

Jigawa tanker explosion: Death toll rises to 180

From Ali Rabi'u Ali (Dutse) & Haruna G. Yaya (Gombe)

The death toll from last Tuesday's petrol tanker explosion in Majia town, Jigawa State, has risen to 180 as of Sunday, October 20, residents told *Daily Trust*.

The incident occurred on Tuesday, October 15 when a truck carrying petrol, travelling from Kano to Nguru in Yobe State, exploded in Majia, located in the Taura Local Government Area of Jigawa State, following a fall that resulted in the immediate death of over one hundred individuals and injuries to many others who were scooping fuel.

The explosion marks a tragic first in Majia, a predominantly agrarian community in Jigawa known for its economic activities.

Jabir Abdullahi Majia, a resident, told *Daily Trust* that "People who lost their loved ones are still grieving as the death toll continues to rise.

I work at Adams Science Tahfizul Quran, and the truck fell right in front of our school gate. People are still mourning today."

He added that the memory of the explosion will remain etched in the minds of the community, as virtually every family suffered a loss.

Mustapha Abdullahi Majia said his family lost about 52 blood relatives. He said, "It was a horrific situation that we have never experienced before in this town. My family lost about 52 blood relatives."

Another resident, Adamu Lawan Majia, said hardly any family escaped the impact of the explosion, estimating the death toll at around 180. Lawan said 104 people died at the explosion site, while others succumbed to their injuries after being taken to hospitals.

Addressing the lessons learned from the tragedy, Lawan emphasised the need for public awareness about the dangers of scooping petroleum products, noting that ignorance played a significant role in the

incident. He pointed out that most victims were young people, as the elderly were likely aware of the risks involved.

"We have learned a lot from this, and we will never forget this day. It will remain in our memories, even for those too young to understand; the story will be passed down to prevent future occurrences," Lawan said.

Injured survivor Uzairu Musa Mainama recounted his experience, saying he narrowly escaped death.

"I reached the scene, and within less than three minutes, the fire ignited. I remember being pushed away by the flames, quickly removing my burning shirt, and making my way to the clinic. More than 100 of us were injured, and I was then transferred to General Hospital Hadejia, and later to Rasheed Shekoni Specialist Hospital," he said.

Efforts to contact the police spokesperson in Jigawa, SP Lawan Shisu, and the state's Commissioner

for Information, Sagir Muhammad, to confirm the latest casualty figures were unsuccessful.

Their phone lines did not connect when our correspondent called, and they had not responded to text messages by the time of this report last night.

Northern govs donate N950m to victims

Meanwhile, the Northern States Governors' Forum (NSGF) has announced a donation of N950 million to support the victims, families, and survivors of the devastating petrol tanker explosion in Majia town of Jigawa State.

The chairman of the forum and Governor of Gombe State, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, announced the donation when he led a delegation of northern governors to sympathise with the government and people of Jigawa State over the explosion that claimed over 150 lives and left several people injured.

A statement by his spokesman,

Ismaila Uba Misilli, said Governor Yahaya explained that the collective contribution was to help alleviate the suffering caused by the incident and assist the state government in managing the aftermath of the tragedy.

He expressed sorrow over the loss of young lives, acknowledging that many of the victims had the potential to contribute meaningfully to leadership and nation-building.

He urged the people of Jigawa to remain strong, steadfast and united during this challenging period and also prayed for the peaceful repose of the souls of the deceased and strength for their families to bear the immense loss.

Responding, Governor Umar Namadi of Jigawa State expressed profound gratitude to the northern governors for their solidarity and generous support.

Governor Namadi also noted that the financial assistance would play a vital role in providing relief to the survivors and families of the victims.