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Early morning inferno kills 3 in Benue

Our Reporter

August 28, 2013

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From ROSE EJEMBI, Makurdi

An early morning inferno yesterday has claimed the life of one Terhemba Makka, a senior staff of the Nigerian Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and two other members of his family in Makurdi, the Benue State capital.

The tragedy occurred barely two weeks after a young man sustained serious burns while trying to rescue a 16 months old baby from a burning house opposite Vaatia College in Makurdi.

According to an eye witness who gave her name as Erdoo, the fire started at about 2 a.m when electricity supply was restored by Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) to the Lower Katsina-Ala Street in the capital city.

She stated that while asleep, she suddenly heard shouts of 'fire' from within her vicinity and wasted no time to wake her children up and run for safety because she did not know which of the houses was engulfed by the inferno.

Erdoo said when she finally identified where the noise was coming from, she rushed there only to hear someone screaming for help inside the burning house but neighbours tried in vain to rescue the occupants.

"We heard shouts of "fire, fire" coming from the house. We heard someone screaming "help me, help me." The flame and smoke were too much. The house has only one entry door with burglary proofs supporting the windows and doors; so, it became very difficult for any one to go in and rescue any of them.

"While some youths poured water on the fire, others struggled hard to break a portion of the house and managed to rescue the deceased's son. By the time men of the fire service

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arrived the scene, the entire house had been completely engulfed by fire."

She stated that the rescued son of the deceased was immediately rushed to St. Theresa's Hospital, High Level, where he is receiving treatment while the charred remains of the deceased victims were deposited at the morgue. It was gathered that the late Makka, who had been resident in the area for barely six months, had early this year, buried his first wife.

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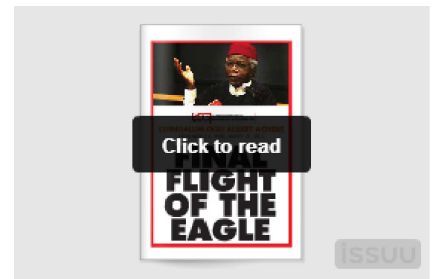
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