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TANKER BLASTS KILL 17 IN LAGOS, GUSAU



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Written by Femi Akinola, Lagos & Shehu Umar, Gusau Hits: 135

Fifteen persons were killed late Tuesday when a petrol laden tanker crashed and exploded at the Berger area along the Oshodi-Apapa expressway, Igando, Lagos.

A branch of Zenith Bank, three houses and 10 vehicles were also reported burnt in the inferno.

Residents said the crash took place around 11pm Tuesday but the fire was put out early yesterday.

Witnesses said the tanker had a brake failure, somersaulted, exploded and burst into flames, burning 15 people to death on the spot and destroying property.

The fire spread to the three houses and the bank branch, burning them completely.

The General Manager, Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), Dr. Femi Oke-Osanyintolu, confirmed at the scene of the incident that 15 people were burnt beyond recognition.

The spokesman, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Ibrahim Farinloye, however, said nine persons died and the corpses were deposited at the General Hospital, Yaba while those wounded were treated and discharged.

He said also that 54 shops situated in the four buildings were completely burnt.

Lagos State Chief Fire Officer, Fadipe Rasaq, told Daily Trust that his office received a distress call on a raging fire a little after 11 pm and responded swiftly. He said the damage would have been more but for the quick intervention of firemen. A rescue official at the site said 10 vehicles were burnt, including five trucks, four buses, one car and two bikes.

Elsewhere in Zamfara State, two persons were killed when a petrol tanker somersaulted and caught fire along the by-pass in Gusau yesterday.

The cause of the crash was not known at the time of filling this report but FRSC Sector Commander Halliru Baba Halilu said it was a lone accident.

Residents told Daily Trust that the driver was seen making a phone call before losing control as the tanker skidded off the road and somersaulted a few yards from the NNPC Mega Station.

It took the Fire fighters who responded quickly, several hours to put out the raging flame as the victims were burnt beyond recognition. Sympathizers were trooping to the scene to catch a glimpse or offer help.

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