

community, shooting into the

## ② One killed as arsonists raze Lagos spare parts market

**A** MAN was yesterday morning confirmed dead after fire razed the Akere spare parts market in Ajegunle, Lagos.

The deceased, identified as a security man in the market, was reportedly shot by the suspected arsonists as he tried to prevent them from burning down the facility.

The Nation learned that the armed men stormed the market around 3am, set several shops ablaze and shot the security man before fleeing.

Policemen from Tolu Division and officials of the Lagos State Fire Service managed to put out the inferno, it was said.

The Fire Service said rows of auto spare parts shops were burnt, adding that rescuers kept the fire from spreading to a nearby gas station and adjoining buildings.

Police spokesman Benjamin Hundeyin said an investigation had begun.

President Muhammadu Buhari expressed sadness over the incident.

The President, who also expressed concerns over repeated fire outbreaks in public places in Lagos, called on relevant authorities in the state to take necessary precautions to stem the tide.

In a statement issued by his Senior Special Assistant on Media and Publicity, Mallam Garba Shehu, President Buhari sent his sympathies to the victims of the latest fire incident.

"President Muhammadu Buhari has learned, with deep sadness, the death of a 65-year-old security guard, the loss of personal property and means of livelihood of some hard-working Nigerians at the Akere Spare Parts market in the Apa-

The residents expressed fear

actual casualty figure was yet to be ascertained.

- Buhari, Sanwo-Olu offer sympathies
- Hostel, market burnt in Anambra, Kano

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pa Ajegunle area of Lagos State.

"The President's deepest sympathies are with the traders and their families," the statement said.

Gov. Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State also commiserated with the traders.

Sanwo-Olu in a statement by the Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr Gbenga Omotoso, yesterday, expressed shock at the incident.

The governor said he genuinely shared the grief of the victims, hence he ordered a probe into the fire.

He implored residents of the state to desist from attributing the unfortunate incident to any political party or its agents.

In Kano, 19 shops and one mosque were razed at Kasuwar

Rimi market yesterday,

In Anambra, some hostel blocks at St. John's Science and Technical College, Alor in Idemili South Local Government area of Anambra State were also razed by fire on Monday morning. Property worth over N100 million was reportedly lost in the blaze.

The Nation gathered that the fire started after several unsuccessful attempts to put on the school's generating set.

Principal of the college, Rev. Fr. Dr. Francis Unegbu, who confirmed the incident yesterday, said no casualty was recorded.

He said the school mobilised students to put fight the fire after futile attempts to contact the fire service.

He said, "The fire started when the students were having their breakfast. Properties worth between N80 to N100 million were lost in the inferno."

## Ex-Imo deputy governor arrested

- We've no hand in it, says state govt

**A** FORMER Imo State deputy governor, Gerald Irona, has been arrested by the police.

A source said that Irona, who was deputy to Emeka Ihedioha, was arrested yesterday.

It was not clear why Irona was arrested but a statement by his media consultant, Destiny Ugorji, accused the state government of orchestrating his arrest over what he described as "trumped-up charges."

The statement reads: "As part of its strategy towards weakening opposition in Imo State, the Imo State Government, Wednesday, orchestrated the

From Chris Njoku, Owerri

arrest of the immediate past Deputy Governor, Engr. Gerald Irona, over trumped-up charges.

"At the time of this statement, Wednesday afternoon, the former Deputy Governor had written his Statement at the Police, a bail bond issued, signed, and all the bail conditions fulfilled.

Commissioner for Information and Strategy Declan Emelumba absolved the government of any involvement in Irona's arrest.

"I don't know anything about his arrest," he said.

## \$498,000: Lawmaker arraigned in Rivers