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Nigeria: One Burnt to Death, Others Injured in Petrol Tanker Fire

Vanguard (Lagos)
17 September 2008

Posted to the web 17 September 2008

Chidi Nkwopara

One life was reported lost, while several persons suffered severe burns when a petrol tanker carrying over 33,000 litres of fuel skidded off the ill-maintained federal road at Umuode, Amainyi Ukwu, Ihitte Uboma local government area of Imo State.

Similarly, more than 20 houses and property worth over N965 million were also lost in the huge inferno, as thousands of families have been rendered homeless.

Reacting to the ugly incident when he paid an unscheduled visit to the accident scene, Governor Ikedi Ohakim called on the federal government to pay urgent attention to federal highways in the state.

He described the incident which almost burnt the entire village of Umuode, Amainyi Ukwu in Ihitte Uboma local government area of the state.

"The incident is a complete disaster of national magnitude, caused by the long neglect of the federal roads in this part of the country", Ohakim lamented.

While announcing that the state government will set up a committee to work out the relief package that would be handed over to those whose houses and property were affected, Ohakim also directed the Divisional Crime Officer of the police division to remove the burnt body of the tanker driver and deposit it the morgue of the Federal Medical centre, Owerri.

Speaking also, the member representing Ihitte Uboma local government area in the State House of Assembly and Deputy Speaker, Sir Jonas Okeke, appealed to the victims of the fire to exercise patience while efforts were made to bring them succour.

"The people of the area need the service of the state and federal emergency relief agencies and the International Red Cross to ameliorate the sufferings of over 1,000 displaced persons rendered homeless by the ugly incident. The incident is a calamity and an impending epidemic likely to occur in the area", Okeke pleaded.

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He visited the fire victims at several hospitals in Ihitte Uboma and Obowo local councils and made cash donation of over N500,000 and promised to cater for the hospital bills of some of the victims.

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