

Ogun tanker fire victim dies, nursing mother hospitalised

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| By Johnson Idowu

FILE: Fire

A mother of four, Mercy Emmanuel, who sustained severe burns in the tanker fire incident that occurred last Wednesday along the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, has died.

This is just as a nursing mother who was attempting to rescue her children from the fire has been hospitalised following severe injuries sustained in the fire.

PUNCH Metro reported last Wednesday that the fire began when the petro-laden tanker overturned at midnight in front of a commercial bank located on the Ibafo section of the expressway.

Eyewitnesses had told our correspondent that the driver of the tanker was suspected to have fallen asleep at the wheel, causing him to lose control, which led to the tanker's fall and eventual explosion.

Our correspondent, who visited the community, observed that the petrol spillage passed through a drainage system that led to the community about one kilometre from the expressway.

The fire impact was evident in the community, leaving some buildings with shattered windows, damaged roofs, and cracked walls.

Speaking with our correspondent on Tuesday, the husband of the deceased victim, Ismail Emmanuel, said the smoke from the inferno obstructed her wife's view in escaping when the fire started.

He said that her wife had attempted to escape from the inferno when she fell into the drainage which, unknown to her, had been engulfed in the fire.

He narrated further that efforts to save her life proved abortive as he was requested to make an N6m deposit at the hospital which he could not afford.

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Emmanuel narrated, "I was at work when my son called me about a fire incident in our community. I asked him to check on those at home because he was not living with us. He told me that he couldn't see my wife when he got home. I asked him to look around and after some moment, he called me back that they were on the way to the hospital and that my wife had sustained injuries in the fire.

"We took her to a hospital in Sagamu where we were referred to Abeokuta and from Abeokuta, we were referred to Igbobi in Lagos. Upon getting to Igbobi, I was told to make a deposit of N6m which I couldn't afford and we moved her to the Gbagada General Hospital in Lagos where she gave up the ghost."

He stressed that the body of her late wife was deposited at a private morgue in Ibafo while pleading for the government's assistance towards his family.

Also speaking with our correspondent, a resident in the community who identified himself as Bidemi told our correspondent that another victim who was attempting to rescue her children when the fire started had since been hospitalised.

She noted that the family had yet to return to their home after the fire destroyed some of their household items including chairs, and curtains.

“Iya Ada was also affected by the fire. The fire caught her house and destroyed chairs, curtains and some other items. The fire burnt her while she was trying to rescue her children. She fell and the heat of the fire burnt her sideways and she has since been hospitalised,” Bidemi said.

Earlier, some other victims of the fire incident had appealed to the state governor, Dapo Abiodun, to come to their aid after they lost vehicles worth millions of naira to the incident.

The victims had noted that the vehicles were their only source of income and the means through which they fed their families.

Meanwhile, the governor has extended his condolences to the victims in reaction to the incident while urging tanker drivers to exercise caution on the highway.