

Nine die in Osun tanker explosion

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No fewer than nine persons died on Monday morning as a gas tanker exploded, bursting into flames at Erin-Ijesha in Osun State.

Several others sustained injuries. The incident occurred around 10:40am while the tanker was negotiating a bend with two commercial buses attempting to overtake it.

Our reporters who ran into the accident a few minutes after it occurred observed that nine other vehicles including four commercial buses were burnt.

Locals were seen rushing some injured persons to hospital. They also made efforts to assist those trapped in the forests and hilltops come out.

According to witnesses, the buses attempting an overtake collided with the tanker, causing an instant explosion.

Some passengers in the affected vehicles fled into the bushes with burns.

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A motorist, Ibrahim Kazeem Adekunle, who witnessed the incident, said he quickly manoeuvred his way out of the situation.

“The only thing I saw was that the tanker was in-between 18-passenger buses in front and back. My vehicle was the third behind the tanker.

“The 18-passenger buses wanted to overtake another car coming from the left side, so both the vehicles hit the tanker and the fire started.

“Many of the passengers got burnt. People were inside the burning vehicles. I saw at least four commercial buses burning. I thank God I was able to manoeuvre and escape the fire,” he said.

A woman, Bosede Oluwafemi, who escaped unhurt, said she boarded a bus from Ipetu-Ijesha, a nearby community, and was going to Ilesha with her teenage daughter, Wunmi.

“As we moved forward a bit, a tanker filled with either petrol, diesel or gas fell down and caused a fire. It was God that saved us that we weren’t hurt though some of our co-passengers were injured in the fire. My bag and shoes got burnt but I thank God for life.”

The Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) said the accident occurred at Igbelajewa village, 8km from Iwaraja Junction, Ilesha-Akure Highway.

Spokesman for the Corps, Bisi Kazeem, who confirmed the incident told The Nation that 10 vehicles including a DAF trailer were affected.

“Other vehicles involved were a tanker, a truck, Mazda E2000 bus, Toyota Matrix car, Toyota 4Runner SUV, Toyota Picnic bus, Lexus 350 SUV, Toyota Corolla car and Toyota Hiace bus,” he said.