

Nigerian, 14 Cameroonians killed in fuel truck blast

FIFTEEN people were killed when a vehicle carrying smuggled fuel from Nigeria into Cameroon exploded at a border village, state radio reported on Monday.

All the dead were Cameroonian apart from one Nigerian. The report did not say what caused the blast in the Benue division of Cam-eroon's North region, but local government sources told Reuters a passenger on the vehicle had lit a cigarette.

Authorities say such incidents are common in Cameroon's three northern regions of Adamawa, North and Far North, because Nigeria's cheap, subsidised fuel known locally as "zoua-zoua" or "funge" can fetch three times the price in Cameroon than it is sold for in its West African neighbour.

Security forces succeeded in eliminating the illicit trade in petrol between Cameroon and Nigeria in English-speaking South-West and North-West regions in the mid-1990s, but failed in the northern part of the country because of porous borders. (*Reuters*)
