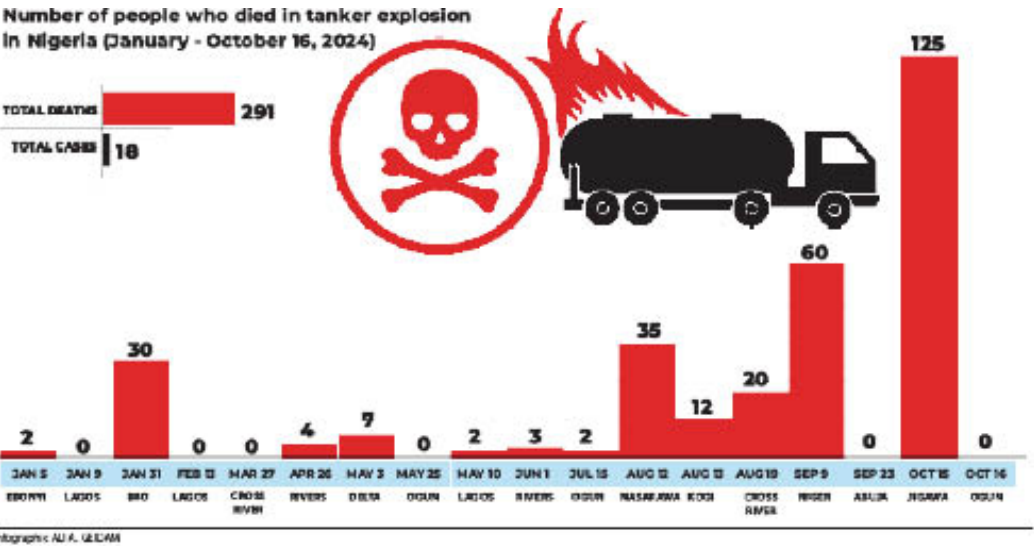


Jigawa Tanker Inferno: Grieving Families Recount Incident As Over 120 Buried



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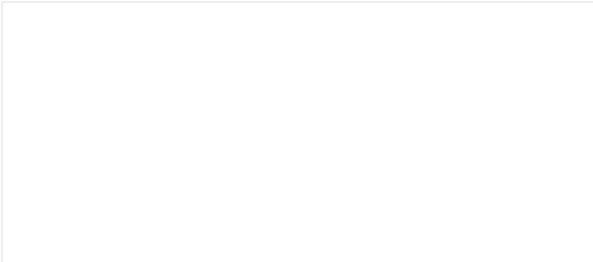
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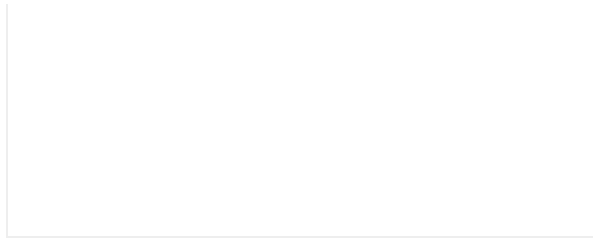


Grieving members of families of those who lost their lives in Tuesday’s inferno in Majia town of Taura Local Government Area of Jigawa State on Wednesday narrated how the petrol-laden tanker’s accident ultimately resulted in an explosion which consumed over 120 human souls.

Death toll from the fuel tanker incident rose to over 125 people as at yesterday, while 70 others have been hospitalised.

Health workers, rescue personnel and survivors said the casualty figure could rise, considering that some of the victims sustained third-degree burns with their vital organs affected.





They said almost every family in Majia town and adjoining communities had been affected by the calamity in one way or the other, even as doctors, nurses and other supporting staff continue to work to save lives.

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- [Shettima heads for Sweden as Nigerians await Tinubu's return](#)

Daily Trust learnt that 115 people were buried in a particular grave while 10 others were buried elsewhere.

Some local and foreign media outlets reported that the number of those who died could be as high as 150.

How the carnage happened

Daily Trust learnt that following the tanker crash, locals trooped to the scene to scoop the fuel. And shortly afterwards, the overturned truck exploded.

The incident is coming at a time when the price of petrol has gone as high as N1,400 in some parts of the country.

It was learnt that the fuel tanker veered off the road to avoid another vehicle, but lost control and crashed.

The tanker, with the number plate KMC 641 F, driven by one Yusuf Mohammad, had taken off from Kano and was heading for Nguru in Yobe State.

DSP Lawan Shiisu Adam, the Police Public Relations Officer in Jigawa State, confirmed the incident to newsmen in Dutse, yesterday, adding that the injured had been taken to different hospitals for medical attention.

“The residents were scooping fuel from the overturned tanker when the explosion occurred, sparking a massive inferno that killed 94 people on the spot.

“The incident left another 50 people severely injured, who were then rushed to Ringim and Hadejia General Hospitals for treatment,” he said.

Jigawa State’s Commissioner of Police, Ahmad Abdullahi, extended condolences to the people of Majia town and the state at large, urging citizens to exercise caution and avoid scenes of petrol tanker accidents.

The state governor, Malam Umar Namadi, expressed sadness over the incident and sympathised with the families of the victims.

He said the entire state mourns alongside the families and that the government stands ready to provide all necessary assistance during this difficult period. He assured the public that steps would be taken to prevent such tragedies in the future.

He prayed Almighty Allah to grant eternal rest to the departed souls.

4 siblings, policeman among dead

Malam Hamza Ibrahim said he lost four of his children to the explosion. Among them was Hassan Hamza 28, who just graduated from College of Health Technology, Jahun.

Malam Hamza said Hassan was an upright young man who went to the scene of the explosion where people were scooping petrol, to send them home, but was consumed by the fire.

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“Hassan was indeed a very nice boy. I have never seen him fighting with anyone. He just obtained a national diploma in Pharmacy and currently working with Khadija Clinic here in Majia. We only

pray that God forgives his shortcomings,” the father said.

Yusuf Hamza, Saidu Hamza and Mustapha Hamza were the three other sons of Malam Hamza, who also died in the fire.

A younger brother to Malam Hamza, Ilyasu Ibrahim, also lost his son, Yahya Ilyasu, to the incident and another son, Abbas Ilyasu was rushed to the Hadejia General Hospital and later transferred to the General Medical Center, Nguru.

Few meters away from the residence of Ibrahim and his brother, Muhammad Sabitu Haruna was seen mourning the death of his son, Sani Sabitu, who until his death was running a business centre in Majia. Sani left behind two wives and eight children.

Like Hassan Hamza, Sani went to the scene to send away his younger siblings who were scooping fuel.

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“Just recently he was offered a job. He was here after Magrib (sunset) prayer and when the truck fell, his mother asked him to go and chase his younger ones from the scene, but as fate would have it, he died while some of his siblings sustained severe fire burns”, Haruna said.

Five almajirai among the dead

Malam Ibrahim Lawan Majia, a Qur'anic school teacher said five of his pupils died in the incident.

“It is a terrible lesson for people not only here in Majia,” he said.

“When something like this happens, people should refrain from scooping fuel. It is very dangerous,” he said.

He prayed for the repose of the souls of those who died in the accident and for the quick recovery of those hospitalised.

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Another resident, Abdullahi Salisu, said he lost his uncle, Tsoho Umar, while two brothers, Habun Salisu and Murtala Ado, sustained fire burns.

Also among the people that died from the tanker explosion is a Mobile Police Inspector, Kasimu Habu, who was said to have been recuperating from a gunshot wound he sustained fighting bandits.

Daily Trust gathered that most of the victims were young people whose ages ranged from 19 to 23.

Victims rushed to hospitals

At the Ringim General Hospital were people with three-degree burns covering face, head and body. An official told Daily Trust that many others were transferred to the Malam Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Kano.

Also among the victims were 45-year-old Lami Samaila and 17-year- old Usman Abdulmumin.

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Some others were taken to the Hadejia General Hospital, Rasheed Shekoni Federal University Teaching Hospital, Dutse as well as the General Hospitals in Gumel and Jahun.

A resident, Habu Majia, who was among the mourners at the residence of Sabitu Haruna told Daily Trust that 115 dead bodies were given mass burial with Governor Namadi in attendance at the funeral prayer. He said they were buried just a few metres from where they died.

NMA urges members to offer help

Meanwhile, Daily Trust gathered that the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) has urged doctors to rush to emergency rooms to help with the influx of patients.

The association said doctors and nurses on ground in various hospitals were already overwhelmed even as many victims were in dire need of attention.

Incident caused by neglect of safety rules-FRSC



Corps Marshal, Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Shehu Mohammed, said the incident was caused by neglect of safety rules.

A statement signed by the Corps Public Education Officer, Olusegun Ogungbemide, said the corps marshal urged all road users to exercise caution and always await FRSC emergency and rescue operatives to handle any of such emergencies.

He stated that it behoves the Corps to advise the public whenever an incident of this nature occurs.

“The lone crash which had no casualties as the driver and conductor survived without any injuries, occurred when the DAF tanker loaded with Premium Motor Spirit attempted to dodge a speed bump while on high speed. The resultant impact of the driver’s action while on high speed, detached the tanker from the body of the articulated vehicle,” he explained.

Mohammed directed further investigation into the crash. He also issued orders to commanding officers at the various tank farms to expedite action towards ensuring that all tankers observe the minimum safety standards before they are allowed to convey inflammable substances.



Tinubu sends delegation to Jigawa

Meanwhile, President Bola Tinubu has directed the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Senator George Akume, to lead a federal government delegation to Jigawa, in response to the inferno.

A statement by presidential spokesman, Bayo Onanuga, said the government delegation will comprise the Minister of Defence, Mohammed Badaru Abubakar; Minister of Transportation, Senator Saidu Alkali; Corps Marshall of the FRSC, Mr. Mohammed; and the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Community Engagement (North West), Abdullahi Tanko Yakasai.

While in Jigawa, the delegation will visit the scene of the incident to assess the situation and visit injured persons in various hospitals, it was gathered.

President Tinubu further directed that emergency aid, including medical supplies, food, and shelter, be extended to the victims receiving treatment and others affected by the fire.

The president commiserated with the state government and families of the victims, and prayed for divine comfort for the bereaved families and the peaceful repose for the souls of the departed.

FG to review fuel transportation protocols

Meanwhile, the federal government has called for a comprehensive review of fuel transportation safety protocols across the country, following the tanker explosion.

The Vice President, Kashim Shettima, made the call yesterday while condoling with the government and people of the state over the incident.

A statement by his spokesman, Stanley Nkwocha, said, “On behalf of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the vice president expressed particular sorrow for the families who lost loved ones in this tragic incident and prayed that Almighty Allah grants them the fortitude to bear the loss.

“This devastating incident has shaken us all to our core. The federal government stands with the people of Jigawa. We are mobilising all necessary resources to support the injured and assist the families affected by this calamity”, he said.

The statement added that the vice president had directed the immediate deployment of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) personnel and resources to Jigawa State.

“The vice president has also announced immediate federal government intervention and called for a comprehensive review of fuel transportation safety protocols across Nigeria.

“As we contend with this tragedy, let us also reflect on the importance of safety measures and public awareness to prevent such incidents in the future,” the statement added.

Investigation on the way

The Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil), Senator Heineken Lokpobiri has directed immediate investigation into the incident, a statement issued by his Special Adviser on Media and Communications, Nnaemaka Okafor, disclosed yesterday.

According to the statement, Senator Lokpobiri directed the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) to immediately commence a detailed probe into the

circumstances surrounding the unfortunate incident.

The minister, while extending his condolences to the families and loved ones of those affected by the incident, admonished Nigerians to desist from approaching vehicles transporting petroleum products that have been involved in accidents or mechanical failures.

“While we understand the temptation to freeloader, the dangers of attempting to collect spilled fuel cannot be overstated. The tragic loss of lives in this incident serves as a grim reminder of the severe risks involved,” he said.

First Lady condolees with families of victims

In a separate statement yesterday, the First Lady, Mrs Oluremi Tinubu, who described the incident as “tragic and most unfortunate,” said her thoughts and prayers were with the people of Jigawa at this time.

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“I pray God to grant the friends, families and loved ones of the departed souls the fortitude to bear the painful loss and grant speedy recovery to the injured,” she added.

Senator Barau mourns

The Deputy President of the Senate, Senator Barau I. Jibrin, has mourned the death of victims of the incident.

Senator Barau, in a statement by his media aide, Ismail Mudashir, expressed condolences to the government and people of Jigawa State over the incident.

“It is with profound sadness that I extend my deepest condolences to the government and people of Jigawa State, particularly the community of Majia town in Taura Local Government Area over the tragic incident that claimed many lives and left others injured.

“My heart goes out to the families who have lost their loved ones and I offer prayers for the speedy recovery of those hospitalised. May the souls of the departed rest in peace, “he prayed.

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NGF sympathises with victims

The Nigeria Governors’ Forum (NGF) has also sympathised with the victims and government of Jigawa State over the incident.

In a statement signed by the NGF Chairman and governor of Kwara State, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, the forum expressed sadness over the tragedy.

According to AbdulRazaq, the governors' heartfelt condolences were especially with families that lost loved ones and those who sustained injuries in the fire.

The NGF said the reported circumstances of the incident are worrisome, urging citizens to avoid taking advantage of petrol spills because of its volatility and existential danger.

“This unfortunate incident again calls attention to a need for improved safety protocols in the handling of combustible materials like petrol, including during unforeseen circumstances such as accidents,” the forum noted. He prayed Almighty Allah to grant them solace at this trying time and admit the deceased to Al-jannah Firdaus.

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Northern govs condole with Gov Namadi

The Northern States Governors' Forum (NSGF) has expressed heartfelt condolences to Governor Namadi and the people of Jigawa State over the incident.

Chairman of the forum and governor of Gombe State, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, according to a statement issued yesterday by his spokesman, Ismaila Uba Misilli, described the incident as “deeply saddening”.

He emphasised the need for stricter safety measures and public awareness to prevent future occurrences.

“This unfortunate event underscores the urgent need for comprehensive safety measures to prevent similar tragedies. “Authorities must implement stricter regulations governing fuel transportation and storage to minimise risks while public awareness campaigns are equally essential to educate citizens about the dangers of approaching accident sites, particularly those involving hazardous materials like petroleum products,” he said.