

# 7 die in Anambra petrol tanker fire

**S**EVEN persons were confirmed dead yesterday by the Police in Anambra State, following a petrol tanker fire Saturday night at Amawbia Roundabout.

It was gathered that the fire started when tanker carrying petrol fell at Amawbia Roundabout in Awka, the state capital, at about 10 p.m.

The petrol in the tanker also flowed freely through a drainage channel, spreading the fire further.

No fewer than eight other vehicles were completely burnt by the fire, which also damaged many buildings.

Hours after the fire, an official of the traffic agency said two deaths had been confirmed.

However, yesterday morning, the Anambra police spokesperson, Haruna Mohammed, said the death toll had increased to seven.

"So far, seven persons were certified dead at various hospitals by medical doctors

while the only surviving victim was admitted at Intensive Care Unit of the University Teaching Hospital, Nnewi," he said.

According to Mohammed, three of the bodies were deposited at Amaku General Hospital morgue, Awka, two at Regina Caeli Hospital, Awka and another two at Piston Hospital morgue, Awka.

He added that post-mortem examination would be conducted to ascertain exact cause of their death.

By yesterday morning sympathisers were still thronging to the scene of the incident to catch a glimpse of the burnt vehicles, buildings and other valuables affected by the fire.

A tricycle operator, Sunday Ugwu, said: "I was just driving through this road when the fire started Saturday night, so when I found out I could not escape with my keke, I parked it and ran away."

Shop owners, whose building and wares were razed, were also

seen at the site yesterday morning crying profusely.

An eye witness, Mr. Ilu Ali, a vegetable dealer in Awka, disclosed that six of the dead victims were known to him.

According to him, "six persons who died as a result of the fire are northerners, and I know all of them; we were together before the fire started Saturday night.

"Those killed were Sabo Jigawa, Hamza Jarowro, Adamu Mohammed aka Janari, Dansoho, Malam Malam, and Jinjiri from Garzawa, Kano."

Ali said apart from the dead, four other victims who sustained injuries were at Amaku Teaching Hospital, Awka and a private hospital, Felly, in Amawbia area.

He added that the victims were affected because the petrol from the tanker flowed through the water channel to a spot where they were roasting *suya* meat.