

15 feared dead in Enugu fuel tanker explosion

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....Mbah visits accident scene, takes over treatment of injured victims

By **Jude Chinedu**, Enugu

At least 15 people have tragically lost their lives in a fuel tanker explosion that occurred at Ugwu Onyeama, Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State, on Saturday, January 25, 2025.

The explosion occurred around 11:30 AM when a fuel-laden tanker exploded while navigating the busy expressway.

Witnesses described the blast as devastating as it destroyed nearby vehicles and caused widespread panic.

Rescue efforts were hindered by the intensity of the fire, making it difficult for bystanders to access the scene.

Victims who were reportedly burnt beyond recognition are believed to be occupants of the vehicles caught in the inferno.

Authorities have yet to confirm the exact number of casualties or the cause of the explosion as investigations continue.

Meanwhile, Enugu State Governor, Dr Peter Mbah, has visited the scene of the accident for on-the-spot assessment, assuring that the victims would be given full medical attention.

He said the government had taken steps to forestall future occurrences, including enforcement of road rules and fixing the part of the federal road that was in disrepair.

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While commiserating with the families of the victims, Governor Mbah described the accident as unfortunate and directed the Federal Road Safety Commission's Sector Commander, Enugu, Mr Franklin Agbakoba, and the State Commissioner for Transport, Mr Obi Ozor, to ensure that all tankers conveying inflammable substances in the state have anti-spill lock that will prevent spill in case of accident.

“This is an accident involving a tanker that preliminary investigation shows may have had a break failure, fell down, had its product, premium motor spirit spilled from the tank and ignited. So, this is for us a tragedy where we have some casualties.

“But as I said, investigation is still at preliminary stages. The police and other law enforcement agencies are on it. We want to get to the root of this for us to understand the true cause of the accident.

“In the meantime, we have moved those that are in need of treatment to the hospitals for full medical attention. My Commissioner for Health and also my Special Adviser on Health, the Chief Medical

Director of the Enugu State University of Science and Technology Teaching Hospital (ESUTTH), Parklane, Enugu, the police, and Federal Road Safety Corps are all involved. They have my instruction to ensure that maximum medical attentions were given to the survivors

, “But we’re also taking quick measures as a government. I have just been speaking to the head of the Federal Road Safety Corps to make sure they enforce the rules that prohibit tanker drivers from the road without an anti-spill lock. Tankers conveying premium spirit and inflammable products must have an anti-spill lock to ensure that when these trucks for down, they do not spill. It is very important.

“Also, for us as a government, we are going to be looking at how we can deploy some traffic rules to ensure that we do not have a recurrence of this.

“We are obviously not going to wait for the federal government to fix the other section of the road. We as government are going to take steps to ensure that whatever needs to be done on that section of the federal road is done immediately so we would never want a reoccurrence of this,” Mbah stated.

While briefing the governor on some of the preliminary investigation conducted by the FRSC Sector Commander for Enugu explained that the tanker spill was as a result of a brake failure by the fuel tanker.

He added that 11 people lost their lives at the scene, while identified injured road users were rushed to the hospital for treatment and thanked the governor for showing leadership by rushing to the scene and equally undertaking to foot the medical bills.