

# Probe begins as Anambra tanker explosion kills one, razes shops

24th November 2025



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The Anambra State Police Command said it has initiated an investigation into an explosion that occurred at Udoji Road, Ozubulu, near the Ekwusigo Local Government Area Secretariat, after a tanker fully loaded with Premium Motor Spirit, otherwise known as petrol, went up in flames in the area.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the tanker crash, which occurred as a result of a collision, killed one person and burnt no fewer than six adjoining shops at the scene.

In a press statement issued on Sunday, the spokesman for the Anambra State Police Command, SP Tochukwu Ikenga, stated that the investigation became necessary over the “false” information being spread by some individuals and groups on social media that the explosion was an attack by an armed group.

Our correspondent who visited the crash scene on Sunday gathered from eyewitnesses that the tanker exploded late on Friday after it collided with a car and a tricycle, resulting in a severe fire incident.

The incident was said to have caused panic and heavy gridlock, prompting the Federal Road Safety Corps to divert motorists and other pedestrians to use other alternative areas for their journey.

The eyewitnesses said there was a big explosion before the tanker went up in flames and burnt for several moments before the arrival of the state firefighters, who battled to control it.

One of the eyewitnesses said, “The incident happened in the evening. The tanker collided with a car and a tricycle before going up in flames after a loud explosion. One person was burnt to death while several shops near the scene were razed before the arrival of the state fire service.

“The raging inferno caused panic in the area as it burnt into the late hours. The firefighters, with the help of other rescue efforts, battled for several hours to put it out, while residents feared possible escalation due to the content.”

“It caused heavy traffic as motorists and other pedestrians could not make use of the road. The operatives of the FRSC were seen diverting motorists and other pedestrians going into and outside the metropolis to make use of alternative area.”

The Head of the Media and Publicity Unit of the Anambra State Fire Service, Chukwudi Chiketa, who confirmed the incident to our correspondent on Sunday, said the fire service immediately deployed three firefighting trucks to the scene upon receiving the call.

Chiketa said the firefighters responded promptly and, through their expertise and professionalism, successfully extinguished the fire, preventing further spread and minimising damage to surrounding properties.

He said, “Anambra State Fire Service, on November 21, 2025, at 17:45hrs, received a distress call reporting a fire outbreak involving a tanker laden with Premium Motor Spirit at Udoji Road, Ozubulu, near the Ekwusigo Local Government Secretariat.

“The tanker had collided with a car and a tricycle, resulting in a severe fire outbreak.

“Upon receiving the call, the Anambra State Fire Service immediately deployed three firefighting trucks to the scene.

“The gallant firefighters responded promptly and, through their expertise and professionalism, successfully extinguished the fire, preventing further spread and minimising damage to surrounding properties.

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“Sadly, one life was lost, and approximately six shops were affected by the fire.”

Also, while reacting to the development in a press statement issued on Sunday, the spokesman for the Anambra State Police Command, SP Tochukwu Ikenga, warned individuals and groups using the unfortunate incident to spread panic, fear, and tension in the state to desist from doing so.

He said, “The Anambra State Police Command wishes to clarify that the fire incident recorded in Ekwusigo LGA was the result of a fatal motor vehicle accident involving a truck and other vehicles, and not an attack by any armed group, contrary to false information circulating on social media.

“The unfortunate incident occurred in the early hours of November 21, 2025, when a tanker truck loaded with PMS (fuel) collided with a Toyota Corolla car. The collision caused the tanker to burst into flames, resulting in the complete burning of both vehicles and some nearby shops.

“Regrettably, a tricycle within the area of impact was also engulfed by the fire, and the rider was fatally burned.

“The Command has since initiated an investigation to establish the identities of the drivers and take other necessary actions. However, the Command strongly frowns at individuals and groups using this unfortunate incident to spread panic, fear, and tension in the State.”

According to him, the Commissioner of Police, CP Ikiroye Orutugu, has ordered a probe into the social media publication to identify and unmask the handler responsible for spreading the fake and misleading report.

“The Anambra State Police Command reassures the public of its commitment to ensuring accurate information flow, maintaining public safety, and preventing the spread of misinformation,” he added.

PUNCH Metro in March 2025 reported that an early morning fire burnt about nine shops located at No 112 Ziks Avenue, by Osamala, Fegge, Onitsha, Anambra State.

It was gathered that the fire burnt goods estimated at several millions of naira at the affected shops.

Although there was no casualty recorded, it was gathered that the fire was caused by a r power surge which emanated from one of the shops.

Our correspondent, who was at the scene on Friday, observed that some of the affected shop owners were still packing some of their burnt items.

Some eyewitnesses told our correspondent that the fire burnt for several minutes until men of the state fire service arrived at the scene and stopped it from further spreading to other structures.

When contacted, the head of the Media and Publicity Unit of the Anambra State Fire Service, Chukwudi Chiketa, confirmed the incident to our correspondent on Friday.

Chiketa said a crew of firefighters and firefighting equipment were immediately moved to the scene and the fire was contained.