

## CITYBEATS

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## Pastor's wife, kids, guest killed as mistress 'sets' home ablaze



•The late Taiwo



•The burnt apartment... yesterday

**A** GONY struck at Ejigbo, a Lagos suburb after a pastor's mistress allegedly set his family's apartment on fire.

In the process, the pastor's wife, two children and a relative died.

The incident which occurred around 1am on Saturday at 46, Oladunni Memorial Street, Double Powerline, has thrown the neighbourhood into mourning.

While the pastor's wife, Mary Shofolabo, his children Taiwo, 19, and Iredamola and a relative, Kazeem, 7, died at the General Hospital, Gbagada where they were rushed to, Segun Shofolabo and Elijah Obadina were still being treated at the hospital.

According to the neighbours, Mrs Shofolabo was heard screaming "Iya Rachel what are you doing at my backyard" "thief" "thief" before an explosive sound.

It was gathered that Iya Rachel, a tenant at Pastor Isaac Shofolabo's, was dating the 'man of God'.

Shofolabo is the pastor-in-charge of the Celestial Church of God, Joy of the Lord Parish inside the premises.

A man who refused to be named said Iya Rachel deliberately set out to kill all the occupants of the apartment, adding that the only passage into the place was locked from outside.

He said: "It is a terrible thing, very shocking. It happened around 1am. It was Mama (the late Mrs Shofolabo) that woke up other residents with her scream. I was in my own room when I heard her voice and came out."

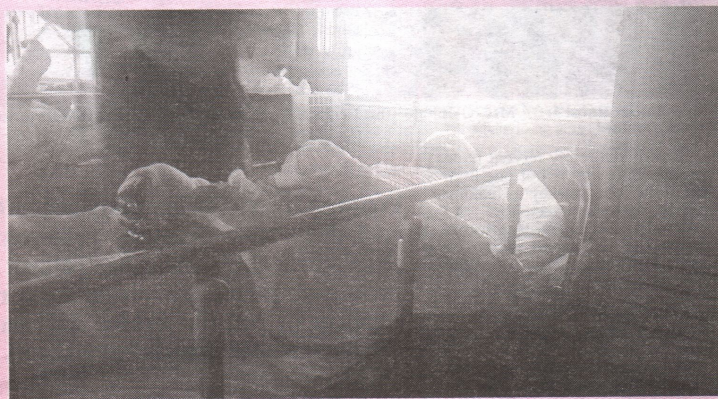
"Coming out, I saw fire on her body and she was shouting that Iya Rachel has burnt everyone in her house. That she saw someone moving from her house and thought it was a thief. But when she looked from her window, she saw that it was Iya Rachel."

"Since they are not close, she screamed and asked her what she was doing in her house. She woke up the other children at home and told them she saw a thief moving round and when they tried to go through the door, they realised it was locked from the outside."

"It was when they were returning to their room that they heard the explosion and people started running. It was Mama that used her hand to break her window so that they can all come out from there."



•The injured Segun in hospital... yesterday



•Elijah writhing in pains on hospital bed... yesterday

By Precious Igbonwelundu

"When I saw her, fire was on her body and she was shouting that we should go and help her children inside the house that Iya Rachel has set fire in her house. I got to the place and saw Taiwo, Segun, Elijah and one other person."

"They were the ones who told me that Kazeem was still inside, at that time, the fire was very heavy and no one could enter. Neighbours started trying to put out the fire while some of us rushed them to Isolo General Hospital but they were rejected."

"We went to a private hospital and they said we have to deposit N200,000. Since we didn't have the money, we rushed to Gbagada General Hospital."

"There was no car and so, Mama and others were put inside tricycle, I stood by the edge of the tricycle, while Taiwo was carried on a motorcycle. By the time we got to the hospital, around 2am, Taiwo was swollen."

"They started treating them and they were responding. Mama even told the doctor on duty what she saw and explained everything to him. But later in the day, she passed on

and few minutes after her, Taiwo died too."

"Their father came back from vigil around 4am and he saw what has happened. He followed some of the neighbours to the hospital to see them. The police was contacted that night."

At the trauma and burns section of the Gbagada General, family members and sympathisers trooped in to see Segun and Elijah, who were severely burnt.

Their siblings - Bunmi, Felix and Kehinde - corroborated the claim by the neighbours that their mother narrated what she saw in the presence of the doctor before she died.

Weeping uncontrollably, Bunmi said yesterday was Taiwo's 19th birthday, adding that she was excited because her colleagues at her work place planned to celebrate it for her.

Bunmi said: "Taiwo was very happy because it is the first time her birthday would be celebrated. At the saloon where she worked, her madam and colleagues had planned a celebration for her and she even called my cousin around 12am on Saturday telling her of the dress code and her new dance step."

"We do not have anyone. Our mummy was our only support and now, she has been taken from us. My daddy knew the woman over five years ago when she moved into our compound with her husband. But her husband left when he discovered that she was my father's lover."

"The woman has been causing problems for my mother. She was the reason I left the house. At a point, I told my mother to leave them that she should not put her mind in whatever they were doing. Yet, the woman was not satisfied."

"There was anniversary at the church on November 27 and people heard the woman complaining that my mother was overdressed and looking beautiful. That so, she could still look beautiful. They told my mother but she doesn't take such things seriously. She didn't read any meanings to it. Now, the worst has happened."

"We are crying for justice. We have reported to the police and we are begging them to investigate well because we know that something is not right. Let whoever was responsible for the fire and deaths of my mother, my sister, brother and Kazeem pay for it. We want justice."

## Artisan 'stabs' banker to

