

# Death toll in Ogun pipeline explosion rises to three

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The lone survivor of the pipeline explosion at a vandalised pipeline of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Animashaun Abiodun, has died of severe burns.

Abiodun, 28, died on Saturday at an undisclosed public hospital in Ogun State where he was receiving treatment.

He was rescued on June 8 when operatives of Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSDC) recovered two bodies of other victims of the explosion.

Abiodun was said to be writhing in pains on the scene of a fire from a ruptured NNPC pipeline in Ogere Expressway area of the state.

He was reportedly taken to the Intensive Care Unit of the Olabisi Onabanjo University Teaching Hospital in Sagamu and later moved to another hospital in Abeokuta, the state

capital, for security reasons.

But he died on Saturday.

His suspected accomplices – Lateef Ayoola and another identified simply as Bianco – reportedly died earlier on the scene of the pipeline fire.

Before his death, Abiodun allegedly confessed to operatives of the NSCDC that most weekends, he took six or seven Jerry cans to siphon fuel from vandalised NNPC pipelines and that the money realised from selling the product was used for ajo (contribution) and give himself a “treat”.

NSCDC’s Commandant in Ogun State Command, Ayodele Philip, who addressed reporters yesterday in Abeokuta, said some workers of a private security firm contracted to watch over the Ogere stretch of the NNPC pipeline spotted Abiodun and two others and called the attention of the NSCDC to the scene.

Philip said the until his death, the suspect, from his confession, was helping the command with information about the criminal activities of pipeline vandals in the state.

He added: “Abiodun had been a victim of fire explosion (before the last incident) during his illicit acts. Nemesis only taught him a bitter lesson, having refused to learn in a hard way.

“He also confessed to have been involved in series of pipeline vandalism alongside his deceased friends to the extent of getting burnt on some occasions. Yet, they were not deterred until this their death.

“Before his demise, Abiodun also confessed to have started his nefarious acts as a teenager and that the stuff seemed more of conscription into a cultic group from which it is almost impossible to withdraw, once one is taken in.”