

10 Dead, 54 Vehicles Burnt As Tanker Explodes In Lagos

.Six Feared Dead As Police, Butchers Clash In Ibadan

By **Andrew Utulu, Gbenga Abegunrin** - June 29, 2018



Scene of fuel tanker accident at Otedola Bridge, Lagos-Ibadan Expressway in Lagos on Thursday. Photo: Akinniranye Oluwasegun

Lagos / Ibadan – A 33-litre petrol tanker truck caught fire on Otedola Bridge axis of Berger along Lagos-Ibadan expressway on Thursday, killing ten people and burning 54 vehicles, eyewitnesses said.

Confirming the incident, Bisi Kazeem, Spokesman, Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), in a statement said, "A crash involving a fallen loaded tanker occurred around Otedola Bridge on the outward Lagos section of the expressway. Many vehicles caught fire in the process."

It was gathered that the tanker was heading out of Lagos towards the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway when the crash occurred, causing panic and fear among motorists and other road users.

This led to abrupt stop of traffic on both sides of the road, with emergency workers converging on the scene to salvage the situation.

Combined officials of Lagos State Police Command, FRSC, National Emergency Management Authority (NEMA), Lagos State Emergency Management Agency and Rapid Response Squad were all at the scene, trying to put out the fire and attended to affected victims as at the time of filling this report.

It was gathered that many people were trapped in their cars prior to the arrival of emergency workers and officials of the federal and state fire services.

When contacted, the Rapid Response Squad (RRS) led by Tunji Disu, an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), said his men were "on ground to manage the situation."

Also, LASEMA officials and other government agents present at the scene were seen with body bags trying to evacuate the dead.

The fire was brought under control about an hour after the outbreak.

The traffic backlog as a result of the explosion extended as far back as the Third Mainland Bridge, backing up to the UNILAG water-front.

Also, Ojota to Agidingbi down to Ojodu Berger, Ogba and parts of Ikeja suffered heavy traffic gridlock.

Adesina Tiamiyu, General Manager, Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASAMA), said on getting to the scene of the incident, it was discovered that a Mack tanker truck loaded with 33 liters of premium motor spirit (PMS) moving inward Berger at about 5:23p.m., fell and spilled its content on the road resulting into fire outbreak.

He said further investigation by the LASEMA Response Team revealed that unfortunately, nine bodies were confirmed dead and recovered from the scene. These include eight adults and one minor.

LASEMA also disclosed that four persons sustained various degrees of injuries and taken to the hospital.

"A total number of 54 vehicles were completely burnt as a result of the inferno", he further stated.

Six Feared Dead As Police, Butchers Clash In Ibadan

About six persons were feared dead as policemen and aggrieved butchers engaged in a bloody clash at the popular Bodija Market in Ibadan, Oyo State capital, on Thursday, according to eyewitnesses.

Both the state Commissioner of Police, Abiodun Odude, and the Oyo State government, confirmed that there were casualties during the violence that erupted at about 9.00 a.m. on Thursday.

While Odude told newsmen that two dead bodies were recovered, Yinka Fatoki, the Executive Secretary, Bureau of Investment Promotion, who addressed a press conference on behalf of the state government, also said there were casualties.

Fatoki maintained that the government decided to shut the market to prevent further loss of lives and property.

The state government and butchers in all the 11 local government areas have been at daggers drawn over an order directing all the butchers to relocate to a private abattoir at Amosun Village, near Akinyele.

The butchers, under the umbrella of National Butchers Union (NBU), had earlier in the week appealed to Governor Abiola Ajimobi of Oyo State to, as a matter of urgency, prevail on some elements who, they alleged, were using security agents to demolish abattoirs located in some markets within Ibadan, in the bid to force them to Amosun Village.

The aggrieved butchers made this appeal at a press conference jointly addressed by NBU and a human rights organisation, Veteran Organisation for Human Rights Initiative (VOHRI), and during a protest they staged to the Oyo State Secretariat, Agodi, Ibadan.

But the state government came out on Wednesday to say that a lawsuit had been instituted against operators of unlicensed and unauthorised abattoirs in Ibadan.

The government said an interim order issued by the Oyo State High Court was executed by court sheriffs on Friday, June 22 to seal Bodija Market abattoir, Aleshinloye Markert abattoir, and several other such unlicensed abattoirs across Ibadan.

DAILY INDEPENDENT learnt that trouble started on Thursday when some of the butchers accused their leaders of taking gratification from the state government to support the relocation order.

Fatoki told newsmen that some disgruntled elements among the butchers attacked police officers, who were at the market to enforce the court order, with guns.

According to him, during the melee that ensued, some lives were reportedly lost. The police station in Bodija Market was set ablaze.

He revealed that this was what prompted the state government to shut the market in order to ensure the safety of lives and property.

Comments

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