

2 die, scores injured in Ogun tanker accident



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...17 vehicles, shops burnt also

Two people were between Thursday night and early yesterday killed and many others injured as a tanker fully loaded with Premium Motor Spirit, popularly known as petrol, crashed around the Old Toll Gate in Sango Ota area of Ogun State. Millions of naira worth of goods including a full load of Milo sachet products and cement as well vehicles, shops and part of a filling station were destroyed in the inferno which raged for hours. The Ogun State Sector Commander of the Federal Road Safety Corps, Clement Oladele, confirmed that two people were burnt to death while six others were injured. The state's FRSC command also stated that the injured victims of the multiple accident and explosion were rushed to the Ota General Hospital while the corpses of the burnt people were also deposited at the mortuary. It was, however, gathered that the driver of the tanker,

which was heading towards Sango was dragging the right of way with a car when the accident happened.

A mechanic in the area, who simply identified himself as Daddy Praise, narrated thus: “The accident happened around 12a.m. last night till around 5a.m. this morning. What we heard was that the tanker and a car were coming from the Toll Gate and they were dragging the road with each other near the Road Safety Office.” The mechanic continued that “very close to Shoprite, the driver was ascending the hill side of the road while dragging the road with the car when he lost control of the vehicle.”

“The tanker lost control and crashed backwards before tumbling and emptying its content on both sides of the road and the next thing was a loud explosion,” the mechanic said. The Ogun FRSC identified the burnt vehicles as the tanker in question, 11 other trucks, a white bus with registration number: XQ 828 FST, a yellow LT bus marked MUS 604 XU, a Toyota car marked MUS 494 CC, a Toyota Sienna and a pick-up van. In a statement, the Ogun FRSC command said: “Two burnt corpses were evacuated to the Ifo General Hospital, Ogun State as the six injured victims were rescued to Ota General Hospital, Ogun State.” “The suspected cause of the crash was a mechanically-deficient truck conveying PMS (petrol) products that fell and spilled its contents,” the FRSC stated further.

“The spilled contents then spread from the ShopRite Mall in Ota up to the FRSC Command Office located at the old Toll Gate, Ota, destroying vehicles and other properties affected by the spilled inflammable contents.” On account of the incident, which caused untold hardship for residents, commuters and motorists, led to traffic stretching to many parts of Ogun and Lagos States, the FRSC Sector Commander advised motorists, especially tankers transporting flammable products like petroleum products, to adhere strictly to the 1957 United Nations Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Roads (ADR) which Nigeria recently acceded to, which amongst others, require trucks conveying dangerous goods, including petroleum products to be installed with tanker’s seal valve which prevents the liquidified content from spilling in the event of a road traffic crash.”

The Sector commander commiserated with relatives of the victims. Some traders, who also spoke with our correspondent, said the accident leading to the explosion, which was largely avoidable, led to the loss of millions of naira. A trader who gave her name simply as Abiola said she was still outside when the incident happened but had to leave her shop and run for her dear life. She said: “Had it been the tanker driver had allowed the car he was dragging the road with to go, we wouldn’t be here counting our losses. I deal in wine but my shop is burnt beyond recognition. I don’t know where to start from, I am not the only person affected by the explosion, government should come to our aid.

“A friend of mine selling frozen food, her shop and the goods inside her shop burnt to the ground. majority of us are trading on loans. The bank which lent us money doesn’t want to understand what happened, all they are after is their money.

I am finished.” Another resident of the area said: “Government should set up a taskforce to monitor the activities of the truck drivers, because of their reckless driving, alot of people have been sent to early grave through their uncaring behaviour. I heard that the driver of the tanker escaped from the scene immediately after the crashed. “I knew that those of us at the bus stop are risking our life. But we have no other job we are doing. Millions of naira have been lost to the fire incident, government should give the traders incentive to move on with their lives.” Our correspondent reported that policemen, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), TRACE officials as well as FRSC were at the scene controlling traffic so as to prevent hoodlums from taking advantage of the situation.

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