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# **4 killed as fire razes house in Lagos**

**LUKKEY ABAWURU and  
CHIDI UGWU**

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**A**T least four persons were feared dead and property worth millions of naira razed yesterday, at the Peoples' Plaza, near Mandilas building on Lagos Island.

*Daily Champion* learnt that the yet-to-be identified victims were still being trapped in the rubbles.

A witness told our correspondent at the scene of the incident that the fire, which gutted three buildings including a six-storey building started at about 7pm on Wednesday and raged on till yesterday's afternoon.

The witness, who preferred anonymity, traced the cause of the fire to electrical fault occasioned by power fluctuations.

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He said the faulty electrical device sparked off resulting in explosion that later set one of the houses on fire.

He said the victims to escape before they were trapped

Another source also alleged that the fire started following alleged negligence by a woman in one of the flats. He said, the woman lit a candle and forgot to put it off before going for an undisclosed mission.

However, when *Daily Champion* visited the scene about 11.00am yesterday, the six-storey building had been reduced to rubbles.

People believed to be relations of the victim were seen crying while fire fighters battled to put out the fire.

A combined team of fire fighters from Lagos State Fire and Safety Services Alausa

# Fire

Julius Berger Plc and their counterparts from Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) were seen trying to put out the raging fire.

The chief fire officer in the state Ajose Aderemi Yusuf, told *Daily Champion* that "a lot of damage had been done before our team arrived the scene".

Yusuf, however, assured that his men would do everything possible to put out the fire.

He confirmed that three fire fighters sustained minor injuries.

However, another fire fighter who pleaded anonymity decried lack of adequate fire fighting equipment, saying that "a situation like this requires fighting engine with an extension ladder, helicopter and hydriants but we do not

have all these here and that has been our major handicap."

It was gathered that those who lost their lives were shop owners struggling to retrieve some of their goods. Business activities were paralyzed in the area as traders and sympathizers were seen lamenting the loss of properties.

The most affected section was the plaza where shoes are sold. "Only God knows how much I lost today", said Chibueze, who lost his two shops to the inferno.

He said, "when the fire broke out at the third floor of the building, I made frantic efforts to retrieve goods from my second shop located on the second floor but was stopped by men of the Task Force who barricaded the entrance claiming that hoodlums might

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use the opportunity to loot”.

Deputy Police Public Relations Officer (DPPRO), Mr. Olumide Jimoh, an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), said the cause of the fire could not be ascertained as at press time.

# Fire

He confirmed that the three buildings were reduced to rubbles by the fire, which was later put out by the combined efforts of fire fighters.