

Fire kills seven-year-old during vigil in Lagos church

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Afeez Hanafi

A seven-year-old girl, Priscilla Adesina, was killed on Saturday after fire razed a section of the Faith Revival Apostolic Church at Faith bus stop, Egbeda area of Lagos.

SUNDAY PUNCH learnt that the fire started around 1.30am after the parents of the girl left home to attend a vigil in the church. They reportedly locked the door from outside, making it difficult for her to escape from the room.

The girl's father was said to be a resident pastor of the church but efforts to speak with him proved abortive as he was said to be in mourning.

The girl was said to have inhaled fumes and was recovered dead around 4am, after the inferno was put out by fire fighters from the Ikotun station of the Lagos State Fire Service.

The agency's director, Rasaq Fadipe, said it had yet to determine the cause of the fire while Adesina's corpse had been handed over to the police from the Ikotun division.

Fadipe said, "We received a distressed call at about 1.45am that a Boys' Quarters behind the auditorium of Faith Revival Apostolic Church was on fire. Fire fighters from Ikotun responded immediately. The fire was raging when we got there.

"The girl was locked inside the room while her parents went for a vigil in the church. She inhaled a lot of fumes and was met dead on the bed around 4am when the fire was put out."

A resident of the area, who identified himself only as Olatunji, told our correspondent that he heard about the incident, but was not allowed access to the scene.

He said, "The incident happened around 1.30am but I got to know around 9am today (Saturday) when I was going to my shop. I wanted to enter the church premises to see the building but I was not allowed in."

The Assistant General Overseer of the church, Pastor Emmanuel Adenuga, said the congregation made frantic efforts to extinguish the fire immediately it was noticed.

He said the immediate cause of the fire had yet to be ascertained, though a generator was put on in the apartment.

He said, “The unfortunate incident of a midnight fire outbreak occurred on the premises of our Mission Headquarters early this morning (Saturday). The incident claimed a seven-year-old girl, Priscilla, who is the daughter of one of our resident pastors, Peter Adesina.

“The fire was noticed at about 1.15am in one of the resident pastors’ apartments while the monthly Workers’ Vigil was going on within the church compound. By the time people got to know about it, frantic efforts were made to put out the fire with fire extinguishers and water. Immediately, distress calls were made to the police and Fire Service station nearby.

“However, the havoc had been wreaked through the loss of the girl’s life that was asleep in her parents’ apartment. The immediate cause of the inferno is yet to be ascertained though the family’s power generator was left working to fan the deceased because of heat.”

He added that policemen from the Idimu Area Command arrived the scene about 10 minutes ahead of fire fighters from Ikotun who quelled the raging inferno from spreading to other apartments.

The Lagos State Police spokesperson, Dolapo Badmos, promised to get back to our correspondent with further details.

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Contact: editor@punchng.com