

20 feared dead as tanker explodes on Benin-Sapele highway

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Group berates Obaseki over response to Okunbo's allegations

Tragedy occurred yesterday along the Benin-Sapele-Warri highway when a tanker carrying petroleum product fell and exploded around the popular Koko Junction section of the busy highway.

The Guardian learnt that about 20 persons were burnt to death beyond recognition while no fewer than 10 vehicles were gutted by fire.



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"The tanker carrying petroleum product was trying to avoid a bad spot when it fell and suddenly exploded between Koko Junction and Ologbo section of the Benin/Warri in Delta State.

"More than 20 persons were burnt beyond recognition. About 10 vehicles were trapped in the explosion. The victims were occupants of the burnt vehicles.

"Officials of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) and security agencies are already here trying to remove the dead bodies. Many persons were injured. It's a terrible situation," an eyewitness said.

Meanwhile, a group, the New Nigeria Collective (NNC), has launched attacks on Edo State Governor, Godwin Obaseki, for his outright denial of everything he was accused of in his reply to Captain Idahosa Okunbo's letter to President Muhammadu Buhari and the people of Edo State on the situation of the state preparatory to the September 19, 2020 governorship election.



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In a statement signed by its Chairman, Adeola Adewunmi, the group said Okunbo's detailed letter, advertised in some key national dailies on Monday, painted a vivid picture of the governor's crimes against him, citing places, names, witnesses and dates.

This, the group said, was an indication of a man, who came clean to the public with all the facts before him, and unlike Obaseki, who only resorted to emotional blackmail and danced round the issues without paying attention to the clearly identified issues.

"We read with absolute shock and its resultant helplessness of Governor Godwin Obaseki's attempt to look good before the public against the well-documented grouses of one of Benin's great and illustrious sons, Captain Idahosa Okunbo.

"We are quick to note that your reply is of no consequence. Where were you when your men, armed with falsehood and deceit, were throwing stones at Okunbo? If truly he was your brother or friend as you claimed, did you ever reach out to him even after he said at different times that you and your men should leave him alone?

"Why didn't you also confirm to the whole world that Okunbo was your brother and friend by asking your foot soldiers to stop all their attacks against him, at least, after you



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saw a letter he personally wrote and addressed to the public? But after that, the attacks escalated,” the group alleged.

