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18 burnt to ashes, 50 hospitalised in Nasarawa gas explosion

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About 18 persons were reported to have been burnt to ashes and over 50 severely injured and are hospitalised due to a gas explosion at Natson Petroleum Nig. Ltd filling station, in Lafia, the Nasarawa State capital.

The cause of the explosion, according to a source around the filling station, was due to a head on collision between a commercial motorcycle and a keke Napep driver from the main road which the flames extended to an already leakage of gas products from one of the reservoir from the filling station before the explosion occurred.

About nine vehicles, including two fuel tankers, eight motorcycles and three tricycles, were caught in the inferno burning all the occupants beyond recognition.

Meanwhile, the casualty unit of the Dalhatu Araf Specialist Hospital (DASH), Lafia, was littered with burnt bodies of victims of the gas explosion as medical personnel of the hospital battled to save their lives.

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This was even as sympathisers trooped out in hundreds in the hospital's premises to catch a glance of the horrific incident when victims of the fire were conveyed in by official of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) from the spot of the explosion.

When our correspondent spoke to one of the sympathisers, Ibrahim Mushasha, at the entrance of the casualty unit of the DASH for his observation, he said that so far over 50 burnt victims had been conveyed in the unit for urgent medication to save their lives, even as others were rushed to some private hospitals in the state capital.

According to him, "They were brought in unconsciously naked as their bodies were burnt as they struggle in the anguish.

"We are yet to ascertain the number of those who died in the inferno as the dead bodies were still been counted but so far about 18 dead bodies were recovered.

"Some of the victims were caught up in the inferno as they were plying the Lafia – Abuja road, especially students of the Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia who were going to school for lectures as well as persons travelling on that road as at the time of the gas explosion.

"They were brought in unconsciously naked as their bodies were burnt, we are yet to ascertain the number of those who died in the inferno as the dead bodies were still been counted, but so far about 18 dead bodies were recovered."

A female medical personnel attending to the victims at the casualty unit of the hospital declined comment on the number of casualties so far conveyed into the casualty unit for treatment, when our correspondent sought to confirmed the 18 deaths.

She, however, said that the immediate concern of officials of the hospital personnel was to save life first, noting that the dead bodies should be about 18.

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Also, a security officer from the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) on duty at the casualty unit declined comment that it was only personnel from the casualty unit that could talk to the press on that catastrophe, but the management of the hospital refuse to give the actual number of casualties, noting that their priority now is to save the lives of the victims still alive, the FRSC officials said they will issued a press statement on the fire inferno but at the movement they want to focus on the ones alive.

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