

# One dead, others injured as diesel-laden tanker explodes n Lagos

July 20, 2022



**By Providence Ayanfeoluwa, Mercy Opara & Christiana Moneke**

AN explosion from a tanker loaded with 33,000 litres of Automotive Gas Oil, AGO, rocked a truck garage popularly known as Aboki Garage, on the Oshodi Apapa expressway, yesterday, burning an unidentified man to death in the resultant inferno.

Several persons were also injured in the ensuing stampede while a yet-to-be-specified number of trucks parked inside the garage used to load black oil and Diesel also were burnt.

There were different accounts as to how the incident happened. A version of the account by an eyewitness had it that it occurred at about 3.35 pm, while the product was being offloaded from a truck into drums.

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Another version had it that the explosion occurred barely one hour after a helicopter was sighted hovering around the garage.

An eyewitness identified simply as Ayuba told Vanguard that “we heard an explosion right inside that garage, (pointing to the direction). We all ran out at first, thinking it was a terrorist attack. But when we saw the thick smoke and balls of fire, we all regrouped but could not help the situation because the fire was too much and there was a truck loaded with diesel at the entrance.

“A truck attempted to drive in but could not because another was parked at the entrance of the gate. In the process, the driver of the truck driving in hit the other truck at the entrance as one of its tires lost balance.

“You can see people standing helplessly. They want to help bring some trucks out but they cannot because the two trucks at the entrance have obstructed further entrance in and out of the park.

“An Army barracks is beside this garage. We learned that the Army owns the land. Unfortunately, for over 30 minutes, the Army and firefighters did not get here. The fire has affected not less than 10 trucks inside there.”

On his part, Sunday Oladele lamented that if the situation was not contained, it could affect many tank farms, including private and government properties on that axis.

While speaking with Oladele, a fire service truck drove in. Officials of both the Federal and State Fire Services were sighted battling to put out the fire and at the same time, prevent it from spreading to the Signal barracks, Mile 2.

The area was later cordoned off by personnel of the Nigerian Army, causing motorists to make a u-turn.

The Deputy Head, Lagos State Fire and Rescue Service, Ogabi Olajide, stated that “our officers are presently combating intense Fire at an articulated Motor Park, at Otto Wharf, Mile 2, Lagos, which resulted from a tanker carrying diesel that exploded and lead to inferno reported at 3.44 pm.”

He, however, did not give further details and he promised to do so later.