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## Three siblings, three others die in Lagos fire

Posted by: Precious Igbonwelundu and Ebele Boniface in [Featured](#), [News](#) 12 hours ago

### •One dies in building collapse

Fire swept through some parts of Lagos between Sunday and yesterday, leaving no fewer than six persons dead.

Another person died when a building collapsed on Victoria Island, Lagos, yesterday.

Fire razed the popular Balogun Market on Lagos Island, a sawmill on Ebute Meta, Lagos Mainland and the Igando Dumpsite on the LASU-Iba Road.

Four children, a septuagenarian and a young man died in Sawmill fire, which started about 9.36pm on Sunday.

Among them were three siblings, Amidat, Quayub and Ahmed, aged between three and seven.

They were burnt to death in their shanty near the Sawmill.

Emergency workers said they recovered one body on the scene.

Sources said the siblings were last seen around 8pm, few minutes before they died in the fire which affected Jebba, Kano and Cole streets.

It was gathered that the septuagenarian was bed-ridden in a storey-building affected by the fire.

The fire was so intense that motorists plying the Third Mainland Bridge on Sunday night could feel the heat.

The Balogun Market fire, which started about 3am, destroyed goods worth millions of naira.

No fewer than five plazas, including a Diamond Bank branch on the street, were affected by the fire. The incident caused traffic gridlock in and out of Lagos Island early yesterday.

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Most of the traders did not know their shops were on fire until they got to the market.

The fire affected Balogun, Gbajumo and Fred McWen streets, disrupting business activities.

Most of the attached shops including containers built on transformers were destroyed.

Although the fire service deployed its aerial fighter to the scene, the fire kept raging. Many attributed its intensity to the stored inside some shops.

A trader dared the raging fire climbing a building to recover his safe.

The trader, who was seen climbing the building from the Gbajumo axis, resurfaced with a huge safe. Many watched in awe as he took the risk.

Many women wept profusely as they could not recover anything from their shops and warehouses. Some men among them vented their anger on the local government for according to them, installing road blocks which fire trucks easy access.

A victim, Rafatu Adeyemo, who said she was training her children with proceeds from her shop, wept in front of her shop, which is inside Rich Plaza.

Felicia Lawani, who said two of her shops and her warehouse were razed, stated that her neighbour alerted her.

"I have two warehouses and a shop in the building. I sell shoes. I did not hear about the fire on time. I cannot really talk to you now because I am confused. This is the second time that I will lose my goods to fire. The first one was that of UBA Plaza; I lost everything. Not even a pin was recovered. Now the same thing has happened again," she lamented.

Mrs. Vera Ezenma, who just stocked her warehouse last week, cried uncontrollably as she was stopped from entering the fire.

She said: "I have two shops and my main warehouse here. My husband is in China and he sent the goods to me. I just offloaded my goods on Monday and Wednesday. I packed them in the main warehouse here. Look at me now; the whole goods are gone. I did not pick anything out of this place. I came here around past 5am. Someone called me on phone that my shop was burning. Where do I start? What do I do?"

Chukwudi Azubuike said: "People should come here and see things for themselves. The local government installed blockades on the roads. If they had not put these hindrances which do not allow vehicles to pass, the over five hours we spent trying to remove them would have been useful in saving our wares.

"Go and tell them that I will break my voter's card. I cannot vote for anybody. This is the second time two of my shops would be burnt. The first one was at Tejuosho Market. Two of my shops got burnt and I did not get a single thing out. Now I have lost two of my shops again. This is too much and I cannot take it. What government enjoys the sufferings of its people? They enjoy scattering our business and our money. What do they want me to do? The entire road was blocked and the fire truck could not come in."

More than four buildings were razed by the Igando Dumpsite fire.

The fire was said to have been caused by the inflammable materials dumped at the site, such as tyres.

The fire, which started at about 4pm on Sunday, raged till mid-day yesterday.

While inspecting the extent of damage at the Balogun Market, the Iyaloja General, Mrs. Folashade Tinubu-Ojo, appealed to the traders to remain calm. She said stock would be taken after the fire had been put out.

She promised to appeal to Governor Babatunde Fashola to assist the affected traders, adding that the market would be re-planned without sentiments.

"We cannot give an account of the number of shops burnt or the extent of damage because fire-fighting operation is still going on. But I can tell you that many things have been destroyed here. About five storey buildings and many key clamps are affected. We will plead with the governor to see whatever assistance that can be rendered. It is not only markets that are burning. We are in the harmattan season and the tendency of fire outbreak is high.

"What our people need to do is to be careful. Like the case of the Ebute Meta Plank Market, people should not smoke around there since there is the likelihood of it causing inferno. We will also need to put sentiment aside and address the issue of re-planning this market (Balogun)," she said.

An engineer simply named Oluwatosin died in the Victoria Island building collapse. The same building at 249B Muri Okunola Street, collapsed last year, killing no fewer than 30 people.

When The Nation visited the scene, the body, which was retrieved from the debris, was covered with a white cloth awaiting evacuation.

It was gathered that the deceased had gone into the building to ascertain the state of the slabs. A man who gave his name as Pastor Reuben Adeyemo claimed the deceased is from Ondo State, but could not say where his family lives.

Sources said he was a civil engineer with a construction company that is in charge of the building which has been marked for demolition by the state building control agency.

Eyewitnesses claim the building fell around 11.30am, less than 30 minutes after they had exchanged pleasantries with the deceased.
