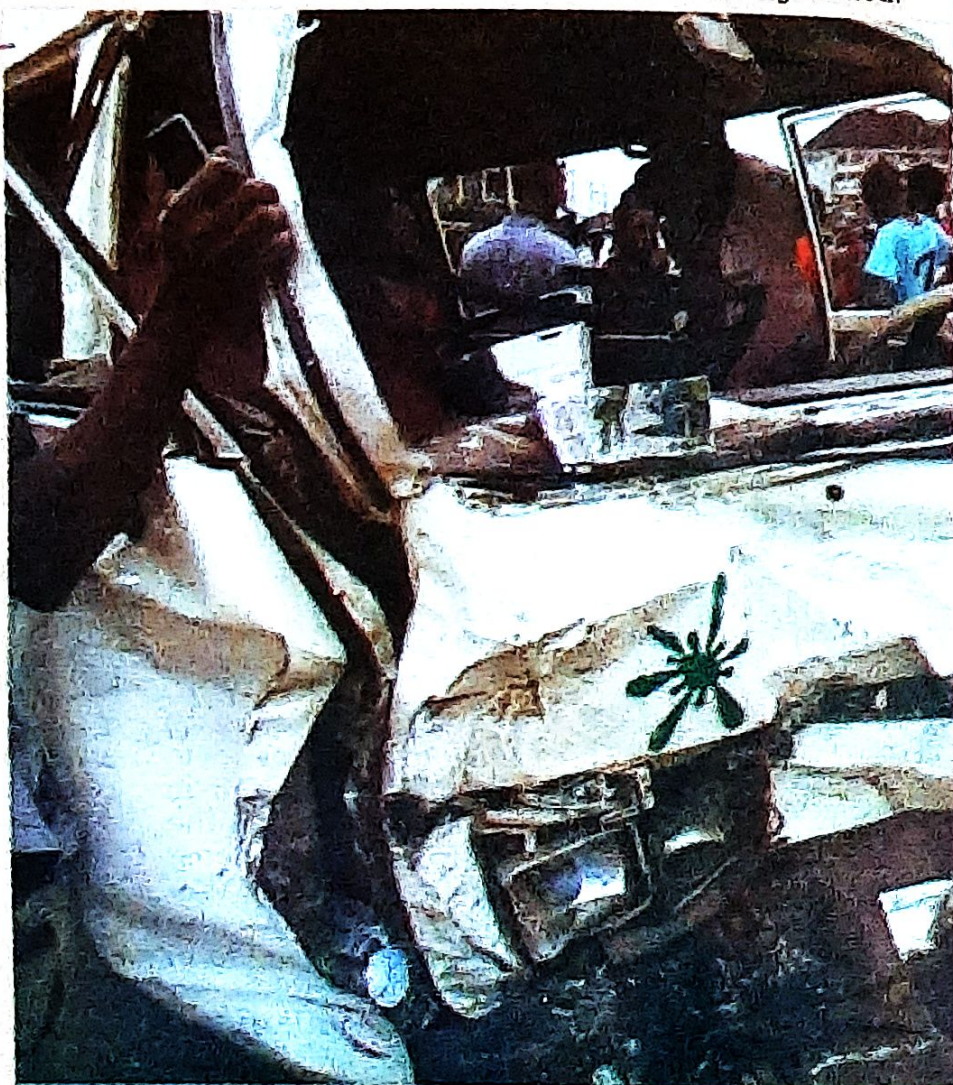
While attributing the accident to overspeeding, Benamaisa said "Four vehicles were involved and it was caused by over speeding. A total of seventeen

people were involved. Four died made up of one female and three males while nine were injured with various injuries."

The spokesman of the Police Command in Edo, SP Bello Kontongs, who also confirmed the incident said that four persons died against the speculated number of nine by eyewitnesses.

He said "It involved a truck coming from upper Sakponba that lost control and ran into a white bus killing three people on the spot while one died on the way to the hospital.

"The injured victims have been rushed to the hospital for treatment," Kontongs stated.



CRASHED: The mangled remains of one of the vehicles.