

Gas explosion kills 6 in Abia

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From Okey Sampson, *Umuahia*

It has been reported that at least six persons were killed during a gas explosion in Owaza, Ukwa West local government area of Abia State.

Initial report has it that the incident occurred at about 9:50am on Sunday, when the victims were engaged in an illegal oil refining in a site in Owaza.

They were said to have used a gas cylinder to disconnect an oil pot which exploded in the process and killed the six on the spot.

However, a source from the area told Daily Sun the deceased were not involved in illegal oil refining.

The source who gave his name as Ekele Chukwu said what happened was that when the military dislodged oil bunkers in the area sometime ago, a man from a community in Rivers State which shares boundary with Owaza and who was among the oil bunkers, dismantled his oil pots and packed them in a compound at Owaza.

Chukwu said on Sunday, the man whose identity could not be immediately ascertained, contracted a welder to dismember the pots so he could put them to other uses.

The source said it was in the process of dismembering the oil pots, that the gas cylinder they were using, exploded, killing four people instantly and seriously injuring two other.

“The victims were not involved in oil bunkering as have been erroneous reported in some quarters.

“The truth remains that a man from a community in Rivers state that shares boundary with Owaza, was among involved involved in oil bunkering who were dislodged by the military sometime ago.

“He packed his oil pots in a compound in Owaza and on Sunday morning, he came with a wielder to dismember the pots, probably, he wanted to them for other purposes.

“It was in the process of dismembering the pots that the gas cylinder exploded, killing four people instantly, including the owner of the pots, and injuring two others”.

There are fears that the two people injured in the explosion, may have died in hospital because of the severity of their wounds.