

# Natives feared dead as illegal fuel dump explodes in Rivers



Mike Odiegwu, Port Harcourt



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An unspecified number of people has been reported dead following an explosion that occurred at an illegal fuel dump in Okari Jetty in Okirika Local Government Area in [Rivers State](#).

Advertisement It was gathered there had been efforts by some influential persons to suppress the incident that occurred on Monday night, July 31st.

Though some sources said 16 persons were feared dead during the incident, others said only two fishermen lost their lives in the process.

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An activist, who spoke in confidence, explained that some residents came out to scoop fuel from a barge discharging fuel at a depot owned by the Port Harcourt refinery.

The source said: “During the process, the hose connected to the refinery depot pulled out of the barge while transporting the fuel. The people rushed with their Jerry cans and scooped fuel.

“Some of them later stored the fuel in gallons close to the jetty. Two fishermen, unknown to them that gallons of fuel were dumped there came out in the night to catch fish with their lanterns. The heat from the lantern caused the explosion. The two died”.

The Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) Olufemi Ayodeji, refused to answer his telephone calls.