

Gas explosion kills five in Ogun, Delta

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TWO persons were killed while three others were injured in a gas explosion which occurred at Conference Hotel in Abeokuta, Ogun State, on Tuesday.

Also in Delta State, a mother and her two children were killed on Monday evening when a gas cylinder exploded at Ughelli.

The incident in Ogun occurred few days after two persons, including an infant died following a gas explosion at Oke-Egunya area of the state capital.

According to a statement issued by the facility manager of the hotel, Mr Tunde Osinubi,

the incident occurred when a technician was carrying out routine maintenance on the automatic revolving door at the entrance to the hotel's reception, which involved the use of oxyacetylene gas to weld the door hinges.

Osinubi said the oxyacetylene gas cylinder suddenly exploded, killing the technician and one other person yet to be identified.

He said further that three other persons were injured and taken to the hospital for medical attention and were already responding to treatment.

He said: "So far, no sabotage is suspected. It is, however, suspected that the gas cylinder purchased at the open market might be fake and unable to withstand gas pressure.

"The management of the hotel sympathises with the families and friends of the deceased and wishes to warn the general public of the presence of fake gas cylinders in the market. This incident is, however, greatly regretted."

On the other hand, the explosion in Delta occurred at First Amekpa area of Ughelli in Ughelli North Local Government Area of the state when the mother was preparing supper for the family.

The victims, who were occupants of a block of two apartments and whose names could not be ascertained as of press time, were reportedly burnt beyond recognition before help from neighbours could reach them.

The deceased's section of the block of two flats was re-

portedly destroyed by the fire. Operatives of the Delta State Fire Service in Ughelli were said to have promptly prevented the inferno from engulfing the entire neighbourhood.

Sources said the husband and father of the victims, who is a commercial tricycle operator, only arrived after the explosion and was reported to have attempted to rescue his family by jumping into the fire but could not save the situation.

The remains of the victims were later evacuated to the Ughelli Central Hospital's morgue by the fire service officials.

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Bright Edafe, said he was not sure if the incident was reported to the police.