

TWO people were yesterday confirmed dead when the pressurised pipeline carrying petroleum products from Atlas Cove Jetty, Apapa, Lagos State, to Mosimi Depot in Ogun State exploded into fire at Ije Ododo village, near Ikotun, Lagos.

The pipeline operated by the Pipeline and Products Marketing Company (PPMC) of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) provides conduit for bulk transshipment of imported products for distribution to the Western and Northern parts of the country.

Sunday Champion gathered that the pipeline caught fire as thieves bore holes into it to

2 killed in pipeline fire

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siphon products.

Incidents of siphoning of governments products by thieving syndicates are rampant along the Atlas Cove and Mosimi depots, and accounts for high human tolls during fire blasts.

PPMC, in September alone, lost 23.735 million metric tones of products in transit along the pipeline.

Yesterday's fire occurred at Ije Ododo between Adesoba village and Ikotun, in an

isolated bushy swamp that proved difficult for vehicular access.

Managing Director of PPMC, Mr Suleiman Achimugun confirmed to *Sunday Champion* on telephone that the fire was sparked off by hot tapping as thieves tried to steal products.

He said NNPC and Lagos State fire units have been deployed to put out the fire while the pipeline has been depressurized to cut off fuel supply to the area.

According to him, Access Bridge has been built to cease movement of men, chemicals and equipment needed to fight the fire while the area has been cordoned off.

He, however, could not immediately quantify the volume of products lost in the incident.

Sunday Champion recalls

that a similar fire explosion claimed over 300 lives as thieves siphoning products from the same pipeline sparked off fire at Ilado village, near Atlas Cove, early this year.

Group Managing Director of NNPC, Mr Funso Kupolokun, had blamed the victims for their fate, saying the corporation was not going to bury the pipes deeper.

The fire outbreak also came behind similar ones which occurred in Jesse Town, Delta State and Isukuato in Abia State some few years back when both pipeline fires broke out and claimed hundreds of lives, and property worth millions of naira in the process.

Whereas cases of fire outbreak around pipelines have become a routine occurrence in the country the practice of bailing fuel, by thieves has remained unchecked by the authorities of the state.

Ahmadiyya School anniversary

THE Fazl Omar Ahmadiyya Nursery and Primary School, Ojokoro, Lagos, headquarters of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat, has celebrated its 10th anniversary with pomp and music.

The event which attracted dignitaries from all walks of life

It took the bold initiative of the Youth wing. (*Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya*) led by Brother Abdul Wahab Matepo, Late Abdul Ganiy Kehinde as well as the support of Alhaji Hussein Sunmonu, the former Amir of the Jamaat, his executive council and