

# Dozens Feared Dead In Cross River Tanker Explosion

From Tina Todo, Calabar

**A** TANKER loaded with petroleum product exploded yesterday, killing over sixty persons along Odukpani axis of Ikom/Calabar highway in Cross River.

The sad incident took place yesterday at about 4pm close to the Federal Housing estate in Odukpani. An eyewitness said the tanker fell off while descending the hill into a ditch and minutes later, people were seen running to the scene with gallons and other containers to scoop fuel when it exploded.

Sympathisers pulled one of the victims out from the inferno alive but he was completely burnt. Police Public Relation Officer, DSP Irene Ugbo confirmed the incident, saying that the number of casualties cannot be ascertained for now since the fire

was still raging.

In related tragedy, gunmen have kidnapped a broadcaster with the Cross River Broadcasting Corporation (CRBC) in Calabar, Peter Etim popularly known as *The Godfather*.

He was abducted yesterday in his house along Chamley Street in Calabar South and whisked away in a waiting vehicle.

According to a close source, "He was supposed to read the news on radio this morning, but of course could not anymore. He is not a politician or involved in any controversy, he is such an easy-going guy so why should something like this happen to him? Could it be mistaken identity? No one knows. His phone number has been switched off and the kidnappers have not gotten in touch. It is really unfortunate," the person said.