



Okeke

• Uber driver, passenger escape gas poisoning

Deji Lambo

One Praise Emeka was burnt to death on Friday, when his parent's house at No. 4 Ben Okonkwo Street, Igando, Lagos State, was engulfed in fire.

The fire, which started around 9pm, burnt the five-year-old beyond recognition and destroyed the building.

As of the time of filing this report, the value of the burnt property and valuables had yet to be determined, but it was learnt that emergency responders cordoned off the area and prevented the fire from consuming adjoining buildings.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Bala Elkana, who confirmed the incident in a statement on Sunday, said the combined efforts of men of the command and officials of the Lagos State Fire Service led to the rescue of other victims, adding that investigation had commenced to ascertain the cause of the inferno.

Elkana stated, “On Friday, October 4, 2019, around 9pm, the Igando Police Station received a distress call that there was an inferno at No. 4 Ben Okonkwo Street, Igando. The value of the properties destroyed by the fire had yet to be estimated, but five-year-old Praise Emeka was burnt beyond recognition.

“The combined efforts of the police and the state fire service led to the rescue of other occupants of the building and prevented the fire from escalating. Investigation is ongoing to ascertain the cause of the incident.”

In another development, men of the state police command have rescued an Uber driver, Abiodun Balogun, and his passenger, Odisha Ginika, who were discovered unconscious in a black Hyundai car parked at Shobande Street in the Akoka area of the state.

Elkana said the policemen were on patrol when they saw the victims, adding that after removing them from the car, they were rushed to hospital, while the vehicle was impounded for inspection.

According to the PPRO, investigation revealed that the victims became unconscious due to gas leakage from the vehicle’s air conditioning system.

Elkana said, “On Thursday, October 3, 2019, around 10.25pm, a team from the Bariga Division, while on patrol along Shobande Street, Akoka, noticed a black Hyundai vehicle parked along the road with two occupants, Abiodun Balogun, 32, and Odisha Ginika, 21, unconscious on the driver and passenger seats, respectively.

“The victims were rushed to hospital for medical attention, while the vehicle was removed from the scene for inspection. They were resuscitated by the medical team on duty and later discharged from hospital.

“Preliminary investigation revealed that the man is an Uber driver, while the lady was his passenger. They became unconscious as a result of a poisonous chemical substance/gas that they inhaled due to a leakage from the air conditioning system.”

In another development, one Chizoba Okeke has been arrested by men of the command for allegedly robbing residents of their valuables in the 2nd Rainbow area of Festac, Lagos state.

Elkana said policemen, who were mobilised to the scene of the robbery, arrested Okeke and recovered from him weapons and the military uniform he used for the operation.

He stated that the 30-year-old suspect would be charged.

The PPRO said, “On Thursday, October 3, 2019, around 11.30pm, the Festac Police Station received a distress call from a filling station at the 2nd Rainbow, Festac, that an armed robber was sighted in the area. The anti-robbery patrol team was promptly drafted to the location. The suspect, who was identified as Chizoba Okeke, 30, was arrested.

“Items recovered from him included two phones, one sword, house-breaking implements, two daggers, a PoS machine and ATM card. Investigation is ongoing to ascertain where and how he got the military uniform he operated with and to also identify other members of his gang.

“It is not yet established whether he belongs to the gang of dismissed soldiers arrested some weeks ago. The suspect will be charged as soon as investigation is concluded.”

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