

Police, Navy guard exploded ship

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POLICE and the Navy have cordoned off the ship, M.T. Tuma, which exploded on Tuesday killing at least five people on board.

Commissioner of Police, Port Authority, Mr. Vincent Ojo, who visited the scene for on-the-spot assessment said it will remain secluded until full investigations into the incident are concluded.

He expressed shock at the development but declined to make further comments on the issue till after investigations.

Daily Champion which visited the scene noticed heavy presence of officers and men of the police and the Nigerian Navy

securing the vessel.

The explosion was said to have been caused by a fire outbreak from the ship's engine. An engineer, who was supposed to be on board the vessel but escaped by a stroke of luck, said the ship came from Cotonou, Benin Republic.

According to him, the vessel, prior to the explosion, had developed an engine problem. The engineer, a Ghanaian who simply identified himself as Kofo, disclosed that the chief engineer on board had earlier instructed that the engine must not be put on as he had identified a mixture of petrol and diesel.

He explained that while the chief engineer and captain left the ship, somebody unknowingly switched on the engine, hence, the explosion.

Daily Champion gathered that Julius Berger and ASCON fire services were the first to arrive the scene to put out the fire before arrival of personnel of the Federal Fire Service and its Lagos State counterpart.

Meanwhile, ship has been pulled away into the sea and from oil tanks at the ports. It will be recalled that barely a month ago, about 200 persons lost their lives in a pipeline explosion as Ilado village in Apapa.