

Two killed, 15 vehicles burnt in Rivers tanker fire

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File: Tanker fire

Chukwudi Akasike, Port Harcourt

TWO persons were killed while 15 vehicles went up in flames when a tanker laden with petrol crashed on Tuesday at Eleme axis of Rumuokwurisi, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

The tanker, according to an eyewitness account, was trying to avoid a collision with a car when the driver lost control crashed the vehicle into a bus parked by the roadside and exploded.

It was learnt that the tanker was on top speed when the accident happened, even as the driver of the tanker was said to have escaped unscathed while his conductor and a passerby were burnt beyond recognition.

The accident caused a gridlock along the Rumuokurisi axis of the East-West Road.

An eyewitness, who identified himself as Johnson, said as the tanker driver tried to control his vehicle, petrol began to pour out.

"We saw him trying to control the motor and everybody ran away. Petrol started pouring and suddenly, when it rammed into a stationary bus, it caught fire. We did not know how the driver escaped.

"But the conductor could not jump out. He was burnt completely. One man, who did not see the fire quickly was also killed. Other vehicles close to the scene of the accident also went up in flames.

"Many people were lucky because God save them from being burnt by the raging fire. When the fire stopped, we counted about 15 cars that were destroyed. A filling station was also affected," he added.

However, the Public Relations Officer of the Federal Road Safety Corps, Rivers State Sector Command, Mr. John Michael, confirmed the incident and attributed the accident to speeding.

He explained that the incident happened between 1am to 2am on Tuesday, adding that while two persons died, one other person was injured.

Michael stated that 19 vehicles and three buildings were affected by the inferno.

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