

a fire outbreak, which started in the early hours of yesterday,

Over 30 feared dead as tanker explodes in Imo forest

By Chinonso Alozie

OWERRI— Over 30 bodies were said to have burnt to ashes after a tanker suspected to be used by oil bunkerers exploded in the forest of Obitti, Ohaji/Egbema Local Government Area of Imo State.

It was gathered that the tragedy occurred Tuesday at the place described as Ndorama pipeline right of way in the Obitti rubber estate of Ohaji/Egbema council of the state.

At press time, relatives of the victims gave different versions of what caused the explosion.

Some said there was exchange of gunfire between two groups trying to claim dominance of the area of the oil bunkering business. Others believed that leaders in charge of oil bunkering business planned the attack that led to the explosion.

While a community leader, who did not want his name

mentioned, alleged that the victims trespassed the territory of the illegal bunkering location said to be under the control of a kingpin, also said to be a politician.

According to a video by the eyewitness, he said: "Vandals came to vandalise pipeline right of way. This place is called Ndorama pipeline right of way. They drove to the place in a tanker suspected to be used for the illegal bunkering. They

dug deep into the ground, located the pipeline and from where they tapped from and emptied the oil into a tanker parked inside the bush.

"They used long hoses connected it to the pipe but unfortunately, luck ran out of them. It exploded and killed many of them. You can see some of them burnt to ashes. Some of them, their bodies are still burning. The tanker was still burning."

Reacting, the Imo State Police Public Relations Officer, Henry

Okoye said the command had set up a high-power investigation team to move in and unearth the immediate cause of the incident, as well as arrest the persons involved.

Nigeria must rethink security strategy

—Aliyu Gusau

ALIYU Gusau, a retired general and a former national security adviser (NSA), says it is a "very tall order" to expect a single police force to effectively manage a nation like Nigeria.

Gusau spoke on Wednesday during the graduation ceremony of the Zamfara State community protection guards in Gusau.

In October 2023, Dauda Lawal, governor of Zamfara, inaugurated the steering committee for the establishment of the community protection guards.

The committee was tasked to develop ways for the establishment of the community protection

Landmine kills 12 in Borno

NO fewer than 12 loggers were killed in Borno State near the border with Cameroon, when their vehicle hit a landmine in an area where Boko Haram jihadists are active, two non-governmental organisations working in the region said, yesterday.

The loggers were on their way to the bush to collect firewood when the flat-bed vehicle conveying them rolled over a mine suspected to have been planted by Boko Haram jihadists on the highway outside

Pulka village, the NGOs said in two reports seen by AFP on the incident, which happened on Monday.

"Men suspected to be Boko Haram planted explosives and killed 12 people while many were injured along Pulka to Gwoza route," one of the reports read.

According to the other report, which gave the same toll, seven other loggers were injured "out of which three are very critical and have been evacuated to Maiduguri for further medical attention".

Conflicting court orders over arrest of Rivers Chief of