

perate effort to force the burglary proofs of her window open but she could not, while the charred remains of one of her children, was found clinging to her body.

"At that time, we tried to break the wall to rescue her but suddenly the roof fell on her. When we eventually succeeded in pulling down the burglary, we saw her charred remains and those of other members of the family on the ground. We could not do anything again but had to leave because of thick smoke," one of the neighbours at the scene had narrated.

Though details of the sad incidents were sketchy initially, the victims were later identified as Mrs Philo Anwuzia, her two young sons - Ekene (16), Emeka (7) and a relative known as Nwike (30), and a neighbour. In June, a pathetic fire incident also claimed the lives of an octogenarian and his granddaughter at Agbado Crossing area of Lagos.

The fire was said to have been caused by a cooking stove placed in the passage of the building which eventually burnt to death an 82-year-old man, Samuel Adeola, and his 12-year-old granddaughter, Mariam, in their resi-

dence at No. 18, Bailey Street, Agbado Crossing, a border of Ogun and Lagos.

Mariam was said to be cooking with the stove on the passage in the victims' residence, where an eye witness said the stove exploded at about 2:52 p.m. when Mariam attempted to put more kerosene into it. Investigations suggest that that rising cases of fire incidents in the state might not be unconnected with a number of factors including power surges, faulty electrical apparatus and general carelessness of people in dealing with naked flames.

When contacted, the Director of Lagos State Fire Service, Mr Rasaq Fadipe, also affirmed that carelessness on the part of residents in dealing with naked flames, was one of the major causes of fire. This is believed to be the case of the fire incident at Shagari Estate, where the inferno had been attributed to a lit candle whose flame had set the curtains in one of the rooms in the building on fire.

"We, therefore, want to urge people to desist from making use of candles or any other open flame in their homes, rechargeable lamps are better. Candles might seem small and innocuous but the havoc they can wreak can be unimaginable as in this case," Mr Fadipe said to