



Traffic standstill as eight die in accidents, tanker explosion on Lagos-Ibadan Road

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One of the burnt vehicles... yesterday

For hours, traffic stood still yesterday on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, leaving many motorists sweating and groaning in their vehicles.

The stretch of vehicles extended from the Ibafo end of the road to the popular Ojodu-Berger Bus Stop.

Many commuters took to trekking to avoid getting late to work.

The gridlock was caused by a fuel tanker, which exploded on Tuesday night near Ibafo. The explosion was caused by those who trooped to the tanker to scoop fuel. Three persons, including one Andrew reportedly died; some fuel scoopers were burnt.

The traffic congestion snowballed into Lagos, hindering movement between Berger and Ojota; scores of passengers queued at major bus stops, waiting for buses.



Commercial motorcyclists popularly called *Okada* cashed in on the situation to raise their fares. They were said to have charged as much as N1,000 for a journey that used to cost N100.

Andrew was said to have jumped off a Delta State bound when he saw the exploded tanker and broke his spinal cord.

He was rushed to a hospital, where he died, although rescue agencies said there were no casualties in the incident. The exploded tanker engulfed four other vehicles.

An eyewitness, Ismaila Yusuf said: "He (Andrew) was seriously injured. Some people and I rushed him to a hospital, where he died. A doctor told us his spinal cord had broken and he had internal injuries in the stomach. His body is in the mortuary. Two of those siphoning fuel died in the explosion while seven were burnt."

It was learnt that residents battled to contain the inferno, which extended to another tanker marked KMC 839 XW. A container laden with engine oil also rammed into a stationary truck at Kara and somersaulted and residents trooped out at about 4am to siphon the product.

Also yesterday, five persons were confirmed dead and 12 others injured after a sand-laden truck rammed into a bus at World Oil, a filling station near Ogun State Property Investment Company (OPIC) on the expressway.

The truck was said to have lost control and rammed into the 19-passenger bus, causing a multiple accident.

Other affected vehicles were a Toyota Corolla Sedan marked LSD127EZ, a Toyota bus with registration number XA830EDY and a truck marked LSR813XH.

Confirming the accidents, Sector Commander, Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) Hygenus Omeje told *The Nation* that 12 injured persons were taken to the accident and emergency unit at Ojota.

He said the accident was caused by a bad portion of the road, adding that the driver hit a stone which he did not see.

Omeje said: “The first accident involved three cars and a tanker. it occurred around 3am but we did not get the information till about 5am. The tanker carrying petrol hit a stone, tumbled and exploded.

“When we got there this morning, we did not see burnt bodies and we did not also get record of anyone that was injured. We only saw the four vehicles that were burnt. so, we cannot say there were casualties.

“The second accident occurred early in the morning too around Kara. It involved a container laden with engine oil. The container rammed into a stationary truck. The truck is bad and was parked on the road and the trailer carrying the container rammed into it. The container fell and people trooped out and were scooping its content. No casualty was recorded in that one too.

“The third accident involved truck carrying sand which lost control and rammed into an oncoming passenger bus. The bus had 19 passengers, eight men and 11 women. Two of them, a man and a woman died on the spot while 12, three men and nine women sustained injuries and were taken to the emergency unit at Ojota.”

Unit Commander-in-charge of Mowe-Ibafo Unit of the Ogun State Traffic Compliance and Enforcement Corps (TRACE) Mr Olusola juawo, who also confirmed the accidents, however, said there were no casualties. He blamed the lockdown on motorists driving against traffic.

He told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that the Kara accident happened at about 11 p.m., but his office learnt about it at 3 a.m. and immediately rushed to the scene.


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