

# Fire kills 8, destroys N114m property in Katsina

**N**O fewer than eight persons died while property worth N114.5 million were lost in various fire incidents in Katsina State in 2012, an official has said.

Alhaji Gide Sani, the state commissioner for Information, Culture and Home Affairs, said in an interview with the *News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)* in

Katsina that 289 emergency calls were received during the period.

According to him, a total of 30 lives and property worth N386 million were saved by firemen in the state.

The figure, he added, represented a sharp reduction in number of fire outbreaks recorded in 2011, when 19 lives and property worth N400

million were lost.

He said: "In the year 2011, the state fire service department saved 39 lives and property valued at N1.1 billion."

The commissioner attributed the reduction in fire incidents to the continued public enlightenment campaign by the state fire service.

He said the government

had provided fire-fighting equipment and chemicals worth over N10 million which assisted the operations of the fire service department during the year under review.

Sani urged the public to be extra-careful while handling fire, especially during the harmattan, and to report fire incidents to the nearest fire service offices.

## Police prevent 'okada' riders from burning FRSC office

**T**HE prompt intervention of officers and men of the Kebbi State Police Command has saved the lives of officials at the office of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) in Birnin Kebbi.

The *News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)* reports that the office was attacked by scores of irate 'okada' riders who were protesting alleged maltreatment of their members.

The 'okada' riders were said to have been involved in a traffic accident allegedly caused by officials of the FRSC in the town.

The okada riders also wanted to burn down the FRSC office during their protest before they were stopped by the police.

Consequently, scores of patrol vehicles of the FRSC have now been parked in the premises of the 1 Battalion of the Nigerian Army, Dukku Barracks.

Also members of staff of the FRSC have abandoned their office in the city for safety reasons.

The FRSC Sector Commander in Kebbi, Mr Seyi Daniel, confirmed that about 300 angry commercial motor cyclists attempted to manhandle

road safety marshals and burn the FRSC office.

He said the dispute was sparked off when commercial motor cyclists conveying two other passengers violated traffic rules by following the wrong lane to avoid arrest.

Daniel explained that in the process, they were knocked down by an on-coming vehicle.

"The okada rider and two passengers were conveyed to the Federal Medical Centre for treatment for

bruises after the accident by road safety marshals.

"Other commercial motor cyclists were wrongfully mobilised, armed themselves with dangerous weapons, chanting vulgar slogans against the commission with intent to burn the office down."

He said that marshals on duty and other staff were able to contact the Police Command for protection.

"They were also able to convey official vehicles to

safety, he stated, adding that "the intervention of the police prevented damage and violence on FRSC personnel."

He attributed the anger of the motor cyclists to ignorance and misinformation.

"They believed their member involved in the accident had died".

Daniel described commercial motor cyclists as lawless and major violators of traffic rules.

## ...Kill suspected armed robber, capture another

**T**HE Police in Katsina State have killed a suspected armed robber and arrested another during an armed robbery siege at the residence of one Alhaji Rabi'u Dan'Amina in Katsina.

The state's Commissioner of Police, Alhaji Abdullahi Magaji, who made the disclosure while briefing newsmen in Katsina, said the suspect was killed in exchange of fire as the police pursued a gang of suspected robbers in Gidan Dawa Quarters Katsina City early on Monday.

Magaji said one of the robbers was, however, captured at the scene of the incident while the others escaped.

"The one we have arrested is a Nigerien. We have also recovered some valuables they have stolen from the house. We are suspecting that some of the robbers are Nigeriens and some are Nigerians. Nevertheless we are pursuing those at large and God willing, we will arrest them," he stated. NAN learnt that suspected robbers numbering about

20 attacked a renowned Katsina spiritualist, Alhaji Rabi'u Dan'Amina at his residence at 12.30 a.m.

The hoodlums robbed him of an undisclosed amount of money and valuables worth millions of naira.

Recounting his ordeal to newsmen, Dan'Amina said: "the robbers carted away my 11 phones worth over two million, huge amount of money and other valuables worth millions of naira; they only left us with N600 in the house".