

3 dead, many injured as gas explosion rocks filling station in Lagos

By Christopher Oji

THREE person were declared dead and several others were injured when gas cylinder exploded at a filling station at Cele Bus Stop, Iju, Lagos, yesterday.

A witness, John Udoh, said the fire started when a tanker was trying to offload gasoline in the filling station and the cooking gas stand attached to the filling station exploded.

Udoh said three persons were burnt beyond recognition, just as many people injured, while the raging fire destroyed many vehicles.

"The police, fire service and emergency agencies are putting out the fire and bringing out burnt victims. Over 40 people were injured and rushed to the hospital," he said.

Another resident Philomena Ojeogwu, who described the explosion as Armageddon, said: "I was doing some work on my laptop when I heard a loud

bang. The entire building was shaking. I thought it was a bomb explosion. When I looked through the window, I saw people running out of their homes and smoke covered everywhere. I had to run out of the house thinking that it was in my compound. It was later that I learnt the explosion happened far away from my compound, but the impact was too much. It affected many streets, such as Obawole Estate, Lucas, Kay Farm, Balogun, et cetera. I think landlords need to do something about their buildings because the explosion affected many foundations and fences.

"I am appealing to the government and relevant agencies to stop giving licenses to people who operate filling stations and gas stations in residential areas. We are sitting on a keg of gunpowder ready to explode. The rate at which gas stations and filling stations are all springing up in residential areas is too bad."

Meanwhile, head, public affairs, Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), Mr. Nosa Okunbor, confirmed there was a gas explosion at Cele Bus stop, Iju-Ishaga. He said LASEMA responded to the emer-

gency promptly

"On arrival, we observed that there was a gas explosion at the aforementioned address. Further investigation revealed that a truck conveying gasoline had a lone accident and exploded."

Navy acquires new hydrographic ship

By Philip Nwosu

HISTORY was made on Thursday in Les Sables d'Olonne France with the launching of the first ever purpose built hydrographic survey vessel by the Nigerian Navy. Speaking at the ceremony at the OCEA shipyard, the Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Ibok Ete Ibas, represented by Rear Admiral Abraham Adajii informed that the new vessel was conceived as a replacement for the Nigerian Navy survey vessel, NNS LANA which was decommissioned about 10 years ago.

According to the CNS, the launching ceremony was a great significance as it marked a giant stride in the efforts towards actualizing the dreams of not only restoring but enhancing Nigerian Navy's survey capability. He also emphasized that surveying and charting play a crucial role in ensuring safe navigation as well as delivery of maritime security, hence, the new vessel will not only enhance the safety of Nigeria's maritime environment but also serve as a critical component of deployment of naval power for enhanced maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.