

METRO

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How pregnant woman, her 3 children, others died in Ondo tanker fire –Witnesses



Fresh facts emerged, yesterday, on how a pregnant woman, her three children and others, were burnt to death, after a tanker exploded at Ore, in Odigbo Local Government Area of Ondo State.

The pregnant woman, her three children and 18 others said to be scooping fuel from the tanker, which crashed and spilled its contents, were reportedly involved in the incident.

The driver of the tanker was said to have lost control, after overspeeding and fell into a ditch on Showboy Road, opposite Optima filling station, in Ore, Sunday evening.

In an interview with locals in the town, one Tijani Diekola told newsmen: “I got here few minutes after the explosion and met some burnt corpses on the ground, but the situation was so tense and nobody could get nearer to the spot.

“It was the next morning that some relatives of the victims were able to recover the corpses of the affected persons. None of them survived the incident because most were burnt beyond reasonable measures.

“I met about 10 burnt bodies, while those around the tanker could not be recognised. They were packed inside sacks by officials of the Federal Road Safety Commission.

“The tanker driver lost control of the vehicle and entered the ditch around 4:30p.m. The people started trooping to the place of the incident, scooping the fuel until the ugly incident happened around 6p.m.

“What actually happened was that the fuel started spilling into a stream in the community while the residents continue to scoop the fuel with buckets and kegs until the explosion occurred.

“Unfortunately, a woman was cooking in her kitchen when the inflammable product on the water caught fire, burning the woman to death while the fire flew back to the tanker.

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“A pregnant woman crossing the stream with three other minors were caught in the fire and were burnt beyond recognition.

“No one could move to save them. Some other people who were close to the tanker were also badly affected. Their remains were packed this morning (yesterday).

Another local, Awalu Saliu, from Sokoto State, told newsmen, “The tanker fell around 4:30 in the evening.

“I heard about it and I drove to this place from the town. Many people were scooping fuel. The rain had stopped.

“I parked my motor-cycle and came down. After some time, we heard a sound like ‘boom.’ The fire started coming. There was another ‘boom’ and we saw fire coming.

“Over 100 people scooping fuel directly from the tanker ran away. I also ran. I saw people carrying fuel

referred to the residence of a woman, who was cooking. The woman died instantly.

Meanwhile, the state Sector Commander of the Federal Road Safety Corps, FRSC, Ezekiel Son-Allah, confirmed that only eight persons scooping fuel died in the fire incident.

Son-Allah said that they were burnt following an explosion.

According to him, a white fuel tanker with no registration number lost control due to overspeeding. Some residents of a closeby village stormed the scene and started scooping fuel spilt from the fallen tanker.

“But unfortunately, the tanker exploded, burning eight persons, who were scooping fuel to death.” The FRSC boss said the tanker driver and motor boy managed to escape from the scene unhurt.

He said the FRSC rescue team had deposited the remains of the victims at the morgue of the General Hospital in Ore.

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