

Fireman dies trying to stop Onitsha market inferno

By Chukwujewu Ilozue, Onitsha on December 8, 2015 3:17 am

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5 others sustain injuries

AN unidentified fire service personnel yesterday lost his life while trying to put off a fire that engulfed the Ochanja Market, one of the major markets in Onitsha, the commercial city of Anambra State.

One of his colleagues identified as Sunday Obiora and four others sustained various degrees of injury in the fire

incident which destroyed 15 shops in the market.

The fire, eyewitnesses said, began at the shoe section of the market in the early hours of yesterday.

Governor Willie Obiano, who rushed to the scene to sympathise with traders and those who suffered losses, promised to bear the cost of burial of the deceased and pay medical expenses of the wounded.

He pledged to provide fire-fighting vehicles and other equipment to the traders and urged them to avoid acts capable of bringing controversy to the markets.

Governor Obiano also promised to set up an investigating panel to find out the cause of the inferno and how to avert future occurrence.

A local security operative, who pleaded anonymity, said the fire incident had started from a section of the market at about 5pm on Sunday and the security operatives in the market put it off.

According to him, about N1.5million was recovered from the shops and handed over to the owner.”

The second fire incident started at about 3 am yesterday from one of the shops and extended to about 15 shops despite efforts by fire service men and others who battled to quench the inferno.

He said it was in the process of quenching it that one of the men died. “He met his untimely death when he climbed a one-storey building to spray water on the fire; unfortunately for him, the building collapsed and he died in the process.”

Another official of the fire service, broke one of his legs, while officials of the Onitsha Main Market was among the five that sustained various degrees of injuries, he revealed.