

# Infant feared dead as fire destroys Rivers buildings

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Map of Rivers State

By Dennis Naku

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An eight-month-old baby is feared dead following a fire that gutted two self-contained buildings on Rumuowolu Street in Eneke, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Though the actual cause of the fire which occurred on Monday is still unknown, two of the seven units of the self-contained apartments were affected as no item was salvaged.

*PUNCH Metro* gathered that the mother of the baby, who had raced to the burning house to rescue her two children, sustained injuries in the process.

While the other, a two-year-old baby survived but with severe injuries, the eight-month-old did not make it, as the woman fainted when she came out.

*PUNCH Metro* reports that the Rivers State Emergency Medical Service later arrived at the scene and took the two kids to the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital.

A neighbour identified as Charity who witnessed the incident told newsmen that there was no electricity when the fire broke out.

Charity said, “We don’t know how the fire came up. The mother was not around. She went to buy something when this happened.

“Suddenly, we heard somebody start shouting, ‘Fire, fire.’ They are two (kids), the first one escaped and came out dragging the gate.

“In the process, the flame of the fire burnt the boy and they rushed him to the hospital and their mother was also affected by the fire.”

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She said while the boy was still struggling with the gate, the woman forcefully opened it but was herself burnt in an attempt to rescue her child, saying, “So that was how the fire burnt the boy.”

While noting that nothing was removed from the house, she called on the Rivers State Government to come to their aid.

According to her, “There was nothing left for them. Everything, even, the boy didn’t survive it. But we pray that God should heal the other.

“We are calling on the Rivers State Government to come and assist them because they are left with nothing, no clothes, nothing at all.

“We don’t know where they will start from. They should assist them.”

PUNCH Metro however reports that neighbours were able to put out the fire and prevent it from spreading to other buildings.

When contacted, the spokesperson for the state police command, Grace Iringe-Koko, said she had yet to receive a report of the incident but promised to find out from the Divisional Police Officer in the area and revert.

She had yet to do so as of the time of filing this report on Monday evening.