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## Two children burn to death in Lagos fire

AUGUST 13, 2014 BY SAMSON FOLARIN ■ 0 COMMENTS

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**•Sympathisers in front of the house**

| credits: Photo:Samson Folarin

Tragedy struck on Monday evening as two kids, Kosiso Chukwu and Munachi Henry, both two years of age, were burnt to death in a fire that gutted an apartment in the Mafoluku, Oshodi area of Lagos.

Their six-month-old sister was, however, rescued by a nine-year-old girl, Perpetual.

Our correspondent learnt that Perpetual and Munachi were on a holiday visit to the Chukwus when the incident happened.

PUNCH Metro learnt from residents that the fire started after the mother of the house, identified simply as Mrs. Chukwu, lit a candle in the room and left the house.

She was said to have also padlocked the burglar-proof gate before leaving the house.

A neighbour said, "It was around 8pm that the incident happened. There were four of them inside the house. While Kosiso and Munachi were in the inner room, sleeping on a mat, the six-month-old baby and Perpetual were in the sitting room.

"Their mother lit a candle in the inner room, shut the gate and left the house.

"The candle fell on the mat and caught fire."

She said the smoke emanating from the inner room woke up Perpetual, who quickly picked up the baby beside her.

She was said to have struggled to push out the six-month-old through the iron bars, before wriggling out too.

It was learnt that Perpetual sustained injuries in the process.

She was said to have raised the alarm which drew the attention of neighbours to the incident.

Another resident, who did not identify himself said, "We mobilised and began pouring water on the fire, but it was not enough."

The fire reportedly raged to an adjacent white bungalow before extending to the roof of another one-storey building beside the house.

The inferno was said to have been worsened by the fuel in some generators in the houses.

PUNCH Metro learnt that residents initially were not aware that the two victims were in the house until it was too late.

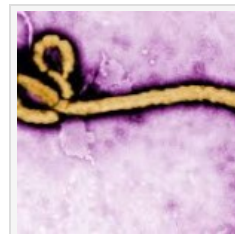
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An eyewitness said, "The mother came back and started screaming, 'my children'. That was the time we knew the kids were there; it was too late."

The owner of the building, Mr. Adewale Adesoye, said men of the Lagos State Fire Service were alerted to the incident that night.

He said, "We called the fire service, but they missed their way. By the time they got here, the damage had been done."

Our correspondent learnt that the remains of the victims had been taken by the police.

When *PUNCH Metro* visited the scene on Tuesday morning, a crowd of sympathisers were seen lamenting the death of the children.

Some officials from the Oshodi-Isolo Local Government Area, were also sighted locking up some houses within the premises.

One of the health officials, who pleaded anonymity, said, "Can you see that the houses are already in bad shape? There's no way people can be allowed to continue here because it's dangerous and more people will die if we don't do anything."

The Head of the Lagos State fire Service, Mr. Rasak Fadipe, said, "The fire started in the night and two children died. It was caused by a lit candle stick. We were able to contain the spread of the fire."

The Deputy Police Public Relations Officer, Lelma Kolle, an Assistant Superintendent of Police, confirmed the incident.

He added that the corpse of the children had been taken to the mortuary.

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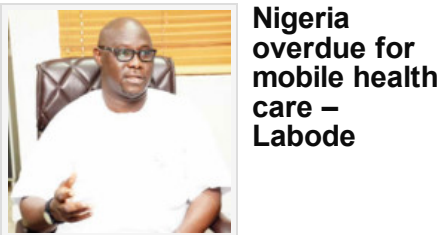
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