

5 dead, 10 injured, 12 vehicles destroyed in Lagos gas explosion

By Evelyn Usman,
Bose Adelaja & Esther
Onyegbula

EXPLOSION rocked Ladipo, Mushin area of Lagos State, yesterday, claiming five persons, injuring 10 others and destroying 12 vehicles and some buildings.

The explosion occurred at a gas shop on 33/35, Ojekunle Street, Ladipo spare parts market at 8.15 a.m.

Many people sustained injuries in the resultant stampede, while property, which monetary value could not be immediately ascertained, were also destroyed.

It was also gathered that 10 persons sustained minor injuries but were treated and discharged by the medical

team at the scene of the explosion.

Spokesman for National Emergency Management Agency, NEMA, Ibrahim Farinloye, confirmed the incident, while Lagos State Emergency Management Agency, said the explosion occurred at an open land with shanties and shops where gas cylinders were stacked.

Vanguard gathered from an eye witness that the owner of the gas shop, who was among the casualties was refilling some of the cylinders when his phone rang and in the process of attending to it, caused the explosion.

Survivors recount experience

A survivor, Olewaseun Adesegun, said he was taking his bath within the premises when the explosion occurred

but miraculously, he escaped it.

Adesegun, an upholstery maker, said his boss was not that lucky as he was recovered dead during the search and rescue operation.

Another survivor, who simply gave his name as Oba, said: "I thought the whole world had collapsed because there was a loud bang and some of my neighbours did not survive it. Let me term it a miraculous escape because I did not know how I escaped. All I know is that I was in one of the badly damaged vehicles, but I cannot recall how I survived it."

Also, speaking at the scene, a man who simply identified himself as Alfa, said: "I lost my friend in the accident. I am heartbroken. He was the one that opened the shop this morning, brought out the cylinders before the incident happened. I wasn't here when it happened but I came immediately I received a call. It was a sorry sight, I

couldn't recognise my friend as his remains were littered everywhere on the ground.

"When he got to the shop this morning, he called to complain that it was long we saw. That was the last time I would speak with him."

One of the sons of the landlord, who spoke on the condition of anonymity said: "The man who sold gas rented that place over 28 years ago and nothing like this has happened. It is disheartening that people who don't know what happened are saying what they don't know."

"My father owns the space rented by the occupants. Some of the victims are our tenants. So, I have to respect the dead not speaking to the press."

One of the victims, Alhaji Umoru, who deals in scrap metals, has been buried at Muslim cemetery in Agege.

Vanguard gathered that one of the injured persons called Segun is still receiving treatment at an undisclosed hospital.

A resident, Pa Adamson Kolaqolei, urged government to sanction erring gas sellers in the community.

Itunnu Babalola's death: FG demands autopsy • We want her corpse — Father

By Victoria Ojeme &
Fortune Eromosele

THE Federal Government, said, yesterday, that an autopsy must be conducted to ascertain the cause of the death of Itunnu Babalola, the Nigeria lady, who was arrested and jailed for 20 years in Cote D'Ivoire for a crime she never committed but died in prison.

Chairman, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, NiDCOM, Abike Dabiri-Erewa, who briefed newsmen in Abuja, said: "We are demanding an autopsy, we are involving INTERPOL, we are involving the police that roped allegations against her."

"Some lawyers are approaching the ECOWAS court concerning the issue. Right now, we want to have a meeting with them."

"But the key thing is that the father has spoken to me that he wants the corpse of his daughter. We have to ensure we get the corpse. The case should go on, she deserves justice in death. It's a pity that she didn't even

happened to be related to an Ivorian police officer.

The person made away with her goods worth about N300,000, allegedly attempted to bribe her with N100,000 to drop the case, which mysteriously turned to a case of human trafficking

Kidnappers kill 2 butchers, abduct one in Ondo

By Dayo Johnson

AKURE—TWO butchers reportedly kidnapped in Ondo State have been killed. Their bodies were recovered by police detectives in the state.

The three butchers, it was gathered, were deceived by their assailants to come and buy cows at Ala forest.

One of the butchers, who escaped, Nasiru Jamui, said they were lured into the bush where they killed two while he escaped by the whiskers.

"The Fulani people that used to sell cows to my boss called him to come and buy cows. Though he had been selling

against her.

She was prosecuted and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.

She was said to have had complications from diabetes and was rushed to a hospital where she died a day later.

"Three of us left tried to run for our lives but I was macheted and fell and pretended to be dead. When I later realised that no one was there, I stood up and ran around the bush. It was only my boss I saw being kidnapped. I don't know the whereabouts of the two others till now."

Contacted, the police image maker, Funmi Odunlami, confirmed the killing of the butchers.

Odunlami said: "Two of the three butchers have been killed. Their bodies were found in Tafa camp within the Ala forest reserves by our men while searching and combing the bush after we were alerted about the abduction."

Scene cordoned off

Meanwhile, the scene of the incident has been cordoned off as security operatives manned strategic places.

Director-General, Lagos State Emergency Management Agency LASEMA, Dr. Olufemi Oke-Osanyintolu, who addressed journalists at the scene put the causality figure at five, including an infant.

He said the agency's Response Team, Eagle Squad at Cappa had been deployed.

Farinloye who also addressed journalists at the scene corroborated Oke-Osanyintolu's position.

Meanwhile, Deputy Head of the state Fire Service, Olajide Ogabi, who was at the scene of the incident, said the explosion affected neighbouring buildings and shops.

Meanwhile, Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Hakeem Odumosu, who also visited the scene of the incident, described it as unfortunate and avoidable, assuming all safety rules had been adhered to.

2 arrested over murder