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Pipeline fire kills 20 in Abia



BY ANAYO OKOLI

UMUAHIA—No fewer than 20 persons were feared dead and many others seriously injured, following pipeline explosion at Umueke village in Umueze Autonomous Community in Osisioma Local Government Area of Abia State.

Eye witness account from the sleepy rural community said the death toll could rise, based on the condition of victims being treated in various hospitals and traditional healing homes in the area.

Vanguard learnt that the fire curred yesterday when some people from the area were scooping fuel from a vandalised pipeline in the area, which supplies



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petroleum products from Eleme to the newly opened Osisioma Depot.

Six people were said to have died instantly, while other deaths resulted from severe burns sustained by the vandals.

It will be recalled that Abia State government had persistently warned youths of host communities of PPMC pipeline against tampering in whatever form with the pipelines because of the devastating result that could follow.

Also, the government had since the reopening of the Osisioma depot, mobilised soldiers and other security agencies to protect the pipelines.

Abia State Commissioner for Petroleum and Solid Minerals' Resources, Chief Don Ubani, confirmed the incident and death of 15 persons.

He also regretted that despite constant warnings against vandalization of NNPC pipelines, some people took the risk and lost their lives in the process.

Describing the action of the people as criminal, Ubani said the wrath of God and nemesis caught up with the hooligans who defied all warnings against breaking pipelines.

He said: "It has become sadly compelling that Abia State Ministry of Petroleum and Solid Minerals' Development should, for the umpteenth time, warn hoodlums in pipeline communities to learn to respect the sanctity of their lives by not attempting to go near

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the pipelines that traverse their communities."



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beneke123

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when is people gonna learn to desist from tampering with oil pipes and playing with their lives? may the dead ones soul rest in peacefull Amen, God have mercy.

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