

# Apapa port not conceived to receive trucks, fuel tankers

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The Lagos State Government has stated that the Apapa port was originally designed to receive imported goods and petroleum products and move them out by railway and pipelines, and not to receive articulated trucks and heavy-duty vehicles that transport these products and goods to different parts of the country.



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The director of the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), Mordecai Danteni Baba Ladan has also blamed the Apapa gridlock on depot owners who refused to construct holding bays in their depots for trucks that load petroleum products, contrary to the terms of their operating licenses.

Speaking at the 2017 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Lagos Zonal Office of the DPR held recently in Lagos, the Lagos State Commissioner for Energy and Mineral Resources, Wale Oluwo stated that all the stakeholders should go back to the original concept used in the design of the Apapa Port as a permanent solution to the gridlock.



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"We must go back to where we started to solve this Apapa gridlock because the port was conceived and started operations, it was not designed to welcome articulated trucks and heavy-duty vehicles to come and take products and goods out from the port. That was not the plan. The plan was for the port to receive goods and those goods are transported by railway through the Iddo terminal to the other parts of Nigeria. That was the concept.

"With respect to petroleum products, the port was constructed to receive petroleum products from the international market and pipe those products through Mossimi Depot in Ogun State to other parts of Nigeria. So, what we are seeing is a complete degradation of the original concept. We must resuscitate the railway lines and we must bring back the pipelines to take products from Apapa to Ejigbo and Mossimi depots and to wherever we agree within ourselves and the DPR," Oluwo explained.

## Committee to solve the Apapa gridlock

The commissioner disclosed that the state government had set up a committee that would start work next week to work out strategies to solve the Apapa gridlock.

Also speaking at the AGM, the DPR director said the Apapa gridlock was a major concern to all the stakeholders, adding that all hands should be on deck to tackle the challenges.

He blamed the depot operators for not operating a holding bay as stipulated in their operating licenses.



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"While we recognise that bad roads and inadequate infrastructure have contributed to the gridlock in Apapa axis, the refusal of depot operators to abide by the laid-down rules has further complicated the problems. For example, all trucks now proceed directly to the depots to queue up for loading instead of staying at the holding bays to be invited when it is their turn to load. Let me reiterate that this practice, encouraged by depot operators, is contrary to the terms of their licenses," Ladan said.

The DPR director reminded the operators that part of the conditions of their licenses is that every depot should operate a holding bay, where trucks are required to park and wait until it is their turn to load at the depots.

Ladan, who was represented by the agency's head of downstream operations, UK Ndanusa, charged the operators to abide by the rules for general safety and decongestion of depot areas.

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