

Jigawa tanker fire: Families mourn loved ones as death toll hits 170

Tukur Muntari and Salisu Kabuga

No fewer than 170 people have now been confirmed dead in the tanker explosion that rocked Jigawa State on Tuesday.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Lawan Adam, in a statement on Friday, noted that 70 others were still critically injured in different hospitals.

He said, "The death toll in the petrol tanker explosion in Majiya town, Taura LGA has risen to 170."

The police spokesman noted that the injured were receiving intensive care at the Federal Medical Centre, Azare, Bauchi State, Nguru, Yobe State and Birnin Kudu in Jigawa State.

"Other hospitals where injured people are being treated include Hadejia General Hospital, Rasheed Shekoni Teaching Hospital, Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, and Dala Orthopedic," he said.

Families mourn loved ones

The usually tranquil town of Majia has been shattered by the inferno, which left a trail of death and destruction in its wake.

The tanker, which was traveling from Kano State, overturned on Tuesday while trying to avoid a collision with a truck, which caused petrol to spill onto the road.

Many villagers had rushed to the scene to collect the leaking fuel, leading to a massive explosion that killed at least 153 people and injured over 100 others.

For residents of Majia, the memory of that fateful night will forever be etched in their minds.

"I'm still in shock," said Aisha Mohammed, a resident who lost her younger brother in the disaster.

"My brother was just 25 years old, full of life and promise. His death is a devastating blow to our family."

Malam Inuwa Abdullahi, a parent who lost his 17-year-old son said the deceased was his "hope for the future."

"My son was everything to me. Now, he's gone, leaving me with unbearable pain and sorrow," he added.

As the news of the tragedy spread, friends and family of the victims converged on the scene, searching for their loved ones amid the chaos.

"I was with my friend, Musa, just hours before the explosion," said Isah Abubakar, fighting back tears. "We had plans to start a business together. Now, he's gone, and I'm left with only memories."

For Halima Umar, the loss of her sister, Fatima, is still surreal.

She said, "Fatima was more than just a sister; she was my best friend. We shared everything. Her death has left a void in my life that can never be filled."

Many residents expressed concerns about the lack of emergency preparedness and response.

A resident, Alhaji Nura Usman, said if the authorities had acted faster, some lives might have been saved.

Others blamed the tanker driver for reckless driving.

An eyewitness, Ibrahim Sani, said, "The driver was speeding, and he didn't even stop when he lost control. If he had stopped, maybe the explosion wouldn't have happened."

Amidst the grief, some residents found solace in their faith.

"Allah knows best," said Hajiya Aminah, who lost her nephew.

"We must accept His will and pray for the souls of the departed."

As the community comes to terms with the tragedy, concerns about compensation and support for affected families are growing.

An activist, Yakubu Namama, said, "The government should provide assistance to the families of the victims."

The Jigawa State Government had pledged support for the affected families. But for many, it's too little and too late.

"What can compensate for the loss of a loved one?" Aisha Mohammed asked, her voice cracking with emotion.

As Majia town begins the long journey to recovery, residents will never forget the tragic incident.

One Halima Dahiru, while fighting back tears, said, "We will always remember our loved ones who left us too soon."

Hospitals flooded

The emergency ward of the

Ado Ekiti celebrates Afe Babalola

Abiodun Nejo, Ado Ekiti

The Ado-Ekiti community in Ekiti State, on Friday, celebrated the maiden edition of Afe Babalola Day to honour the elder statesman, Aare Afe Babalola.

Markets and shops at the Kings Market and around the palace of the Ewi of Ado Ekiti were closed for the celebration of the founder of Afe Babalola University.

Babalola, in his remarks, said the honour by the community was a challenge to him, as well as to other well-meaning Nigerians to continually tread the path that would be beneficial to humanity and attract honours.

He said, "I am challenged by the declaration of Afe Babalola Day to assist or promote underprivileged young people to learn from how I was able to study privately and obtain university degrees without attending any secondary school or university."

Babalola described education as the surest ladder to success, noting that there were many brilliant but financially handicapped young men and women who could be lifted to attain desirable education heights.

He said, "I have, in collaboration with King's College London,

Adeleke seeks FG's support for Osun roads

Bola Bamigbola, Osogbo

Osun State Governor, Ademola Adeleke, has sought the partnership of the Federal Ministry of Works regarding some Federal Government roads rehabilitated by his administration.

A statement by the spokesperson to the Governor, Olawale Rasheed, obtained in Osogbo on Friday, said Adeleke made the request during a visit to the Minister of Works, Mr

Rasheed Shekoni Specialist Hospital in Dutse where some of the affected victims were hospitalised was overwhelmed with sympathisers despite the hospital authority's ban on visitors.

The tragic fuel tanker explosion had brought an influx of victims and sympathisers from varied places in the state, who flocked to the hospital, desperate for news of their family members.

Our reporter observed the chaotic scene, with tearful relatives and friends cramming the corridors, eager to catch a glimpse of the medical staff or condition of their beloved ones.

The air was thick with anxiety and grief, as whispers of "how is he?" or "has she survived?" hung in the air.

Inside the ward, doctors and nurses rushed to attend to the critically injured, their faces etched with concern.

The sound of beeping monitors and urgent whispers filled the room, punctuated by occasional cries of distress.

Despite the chaos, the medical staff moved with precision, battling to save lives.

A nurse, visibly exhausted, took a brief moment to compose herself before returning to the fray.

All efforts to speak to some of the nurses or doctors on duty in the room and the hospital authority proved abortive.

established the Afe Babalola Centre for Transnational Education where underprivileged young people in the whole of Africa and beyond will be trained and obtain university degrees without going to any college or university.

"The second challenge inherent in the Afe Babalola Day declaration is how our people can overcome hunger. There is no doubt there is hunger in the land. This is because we consume more than we produce. It is not the duty of the government to produce and share food among citizens."

"I am worried and ashamed when I see people queuing up for food. I have taken up the challenge due to my experience as a cooperative inspector," Babalola said.

Speaking at the event, the Ewi of Ado Ekiti, Oba Adeyemo Adejugbe, proclaimed October 18 of every year as Afe Babalola Day in the Ekiti capital city.

Oba Adejugbe said the gesture was to appreciate and celebrate the nonagenarian, who, he said, had done a lot for the community and state.

Human rights lawyer, Mr Femi Falana, SAN, congratulated Babalola, Oba Adejugbe, and the entire people of Ekiti State for the honour.

Dave Umahi, in Abuja on Friday.

Delivering reports on the state of federal and state roads while seeking further federal interventions, Adeleke said his administration had embarked on multi-billion naira infrastructure projects which include flyovers, the dualisation of roads, and the construction of some major roads across the state.

Olawale also said the governor briefed Umahi on some of the projects already completed by his administration.