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Pipeline explosion kills two die in Ogun State

By Mercy Jerry

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Pipeline explosion

Two persons suspected to be petrol station owners in Ogun State have died and another severely burnt in a pipeline explosion from a vandalised pipeline of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) at the Ogere expressway area of the state beside the water corporation.

It was not clear what the victims were doing at the location when the fire erupted, though it was gathered the one that suffered burns is receiving treatment at a specialist hospital in Sagamu.

The commandant of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSDC), Ogun State Command, Ayodele Philip, disclosed that the explosion occurred in early hours of last Friday.



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Ayodele said some personnel of a private security firm contracted to secure the Ogere stretch of the pipeline spotted the incident and called the attention of the NSCDC operatives to it.

“We were informed by a reliable source that the two men that are dead are owners of four fuel stations, another one who was injured in the fire outbreak, named Animashaun Abiodun, is at the intensive care unit of Olabisi Onabanjo University Teaching Hospital, Sagamu,” he said.

The NSCDC commandant noted that he has deployed his men to the black spot to provide security, explaining that they have also been advised to work in synergy with the private security firm and NNPC officials.

He also appealed to the public and residents of the area to provide vital information that could assist the operatives secure critical infrastructure in the state.

Meanwhile, residents of Akoka Community Development Area (CDA) of Lagos State have alleged that they are at the mercy of a Total petrol station at the junction that connects St. Finbarrs College Road to Abdullahi, Aiyetoro, Shobande and Wulemotu streets, lamenting that their underground water has been contaminated with black oil residue and fragrance of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS), otherwise known as petrol.

According to the residents, the oil spillage was traced to a leakage from a rusty underground storage tank at the fuel station, a tank that holds 32,500 litres of petroleum product.

The CDA chairman, Mr. Oluwasegun Adesanya, who has lived in Akoka for more than 32 years, said the previous dealer of the fuel station had stopped using the tank for five years prior to 2017 because “anytime fuel is stored in the tank, they recorded a loss of thousand litres of fuel.”

He added that a new dealer, Mr. Aleem Maruf, took over control of the station in 2017, suggesting that there was the possibility of him being unaware of the leakage. “They put fuel in the old tank and discovered few days after that the tank had leaked over 13,000 litres of its content.



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Efforts to speak with the dealer, Maruf, proved abortive as he instructed The Guardian to speak with his lawyer, stating that “the case is currently in court”.

During a visit to the Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency (LASEPA), the general manager, Anthony Ayodele, who spoke through the head, Public Affairs Unit, Mrs. Odedina Adetokunbo, said a conference will be held in relation to the oil spillage in Akoka and the media would be invited.



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However, a source at LASEPA said the organisation has held several meetings with the affected residents and the fuel station, to proffer suitable solutions to the problem, because of the health concerns of affected residents.

Oil spillage and water contamination are hazardous to plants, animals and human beings. Dr. Anthony Nwanoey, an epidemiologist with many years of practice, told The Guardian that Benzene, one of the chemicals found in petroleum products “destroys the ecosystem and negatively impacts photosynthesis.”

He added that oil spillage water contamination “causes cancer, Respiratory Tract Infection, Dermatitis, Rashes and optic problem (Conjunctivitis).”

Nwanoey suggested that since the affected residents have been exposed to these contaminants for a long time that, it is only proper Total Fuel Station to provide avenue for the residents to undergo medical examination to ascertain if they have contacted any health challenge as a result of the spillage.

He stated that there should be a thorough cleanup of the environment, which takes months, and water should be provided in tanks.

Nwanoey further recommended that to prevent future occurrence of such, “the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) should institute a law, where license to operate a fuel station would only be issued to stations situated 400 metres away from residential areas.”

Some of the affected residents, Ms. Ifeamaka Umeike and Mr. Malachi Anyanwu, noted that the change in their underground water was discovered in 2017, although they decided to pay close attention when it persisted around August 2017.



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