

# Rev King, two others arraigned, released on bail

**Kayode Ketefe**

**T**HE General Overseer of the Christian Praying Assembly, Ajao Estate, Lagos, Rev. Emeka King, was on Wednesday arraigned with two members of his church before a Magistrate's Court presided over by Mr. Teslim Elias in Ebute-Meta.

King, Donatus Chiasor and Miss Kelechi were jointly arraigned on a four-count charge of conspiracy to attempt murder, attempted murder, causing of grievous bodily harm and for unlawfully wounding seven persons.

The accused persons

pleaded not guilty to all the charges, which were said to be contrary to and punishable under different sections of the Criminal Code.

After hearing their lawyers' plea for bail, the magistrate granted the accused persons bail in the sum of N2million each.

The lawyers are Mr. Mike Okoye (for King and Kelechi) and Felix Chikelu (for Chiasor).

This was in spite of the opposition to the bail application by the prosecution lawyer, Mr. Ozogbu Williams.

The accused persons are also to produce two sureties

each who will enter into bond in the like sum.

The magistrate said, "These sureties must show evidence of gainful employment and must either be property owners within the Lagos metropolis or public servants of not below the level of a director or an executive director of a reputable company.

"The sureties must also depose to affidavit of means and adduce evidence of both their official and residential addresses which must be verified by the prosecutor."

The 40 year-old King and the two other accused persons were alleged to have de-

liberately set seven members of their church on fire after pouring petroleum on them on July 22. The offence is punishable under Section 338 of the Criminal Code.

One of the victims, Miss Ann King, who was said to have suffered "grievous bodily harm" from the fire was reported dead by the prosecution lawyer.

The remaining six victims said to be "wounded" after they were set ablaze are Olisa Chiejinna, Onuorah Chisobah, Uche Iwoba, Vivian Ezeocha, Bunmi Olisa and Nwere Jessica.

Immediately after the mag-

istrate ruled on the accused persons' bail and adjourned the trial till August 11, policemen from the State Criminal Investigation Department, led them into two commercial buses which drove them away.

Meanwhile, there was a mild drama in the court premises as members of the church were divided in their opinions on the arraignment of their leader.

While some carried placard protesting the innocence of King, other members were busy telling journalists the "evil deeds" of the embattled cleric.