

2 killed as pipeline explodes in Lagos community

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Two person were confirmed killed and several others injured when a pipeline exploded within Gloryland Estate in Isheri-Olofin, under the Egbe-Idimu Local Council Development Area, Lagos State yesterday.

One of the injured suffered a 70 per cent degree burnt and was taken to the Igando General Hospital.

There were speculations that the deceased were among the vandals and were trapped when the pipeline exploded.

Some residents, however, said they were people that had gone to the area for spiritual fortification and were seen walking down the slope to the waterway to have a spiritual bath before they met their untimely death. The pastor that accompanied them was said to have escaped unhurt.

At press time, it was not possible to ascertain the nuaactual number of casualties as residents claimed several residents were receiving treatments for injuries sustained while trying to escape to safety.

Following the deafening explosion and ensuing fire that rocked the axis in the early hours of the morning with smoke enveloping the area, pandemonium broke out and residence fled the estate.

When the reporter visited the area, the two estates were deserted and smoke was still blowing from the points of the vandalism.

The fire devastated the water channel snaking through the community and destroyed several wooden bridges that connected Baruwa to Isheri-Olofin. The bridges were the only means of accessing the two communities through the Lasu-Iba Road.

Director-General, Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), Dr. Oke-Osanyintolu, said as soon as they became aware of the incident, emergency responders were mobilised to the scene. He confirmed that the fire was caused by activities of vandals that had ruptured four points along the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), adding that the fire caused massive havoc as it followed the water channel that ran through the community.

LASEMA spokesman, Nosa Okunbor, confirmed that vandals ruptured the pipelines at four different points within Diamond Estate and Idowu Egba, spilling petrol which resulted in a fire outbreak

According to the Public Affairs Officer, two bodies recovered from the scene were already burnt beyond recognition. He said despite that, rescue and recovery operations were ongoing.

In the face of this recent explosion, angry residents have accused security agencies of complicity, insisting they aid and abate the vandals.

They claimed police and officers of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), stationed in the area were discovered to be colluding with vandals to put their lives at risk.

The residents said they were scared to speak or challenge those who vandalise the pipelines, adding that they were well known and dangerous.

Most of the landlords said the whole area, not just the estates, was sitting on a keg of gun power. They called on Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu to act fast and save the state from being rocked by a calamity of unimaginable magnitude.

“Any time we start smelling fuel in the air, we know that the vandals are at work and we don’t sleep. For days, they would be stealing fuel unchallenged. We don’t sleep in this area at all. On some days, we hold vigils by staying awake. This is a wake up call to the Lagos government to act fast,” a landlord in Diamond Estate said.



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