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15 die in Ibadan tanker fire

👤 Posted by: Oseheye Okwuofu 📁 in Featured, News 🕒 7 hours ago

• **Man loses wife, three kids**

• **20 vehicles, 23 motorcycles, others destroyed**

It was all tears yesterday, as 15 people, including a family of three children and their mother, were burnt to death in a petrol tanker fire on Saturday night at Molete, Ibadan, the Oyo State capital.

The tanker was said to be coming from Challenge-Molete end of the road when the driver lost control.

The vehicle then somersaulted and caught fire, spilling its fuel content, spread into a mechanic workshop, shopping mall and other areas.

A middle-aged man, who parked his vehicle to buy bread, lost the three children and his wife when the fire enveloped the family's car.

Over 20 vehicles, 23 motorcycles, many shops and goods worth several millions of naira were also destroyed.

It took the intervention of the state fire-fighters to stem the spread of the fire into other thickly populated residential areas.

Eyewitness said government and private ambulances conveyed some of the burnt victims to the University College Hospital (UCH) in the state capital, where they are receiving treatment at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

"It is God's protection that is most important. Many, who died, never dreamt of this. Imagine a man that travelled from Ijebu-Ode to this place and only to stop to buy what he would eat, it was then the fire came,

claiming his three children and his wife.

"It is a terrible incident. I was discussing with my friends, when we suddenly heard a deafening sound and people ran out of fear. But before five minutes, we saw fire covering everywhere. May God protect us from

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unforeseen occurrence," an eyewitness, who gave his name as Ade, said yesterday.

Governor Abiola Ajimobi visited the scene twice between Saturday night and yesterday morning to sympathise with those affected by the fire.

Some policemen prevented people from entering the area. A rope was tied to fence away intruders as policemen keep watch.

But the governor commiserated with the families of those who were burnt to death.

Ajimobi, who arrived at 8am, was visibly shaken by the gory sight. Accompanied by the Commissioner of Police Kola Sodipo, he was conducted round the scene of the inferno.

He ordered that a crane be brought to take the carcass of the tanker, which had crossed the road from obstructing traffic.

Ajimobi, who spoke with reporters, enjoined them "to take solace in the fact that death will come when it will."

He said that many who sought to take political advantage of his administration's genuine love for the people, especially traders on the streets, must have seen the danger of politicising genuine government policies.

"As I came here this morning, gentlemen of the press, you yourselves could hear statements from the crowd that gathered here. They keep shouting 'And Ajimobi had warned us against street trading o!' The problem we have is that politicians seek to profit from the lives of the people. Our administration has genuine love at heart for our people. This is manifesting itself gradually and our people themselves can see that love," he said.

The governor was told that the bulk of those who lost their lives were traders who refused to move to the nearby Scout Camp market, which had over a thousand stalls with modern conveniences built by the government and given to the traders free.

"I sympathise with the dead and their families of the dead. This will show our love for the people in our desire to stop street trading. I learnt that a few days ago, another trailer veered off the road at Mobil area and hit the MTN building. If it had been before now when street traders gathered at the Mobil area, I imagine the number of casualties we would have been talking about," he said.

Government, he said, had seen through the hazards posed by street trading, stating that it was why his administration made it a kernel of its urban renewal exercise.

"Apart from vehicles that skid off the road, killing our people, high tension wires also get cut and kill our people selling their wares by the road side. Our people should not listen to evil politicians who mislead them.

"They should support us to fight the menace of street trading, by asking them to leave the road and we will not allow evil politicians to profit from this genuine love by misleading our people," he said.



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