

## 2 killed as tanker explodes on Lagos-Ibadan expressway

From Abdullateef Aliyu & Eugene Agha, Lagos

Two people were burnt to death yesterday when a fuel-laden tanker exploded at the Kara axis of the Lagos-Ibadan expressway outwards Lagos.

The incident happened in the early hours of Saturday, leaving many motorists trapped on the ever-busy expressway.

No fewer than 10 other people were injured while dozens of vehicles parked on the side of the expressway were completely burnt.

Sources said the fire has been burning since 1am without the emergency responders and fire

fighters on sight to save the situation.

But it was learnt that the responders had to retreat following attack on them by suspected hoodlums who were said to be brandishing dangerous weapons.

Director-General of LASEMA, Dr. Olufemi Oke-Osanyitolu confirmed the attack on the responders, saying the operation was suspended abruptly for the safety of his men.

He said, "The agency responded to the incident at 0105hrs this morning according to the stipulated emergency response plan."

According to him, the team was attacked by some hoodlums brandishing dangerous weapons

and was forced to seek extra police cover from the Isheri Police Station.

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) whose men were also on ground confirmed that two people were burnt beyond recognition in the explosion.

The Corps Marshal FRSC, Dr Boboye Oyeyemi, described the incident as unfortunate but avoidable, assuring that frantic efforts are in place to put an end to frequent tanker explosions.

Speaking through Bisi Kazeem, the Corps Public Education Officer, the Corps Marshal stated that the fatal road traffic crash involved a single Tanker fully laden with PMS.

According to him, the crash investigation carried out by a team of FRSC personnel deployed for rescue operations, revealed that the driver lost control of the wheels as a result of mechanical deficiency (tyre blow out) making the tanker to fall on the expressway amidst a wild inferno.

The victims were the tanker driver and his motor boy, it was gathered, while 29 vehicles parked by the road side were completely burnt.

According to the post disaster assessment conducted by LASEMA, 10 injured victims were treated at the scene while one luxurious passenger bus, two articulated vehicles were among the vehicles affected.