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Fire: Seven beggars burnt to death, six others injured

By Segun Olatunji, Kaduna

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No fewer than seven physically-challenged persons were burnt to death in Kaduna on Wednesday in an early morning inferno, which gutted the temporary site of the Disabled Rehabilitation Centre located along Kano Road in the state capital.

Six other disabled persons were also injured in the incident, which destroyed property worth millions of naira were hospitalised.

The fire, which eye-witnesses said started at about 5:00am, completely razed the central part of the rehabilitation centre leaving the other surrounding buildings within the vicinity blackened from the smoke generated by the inferno.

The President of the state chapter of the Joint Association of Persons with Disabilities, Rilwan Mohammed, confirmed that seven disabled persons died in the incident while six others were admitted at the Barau Dikko Specialist Hospital, Kaduna.

Mohammed said that the cause of the incident was yet to be ascertained, adding that many of the victims would have escaped unhurt but for their disability.

He regretted that the inability of men of the fire services to arrive at the centre on time contributed immensely to high number of lives and properties lost in the inferno.

He said, "We could not say this is what led to the fire. But it started around 5.am in the morning. We lost seven of our people to the fire while six people are currently receiving treatment at the Barau Dikko Specialist Hospital, while property worth millions of naira was consumed by the fire.

"The state fire services did not get here on time, before they got here over 70 per cent of the property has been engulfed by the fire.

"The most pathetic part of the incident is that some of the blind persons that could not see were running into the fire, while some cripples who could not walk, saw the fire but were unable to run away from it because of their handicap."

Meanwhile, a portion of a building at Barracks bus stop, Ifako-Gbagada, Lagos went up in flames on Wednesday evening, claiming property worth millions of naira.

An eye-witness said the upper floor of the one-storey building got burnt in the fire.

Policemen attached to the Rapid Response Squad and fire service personnel were deployed in the scene to restore order.

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