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Kerosene explosion ravages family, claims one

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•N5m needed for treatment

By **Nkasiobi Oluikpe** / *Correspondent, Lagos*

Kerosene explosion is one issue that many believe that the authorities feel incapacitated to control, as it has continued to ravage its victims unabated.

Kerosene explosion is caused by the greed and selfishness of petroleum products marketers, who, without thinking of the consequences, and in their quest to maximize profit, adulterate the product with substances, which at the material time cost less than kerosene.

The result of such selfish and greedy acts is explosion leading to people being rendered homeless, incapacitated, impoverished, deformed and, in very severe cases, killed.

Kerosene sale is a major area where petroleum products marketers exhibit their profiteering greed since it is not regulated by government. A litre of kerosene costs



The victim of Kerosene explosion

between N120 and N150, depending on the point of purchase. This makes it more expensive than some other petroleum products.

It is a situation that one can hardly be careful enough to avert, but investigation reveal that if the smell is irritating, pungent or choking it is likely to have been adulterated. Also, if the product evaporates fast, it is an indication that it is adulterated and hence potentially explosive.

The bitter trails of kerosene explosion remain evergreen in the lives of its victims, as the effects remain with them forever.

A paint dealer, Desmond Onyeaniuibe, like many others, didn't know what fate had in stock for him, when he left his happy family of six, for his usual business on Wednesday, December 24, 2014.

On the fateful day, his wife and five children were having dinner in their living room at 6, Oremeji Street, Ejigbo, at about 9p.m. In anticipation of a power outage, she had the lantern, kerosene and matches around. To lend credence to the slogan "Never Expect Power Always (NEPA), while they were still eating, there was power outage by the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) and everywhere became dark.

Oblivious of what was in the offing for her and since lighting the lantern wasn't an exercise that was new to

her, she reached out for the lantern, filled it with kerosene and struck a match stick. That altered the story of the family.

Hear the story as told by Onyeabuike himself:

“On December 24, 2014, my wife and children were eating when the light went off, she decided to light the lamp, and unfortunately, as she attempted doing that, the lamp exploded and the entire family was engulfed in fire; my wife and five children.

“Some good neighbours heard the shout and ran in to help them. They were then taken to some nearby hospitals, who refused taking them in, except one that admitted them till the next day and referred them to the General Hospital.

“We left there for another private hospital, De Godwin Hospital, Ejigbo, which said they could not handle the situation. We then went to Gbagada General Hospital. Unfortunately, when we got there, we were told that all government hospitals were on strike, so we could not be admitted there.

“We had to move down to Angel Hospital, Coker, Orile-Iganmu, where they were accepted and admitted.

“My only son was unconscious for some days with oxygen being passed into him, he came back to life 10 days after admission, talking, eating and drinking until about a week after which, the situation degenerated.

“Unfortunately, on January 15, 2015, he died. According to the doctors in the hospital, he was 93 per cent burnt. The others are responding to treatment, but offsetting the bill of N5,000,000 is a major challenge to me.

“That is why I am pleading with public spirited Nigerians, governments and corporate organisations to come to my help so that my family can leave the hospital once they are discharged.”

The charitable act of Angel Hospital, Coker, is worthy of commendation. They did what 80 per cent of hospitals in Nigeria would not do. That is why, like Onyeabuike pleaded, Nigerians, governments, corporate and religious organisations should come to the aid of this family.

The misfortune that befell the family isn't something they brought upon themselves. If anything, the source of the adulterated kerosene should be investigated and brought to book.

Be that as it may, the seller from whom the kerosene was bought, purchased it from someone else, and that person bought from another, and the story continues. As it is, nobody will ever accept responsibility for it.

It could be you; it could be me, it could be someone else. Be touched by the milk of human compassion to come to the aid of this family by paying any amount the spirit moves you to give into:

Keystone Bank, Desmond Onyeabuibe – Account number: 6007554674.

God will bless you as you contribute to ensuring the discharge of this entire family that has been in hospital since December 24, 2014. What is needed is N5,000,000. Nigerians can do it!

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