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## Tanker explosion kills nine in Lagos

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By **Ekene Okoro** and **Funmi Falobi** (Lagos)

**At least, nine persons were confirmed dead when a petrol tanker carrying 33,000 litres of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) somersaulted and exploded around Berger Suya, Apapa area of Lagos on Tuesday night.**

A commercial bank, three houses and 10 vehicles were not spared by the raging fire that followed the explosion.

**The incident occurred around 11.00 pm on Tuesday, while the fire was put out in the early hours of Wednesday.**

Eye witnesses said the petrol tanker lost its brake and somersaulted, exploded and burst into flames immediately roasting several persons and burnt up properties worth billions of naira.

Officials of the Lagos State Fire Service, Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), police officers and Civil Defence were all on ground to contain the fire and minimise the damage to lives and properties.

Spokesperson of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Ibrahim Farinloye, told journalists that nine charred bodies were gathered after the fire was contained by fire fighters.

According to Farinloye, "The incident involved a petrol tanker which later spread to four houses and four commercial buses all burnt. The disaster occurred at Cement bus stop, along Mile 2-Apapa Expressway. The petrol tanker which was laden with 33,000 litres of PMS, somersaulted and caught fire, claimed lives with vehicles and buildings".

Farinloye added that the remains of the deceased have been deposited at the General Hospital, Yaba while those wounded have been treated and discharged, saying that 54 shops situated in the four buildings were completely burnt.

The fire was put out by a combined team of federal and state fire service. The fire was said to have spread to the commercial bank near the scene of the event and three other houses, razing them to ashes.

General Manager of Lagos State Emergency Management Agency, (LASEMA) Dr. Femi Oke-Osanyintolu who also led rescue operations however said about 15 people were burnt beyond recognition.

He explained that the petrol tanker was fully loaded and that it somersaulted and exploded along Apapa Expressway (inward Iganmu).

"LASEMA and the fire services took control of the incident site. We are still at the scene enumerating and assessment is still on for a comprehensive detail," he said.

A rescue official at the site, who craved anonymity, said 10 vehicles were burnt, including five trucks, four buses, one car and two bikes, saying that the tanker was burnt beyond recognition.

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