

# Death toll in Niger petrol tanker inferno rises to 18

December 4, 2016 Adelowo Oladipo -Minna



THE death toll from the petrol tanker fire which occurred at Tgina in Rafi Local Government Area of Niger State, on Friday morning, has risen to 18, with two children declared missing in the community.

Sunday Tribune learnt this on Saturday, when it visited the scenes of the accident and several other properties that were burnt while the petrol fire incident lasted on Friday.

Media reports, including the one by our sister publication, Saturday Tribune, had said that 17 people, including women and children, died in the accident, which left scores of people with varying degrees of burns.

The bodies of 16 people were buried in a mass grave after the incident, it was learnt.

One of the four victims in critical condition, 11-year-old girl died late in the evening on Friday at the Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Bida, with her remains interred beside the mass grave.

The unidentified driver of the ill-fated petrol-laden tanker marked Kano KBG 19XA and his motor boy, according to eyewitnesses, narrowly escaped and fled when the content of the consignment caught fire.

One of the injured, 17-year-old Sheriff Umar, with second degree burns and was initially admitted at the General Hospital, Kangara, was discharged following the request of his parents.

Among the dead were Mohammed Saleh Mohammed, a 48-year-old principal of Maikujerih Day Secondary School, Tgina, and a teacher, Malam Ndagana from Atahiru Secondary School, Kagara, headquarters Rafi local government of the state.

Meanwhile, the chairman of Rafi Local Government Council , Alhaji Garba Tanko Kangara, described the incident as very unfortunate but an act of God.

The council boss disclosed that his administration would commence vigorous public enlightenment campaign aimed at encouraging residents along the Trunk A road to give 45 metres gap before erecting their houses.

Also in his remark during a brief condolence visit to Tgina, on Saturday, the state's Commissioner for Information and culture and tourism , Mr. Jonathan Vatsa, who was on hand for an on-the-spot assessment of the incident, promised that the state government would soon intervene promptly by providing succour to the affected families.

He thereby seized the opportunity to call on the Federal Government to as a matter of urgency, embark on the dualization of the ever-busy Trunk A federal highway.