

How generator fume killed prophet, two children

•Wife, other kids in critical condition

OCTOBER 23, 2011 was a tragic Sunday for an Ijoko, Ogun State-based cleric, simply identified as Prophet Ayo. He died together with two of his children while the fate of his wife and two other children now hangs in the balance.

The tragedy resulted from the family's exposure to generator fume in their No 7, Adegbola Adekunle Street, Alasia, Ijoko, Ogun State residence.

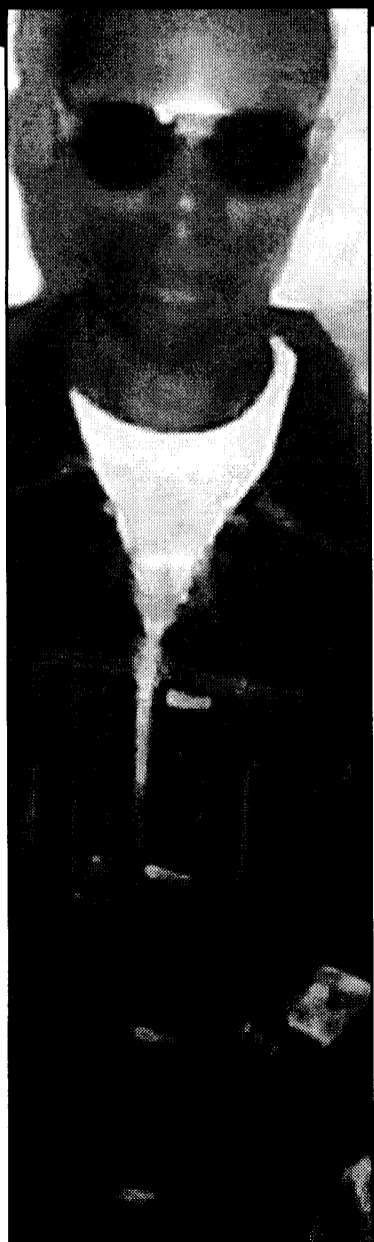
On the fateful day, the prophet was said to have rented some Yoruba films from a nearby home video outlet to watch together with his family. He was also said to have been given some telephone handsets by the owner of the movie shop to charge.

He then settled down with his wife and four children to watch the movies. Midway into the fun, a power outage occurred and the 38-year-old cleric quickly switched on the generator and placed it close to the door to shield it from rain.

However, the decision to place the generator at the doorstep became the family's undoing. He, his wife and children fell asleep as they were watching the films. The smoke from the generator later engulfed their room in the uncompleted building.

The following morning, those who had given their phones to Ayo to charge stormed his house to collect their phones but met the door locked. After repeatedly knocking at the door without any response, they became worried that the family was not yet awake and it was already going to 5:30 pm.

The window to their room was said to have been covered with curtains, a situation which forced those around to forcibly open the door.

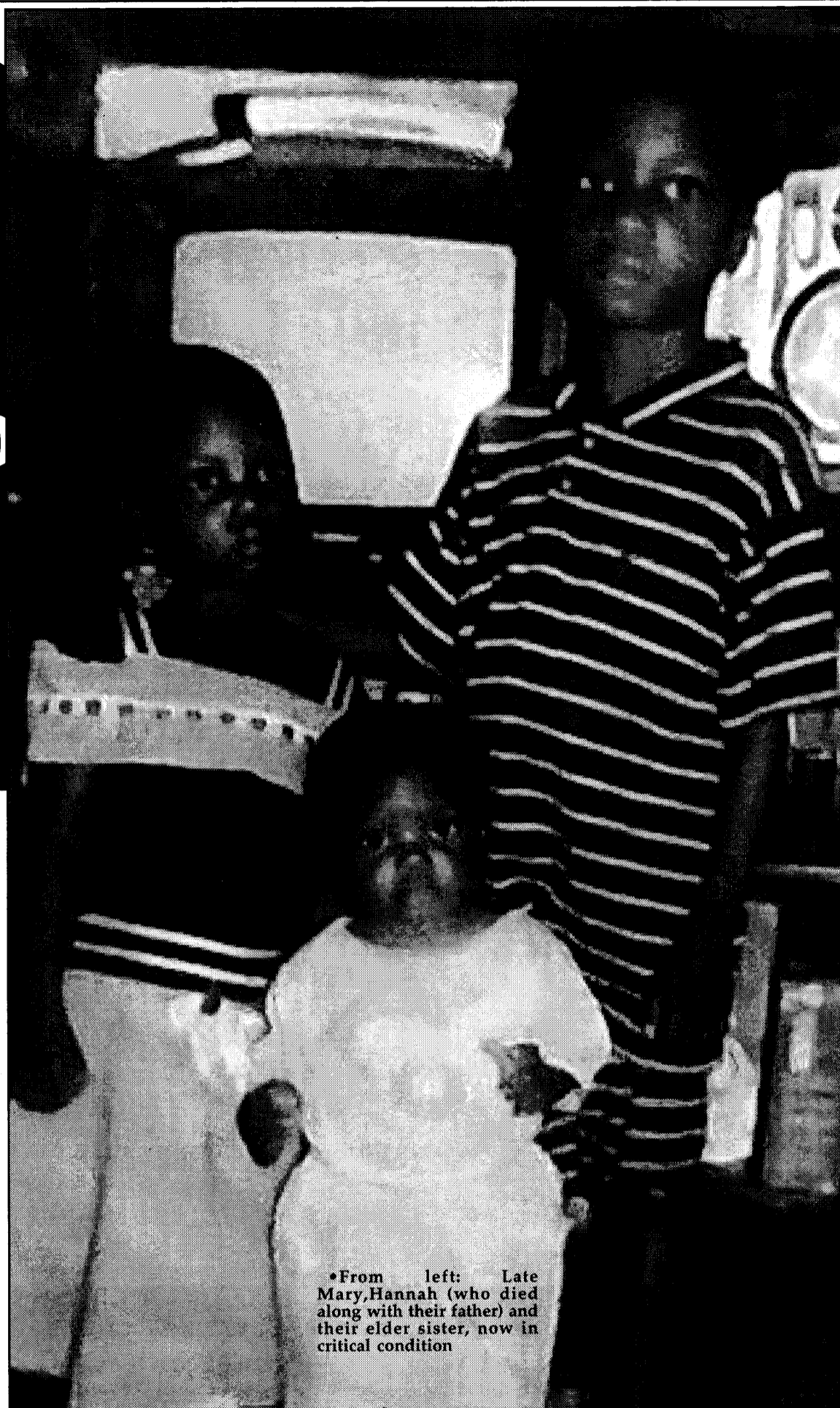


•The late Ayo

■ Kunle AKINRINADE ■

It was gathered that it was not the first time the late Ayo would put his generator at the doorstep.

Recalling how it all happened, one of his neighbours, who spoke in confidence, said: "Prophet



•From left: Late Mary, Hannah (who died along with their father) and their elder sister, now in critical condition

“When the door was forced open, we saw the body of the prophet’s wife resting on her last child’s and she was foaming in the mouth. Her big body had pressed down that of her five-year-old daughter almost beyond recognition”

Ayo was fond of watching movies whenever he was at home on Sunday. On the day of the incident, he had just returned home when he decided to get some video CDs from a nearby video rental shop. He was also given some GSM phones by people at the

shop for charging. He returned home to watch the films.

“Not long after, there was a power outage and he quickly dashed out to switch on his generator. He placed the generator near his door and they were watching films till very late before they slept off

without switching off the generator.

“It was those who gave the prophet phones to charge that alerted neighbours when they knocked repeatedly on the door of their room without any response. The door was then forced open at about 5.30 pm.

“When the door was forced open, we saw the body of the prophet’s wife resting on her last child’s and she was foaming in the mouth. Her big body had pressed down that of her five-year-old daughter almost beyond recognition.

“Prophet Ayo was found in a corner of the room almost lifeless, with other children hovering between life and death.”

Another resident, who asked not to be named, described the incident as mysterious.

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lucky to make it to the hospital but were in a coma for some time.

However, the Akoko, Ondo State-born widow and her kids were moved to the residence of one of her relations somewhere in Ikotun, Lagos, after they were prematurely discharged from the

hospital when they could no longer pay for treatment.

The Ijesa-Isu, Ekiti State-born carpenter turned prophet was also said not to be in good terms with his elder brother because of his role as a cleric in a parish of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church.

Speaking with our correspondent, Oyewole said: "It is true that Ayo and I had issues, and it was because of the way he abandoned his job as a carpenter to answer his purported 'God's call'. Why would someone who called himself a cleric not go to church and opted to watch movies on Sundays?

"I was the one who brought him to Lagos after he finished his apprenticeship as a carpenter. He was the son of my twin sister and I thought I could help him make a good living by bringing him to Lagos. But he was such a heady person.

"When he was living with me, I warned him several times to be of good conduct but he would not listen. After he started living on his own, he told me that God had called him to serve him, which I initially queried. But when he insisted, I took him to a friend of mine who is a founder of a parish of Cherubim and Seraphim Church.

"While he was serving under the man, he usually quarrelled with him and I had to broker a truce

between them on several occasions. He was later given a place by his spiritual boss to establish his own church. He even invited me to his church's annual anniversary, which I did not attend on principle. His wife later explained to me how members deserted the church on account of his high handedness.

"After he lost his members, his church ceased to exist and he started operating from his residence as a seer. I admonished him times without number to find a church to worship on Sundays but he said he was not ready to bow to any pastor again. He had since resorted to staying at home on Sundays to watch movies.

"But I strongly believe that the incident that claimed his life was beyond the ordinary. It could be that he was made to suffer for the sins of those he had liberated from the power of darkness or he might have handled a job beyond his power as a prophet.

"For now, his widow and the children have been moved to a location to forestall an influx of sympathisers. But they are also not hale and hearty. They were discharged from the hospital when they could no longer afford the hospital bills.

"I am using this opportunity to appeal to Nigerians to come to their aid so they could live normally once again."



•Prophet Ayo's widow

He said: "My house is just a short distance away from his. I can tell you that this incident remains a mystery to me because of the way it occurred. The wife of the prophet even confirmed after she was resuscitated, that they were about praying that night after watching the television when something like a whirlwind took over their room and they could no longer control themselves as the wind over-powered them. She said that even her late husband was holding a bible close to his chest while leading the prayer before the unfortunate incident."

The elder brother of the deceased prophet, Mr. Taiwo Oyewole, was said to have rushed the victims to some private hospitals in town but they were rejected on the grounds that their conditions had got beyond control. They were subsequently taken to Ota General Hospital where they were admitted.

Mary, the youngest child of the family, was said to have given up the ghost on the way to the hospital. And while arrangements were being made to bury her, her seven-year-old sister also died.

Prophet Ayo himself only survived another six days before he gave up the ghost. His wife, popularly called Mama Hannah, and her remaining two kids were