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Lagos-Ibadan Expressway: Three Die, Others Injured In Explosion

June 22, 2020 Taiwo Jimoh Comments Off

T

hree people reportedly lost their lives while several others sustained injuries yesterday on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway when a tanker loaded with gas rammed into another tanker and burst into flames.

In all, four trucks were involved in the accident.

Witnesses said the explosion occurred about 12:30a.m. on Kara Bridge.

The accident caused gridlock on the expressway which spread to major parts of Lagos State.

It was learnt that those who died were drivers and a motor boy of the affected vehicles as burnt bones were discovered by emergency workers.

When our correspondent visited the scene, one of the tankers was still burning as firefighters were making efforts to put out the Inferno.

A trader at Kara Market, Mr. Ibrahim Haruna, said he and others were sleeping in the market when they heard a loud noise on the bridge.

Haruna said initially they thought it was the market that was burning.

He said: "A few minutes later, we saw thick flames on the bridge. When we moved closer, it was then we saw two tankers and a truck burning.

"The tankers were burning seriously before the arrival of the firefighters. But the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) was on ground but there was nothing they could do to put out the inferno. It was when firefighters arrived that they were able to put out one tanker and truck as they were still battling with the other burning tanker.

"We thank God the explosion didn't extend into the Kara market. Also those sleeping under the bridge were not affected."

A traveller, who gave his name as Adaobi, said she and others had been in the traffic since 6a.m. as they couldn't cross to Lagos State because of the explosion.

Adaobi said they left Ondo State early to get to Lagos, but unfortunately the explosion stopped them from entering Lagos.

She said: "I thank God, we are not consumed by the explosion, but a lot of us are trapped in the traffic."

First responders, including men of the Federal Fire Service, the Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), Police, the Ogun State Traffic Compliance and Enforcement Agency (TRACE) and Fire Fighters, were carrying out rescue operations.

The LASEMA Director-General (DG), Dr. Femi Oke-Osanyintolu, said the identities of the victims could only be ascertained by DNA, since only burnt human bones were seen.

He said: “We cannot even know the number of people who died now. You can see that it is only human bones we have seen so far.

“It will take a pathology examination to ascertain the number of persons and identify them. Rescue operation is still ongoing.”

Meanwhile, The Lagos State Sector Commander of the FRSC, Mr. Segun Ogungbemi, in a traffic directory, appealed to motorists to seek alternative routes to allow rescuers conclude their mission on the Kara Bridge.

Ogungbemi said officials of the corps as well as men of the fire services were promptly mobilised to the scene when the incident occurred.

“The inferno has already affected three tankers and a trailer. The situation is affecting movement inward Berger arrival into Kara Bridge at the moment.

“The FRSC is admonishing motorists who have reasons to use the road to seek alternatives for now to allow the personnel of the Fire Service on ground to extinguish the fire.

“The rescue operation is still ongoing and an updated version of the travel advisory will be sent later.

Those moving out of Lagos this morning can use the Victoria Island by Ajah to Ibeju-Ode to continue their journey. The Lagos-Abeokuta Expressway to Sagamu Interchange is another alternative that motorists can use at the moment.

“The Sector Commander empathises with the motoring public especially those on essential duties and assured that the FRSC operatives would remain at the scene till normalcy is restored.

“He advises operators of vehicles used for transporting highly inflammable petroleum products to operate them in strict conformity with safety standards prescribed by the 1957 United Nations Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), which Nigeria acceded to as a contracting party,” the directory stated.