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Dozens feared dead at Takwa Bay explosion

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BY CHRISTOPHER OJI ON JUNE 19, 2014

COVER



Several persons were feared dead and many others injured in a midnight explosion that rocked the petroleum pipeline belonging to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) at the Takwa Bay Beach in Lagos. Those who died in the explosion were alleged to have besieged the site of an oil spillage to scoop fuel.

The cause of the fire could not be ascertained as at press time. It was, however, gathered that the explosion was due to the activities of vandals who drilled holes on exposed pipelines to steal fuel.

The entire area, where the explosion took place, was covered with thick smoke when Daily Sun visited the scene. Some of the villagers, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the pipeline vandals came to the area in canoes laden with hundreds of 50-litre kegs.

One of the villagers said: "The vandals filled the kegs with products, tied them to several yards of ropes with which they dragged the already filled cans across the murky waters to a place considered safe for them before they eventually loaded them on their boats."

However, rescue workers were yet to recover any body at the site of the explosion, but the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Public Relations Officer (PRO) in the South-West zone, Ibrahim Farinloye, who confirmed the incident to newsmen on telephone, suspected that relations of victims might have taken away bodies of the dead for fear that government agencies might use them to trace the vandals.

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