

any... they came to church on Thursday. The

that the boy and his grandmother died."

PUNCH Metro learnt that the suspects; Tunde Jimoh

four AK-47 guns with 128 rounds of ammunition from

Special Anti-Robbery Squad.

The police said the gang members lived and operated from Kogi State.

Speaking with PUNCH Metro, Jimoh, 28, who hails from Okenne, denied the knowledge of the guns.

He said, "I am a commercial driver. I work in Osogbo, Osun State. It was one of my friends who pleaded with me to help him drive a car from Osogbo to Lokoja. He said he had a customer in Lokoja that wanted to buy a car. He told me there was a gun in the boot. I told him I could not go alone, and he said he would come with me. In the process, the police arrested both of us.

"I am married with two children. I had helped my friend to bring a vehicle from Ilorin to Kaduna many times in the past. I do not know anything about gunrunning."

Forty-three-year-old Olu, an indigene of Yegba in Kogi State, who usually disguised as a soldier during their trips, confessed that he went into the gunrunning business because of poverty.

He said, "I needed some money. A cousin called Gboye said someone was going to pay me some money, and I should come over to Lokoja.

"While in Lokoja on December 20, the person told me to come to Ilorin and bring a car for him. He said he would give me N50,000. I knew the vehicle had a gun. It was while I was to collect it that we were arrested."

The Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Kenneth Nwosu, said other members were still being hunted by the police.

He said, "The two suspects were arrested where they went to procure guns. They are in SARS custody and efforts are on to arrest other members connected."

Man chokes to death in Lagos fire

Samson Folarin

A 32-year-old man, identified simply as William, has been choked to death in a fire outbreak on Alabi Crescent in the Ijaiye area of Lagos State.

William, who was living alone in a single-room apartment, was said to have been killed by the

smoke which engulfed his room around 10pm on Saturday.

PUNCH Metro was told that people in the neighbourhood heard a noise from his apartment at the time, but by the time they arrived at the scene, he was dead.

The Director of the Lagos State Fire Service, Rasak Fadipe, who confirmed the

incident, said William's body had burns.

He said, "It was few minutes to 10pm when we received the alert. Our Agege Fire Station responded with 10,000 litres of water. They inspected the house and observed there was no generator.

"We also enquired if he lighted a candle, but nobody could tell. From our

observation, it was possible that a mosquito coil he lighted before going to bed wreaked the havoc.

"The house is a one room self-contained, built close to the entrance of the gate. We learnt he had not spent up to one year in the house when he died."

In a similar development, a fire outbreak on Addo Road, in the Ajah area of the state, has consumed a club house and five other shops in the area.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the fire began from the kitchen of the club house and spread to the bar, before devouring the surrounding shops.

Fadipe, who equally confirmed the incident, added that the quick response of the Onikan Fire Station prevented the fire from escalating.

He advised residents of the state to discuss fire safety measures during family and community meetings due to the peculiarity of the harmattan season.

He said, "In Epe, around 3am on Sunday, a storey building was also gutted by fire, destroying two flats and household items including electric fittings. The occupant of the building, who we learnt was a former Nigerian ambassador, was lucky to have escaped.

"People need to be careful because this season helps fire to spread easily. We should add fire safety precautions to our families and communities' discussion. This will help to reduce the outbreak of fire."

ancy in DSS custody'

concocted by the agency to discredit the party ahead of the February elections.

He said, "The DSS shackled the hands and legs of those arrested and blindfolded them while they were being

taken to Abuja. The arrested persons remained in chains at the cell where they were made to sleep on the bare floor.

"The workers had guns pointed at their heads

by DSS personnel who threatened to shoot them. It is unfortunate that a national institution being maintained by taxpayers' funds has now become the enforcement arm of the PDP."



Photo: Saheed Olugbon