

NEWS

Again, Tanker Fire Kills Three, Injures Eight in Rivers

From Ann Godwin, Port Harcourt and Willie Etim, Yenegoa

Again, tanker fire has killed at least three persons and injured many at Mbiama in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Fire also razed down the entire Ijawkiri community in Nembe council of Bayelsa State, a host community of the multi-million naira Oluasari/Souku gas plant facility, which has been a subject of dispute between Rivers and Bayelsa states.

It was gathered that a tanker carrying Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) skidded off the road while trying to negotiate to another lane, which has several bad spots along the East-West road.

An eyewitness, Mr. Akpan Sunday told *The Guardian* that the products of the fallen tanker spilled which later ignited fire but the source of the fire was not ascertained as at press time.

Several houses were also engulfed by the raging fire. The injured victims were tak-

en to the hospitals and are currently receiving treatment.

According to the eyewitness, "The tanker fell while trying to negotiate his way to another lane because there was serious traffic in the area due to bad spots along the East West road."

"Though products spilled after the tanker fell but people did not come to scoop fuel but fire ignited from an unknown source and burnt over 10 cars, 30 shops and several houses," Sunday added.

When contacted, The State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Ben Ugwuogbulam confirmed the incident but said he was yet to get details of the incident.

Major fire disasters occurred in the state last year, precisely at Okogbe community in Ahoada East Local Council of the state where about 200 persons died.

Sympathisers lamented that the fire resulted due to the deplorable state of the East-West Road and urged to Federal Government to fast track the road project which was awarded over six years ago.

It is, however, regrettable that no work has been done on the

road. In fact, between Eleme junction and Mbiama sections of the road poses a great challenge of death trap.

Sector Commander of Federal Road Safety Corps, (FRSC) in the state, Mr. Kayode Olagunju also

confirmed the incident.

Thousands of the indigenes of Ijawkiri community have been rendered homeless. Mr. Newton Joshua, a community youth while confirming the incident to *The Guardian*,

lamented that the community battled to put off the fire which started about 7:30 pm Thursday, but it continued raging till about 2:45 am. Joshua lamented that even the community's call for help to

the service facility at the gas plant located near the community did not get any response and the JTF only arrived the scene after the entire community had been razed down.



No More Street Begging In Oyo State, Says Ajimobi

THE Oyo State Government on Friday said street begging would no longer be tolerated in the state.

Governor Abiola Ajimobi stated this at the maiden Ajumose New Year party for the physically challenged persons in

government would provide money and equipment for them to take off.

Ajimobi said the beggars on the streets were not from the state, adding that government would remove all beggars along the streets in the metropol-