

## Baby killed, 20 houses burnt in fire disaster

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**T**RAGEDY struck in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, on Sunday, when an early morning fire killed an eight-month old baby and razed 30 houses in the D-Line area of the city.

The parents of the baby, who sustained serious fire burns, were however rescued from the fire by brave neighbours.

Eyewitnesses said the victims were partially burnt before their neighbours could come to their aid.

Most residents of the burnt residential area located off Egeleke Street, along Khana Street in D-Line, did not know what caused the fire.

Some residents, who spoke

to our correspondent on Sunday, said that an explosion was heard around the area before the fire started around 2 am when most of the residents were fast asleep.

Our correspondent learnt that while other residents were able to escape leaving their property behind, the parents of the burnt baby were trapped inside their room.

The brave ones however managed to break their walls and ran out of their houses before the fire engulfed the houses.

Before help came for the duo, said to hail from Ukanafun, Akwa Ibom State, the fire had burnt part of their bodies and residents struggled to rent their clothes gutted by fire to prevent further damage to their skin.

When our correspondent visited the scene, the remains of the burnt baby was said to have been buried while the parents had been rushed to an undisclosed clinic for treatment.

Sympathisers trooped to the scene as owners of the houses burnt in the inferno still scavenged the debris of the fire to see if they could recover some of their precious belongings.

Among the buildings torched by the fire was the Bethel of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star sandwiched between residential buildings.

Men of the fire service were seen trying to put off the fire when our correspondent visited the scene.