

Five die, others injured in Lagos- Ibadan Expressway petrol tanker explosion

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1 FIVE people were yesterday burnt to death in an accident involving two petrol-laden tankers and three vehicles in Ogere, along Lagos-Ibadan Expressway.

The Guardian learnt that the accident occurred about 0330hrs, around Tunji Akegi Filling Station, Kwakyama area of Ogere in Ogun State.

Five vehicles parked along the road were also consumed by the fire.

The Public Education Officer of Ogun State Sector Command of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Florence Okpe, who confirmed the accident, said the victims were burnt beyond recognition and their corpses have been deposited at FOS morgue in Ipara Remo area of the state.

She attributed the cause of the accident to wrongful overtaking on the part of the petrol tanker driver and dangerous driving.

She explained that the tanker collided with a truck, which was travelling from Lagos to Ibadan, while trying to overtake.

She advised motorists plying the route to make use of



Scene of Petrol tanker accident in Ogere, Ogun State

Ogun will hold contractors responsible, says Abiodun

the RCC work area and alternative routes via Iperu, Ogun State.

Also, the Public Relations Officer of TRACE Corps, Cdr. Babatunde Akinbiyi, confirmed that five people were recovered dead.

According to him, they were burnt beyond recognition.

He stressed that the spill from the unfortunate inferno affected traffic inbound Ibadan, which has resulted in rerouting traffic along the

diversion axis.

Also, in an advisory, released on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer of TRACE, Akinbiyi, urged the motoring public to exercise patience, while the burnt vehicles are being removed from the road, just as buses and cars were advised to take the alternative route.

He said: "Motoring public, plying the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, inbound Ibadan, is hereby notified of a fire incident which occurred about 0330hrs, involving two petrol laden tankers and three vehicles around Tunji Akegi Filling Station, Kwakyama area of Ogere."

"Regrettably, as at this moment, five persons have been recovered dead, burnt beyond recognition, as the spill from the unfortunate inferno has affected traffic

inbound Ibadan, which has resulted in rerouting traffic, along the diversion axis.

"While the prompt response of security and safety agencies including, TRACE, FRSC, POLICE, FIRE SERVICE, Sagamu and PTD Ogere is appreciated, and with rescue effort still on going, articulated vehicles are urged to exercise patience, while the burnt vehicles are being removed from the road, as buses and cars are advised to take the alternative route below:

"From Sagamu Interchange Link Iperu to Ode/Saapade back to the expressway, inbound Ibadan to continue your journey.

"While TRACE Corps, ditto other safety and security agencies, commiserate with the families of the deceased, any inconveniences the unfortunate but avoidable

incidence have caused the general public is highly regretted please."

MEANWHILE, Ogun State Governor, Prince Dapo Abiodun said the contractor handling the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway would be held accountable for his failure to provide safety signs on the road, which had in recent times led to the unfortunate but preventable loss of lives and carnage of the country's busiest route.

Abiodun, who disclosed this yesterday during on-the-spot assessment of Ogere toll gate end of the reconstruction work, said the drivers of the trucks involved in the accident could not be totally help responsible for the accident because of the inability of the contractor to provide all the necessary safety signs. While commiserating with families of those who lost their loved ones, Abiodun said he would take the issue

up with the Minister of Works, Babatunde Fashola, so as to ensure expeditious completion of the rehabilitation works that has been on for decades.

He said: "I am going to take this up with the Minister of Works. This contractor has to be held accountable; we cannot continue to pussyfoot around a project that is so important, particularly around this corridor.

"I want to call on the contractor handling this project to expedite action. We can take any more excuses of this project. We are going to be holding them responsible for any accident because safety measures are not in place, no safety signs and this is just an unnecessary loss of lives for us.

"We've had too many of these type of sad days on our major highways in Ogun State but of particular note is the recurrence of this type of incidents around this corridor of the Lagos-Ibadan expressway."

"These people (drivers alone) cannot be faulted; construction is ongoing, there are no proper safety signs... anywhere in the world, there would be enough signs that would tell whoever it is that is on the road that the road is now a dual carriage way. Obviously the man coming from Ibadan assumed that he was the only one headed in the direction and was not expecting the tanker that pulled out of the fuel station," he said.

He urged road users around the corridor to be cautious and take their time while driving through the area.

