

Fire guts Sharia judge's home, kills four kids

Four children were killed and one woman injured when fire gutted the residence of the judge of the Sharia Court of Appeal, Khadi Ibrahim Imam, on Friday, in Gwagwalada in the FCT.

Speaking to the *News Agency of Nigeria* on the incident, Imam said the fire started on Thursday night at 1a.m. and lasted for three hours before it was put under control. He said the fire was caused by an electrical spark from a generator, adding, "The four children were inside a separate room crying for help. We did everything to save them and firemen arrived only after their death."

He said among the four children, three were girls and were aged between seven years 18 years, while the boy was four years old. Commenting on the incident, the Gwagwalada area council chairman, Alhaji Zakari Angulu, expressed shock and condemned the Fire Service for arriving late. Angulu said a committee would be set up to investigate the nonchalant attitude of the fire service men and report to the minister.

In his reaction, Gwagwalada Fire Service Officer, Akinola Abayomi, renounced the blame and described the incident as unfortunate. He said, "We

were only informed one hour after the incident. We got there and stopped the escalation of the fire," adding

that inaccessibility to water was the bane of the service.

NAN reports that many personalities attended the

funeral prayers of the children including the Chief Judge of Abuja, Justice Muhammad Gumi.



•L-R: Oyo State Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Mr. Kunle Isola; Head of Service, Mr. Ebenezer Okebukola; and Deputy Governor Taofeek Arapaja, at a briefing on the forthcoming National Cocoa Day in Ibadan on Friday. Photo, NAN.

MEND claims responsibility for

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta on Friday claimed responsibility for the destruction of a Chevron facility in Delta State as well as a major pipeline in Rivers State.

In two separate emails to *Saturday Punch*, the spokesman of the group, Jomo Gbomo, said MEND provided logistic support for

Ibanga Isine, Port Harcourt the operation in Delta State.

He also said that the destruction of the Shell Petroleum Development Company's pipeline was carried out by MEND's commandos. The damaged pipeline is located at Adamakiri and crosses from the Cawthorn Channel to Bonny.

The group vowed that

many other locations in the region would be attacked soon. It indicated that those who attacked the Chevron facility on Wednesday were would-be members of the organisation, adding that they had used the opportunity to test their capabilities. MEND further claimed that troops from the Joint Task Force, Operation Restore Hope, fled at the

I've no hand in Sylva's removal. Longat