

the island. By the time my husband later located her, she had been

“I don't know where to go from

for the traumatic experience that unfolded before her that morning.

incident happened, she jumped and by the time she landed, she was

The measure is not punitive but corrective.”

Woman killed, two injured in Lagos inferno

By Oia Kehinde-Balogun

WEDNESDAY, October 2 was a sad day on Community Road, off Ago Palace Way in Isolo Local Government Area of Lagos. It was the day a shop owner, simply identified as Iya Kudus, died in an inferno the container that served as her shop.

Neighbours said she operated a shop inside a container, where she sold consumables like pepper, melon and other soup ingredients. She also had a grinding machine. She was also into the sale of petroleum motor spirit (PMS), otherwise known as petrol, to commercial motorcyclists and others.

Eyewitnesses said she had a few kegs of petrol inside the shop. At about 9.00pm, the worst happened when the entire shop was engulfed in flames. Fuelled by the petrol in the shop, the entire shop and the shop owner were totally consumed in the fire.

Yesterday, many of residents gathered in groups speaking about the incident.

It was alleged that all the efforts to reach out to fire service stations did not yield any tangible result, as the fire raged relentlessly until it was put out by some neighbours. In

the process of fighting the inferno, some two other persons were affected. A lady called Rashida and another shop owner known as Iya Ibeji were said to have sustained injuries and were immediately taken to the hospital.

Our correspondent saw a mechanic workshop with a number of vehicles directly behind the burnt containers, which served as shops. Many residents praised one of the traders, Iya Biliki, who they said, devised a means to contain the inferno in the absence of water. Iya Biliki was said to have poured detergents from her store inside the gutter and begged the neighbours to use the water to contain the inferno. Her skilfulness, they noted, stopped the fire from spreading to other shops and buildings in the area.

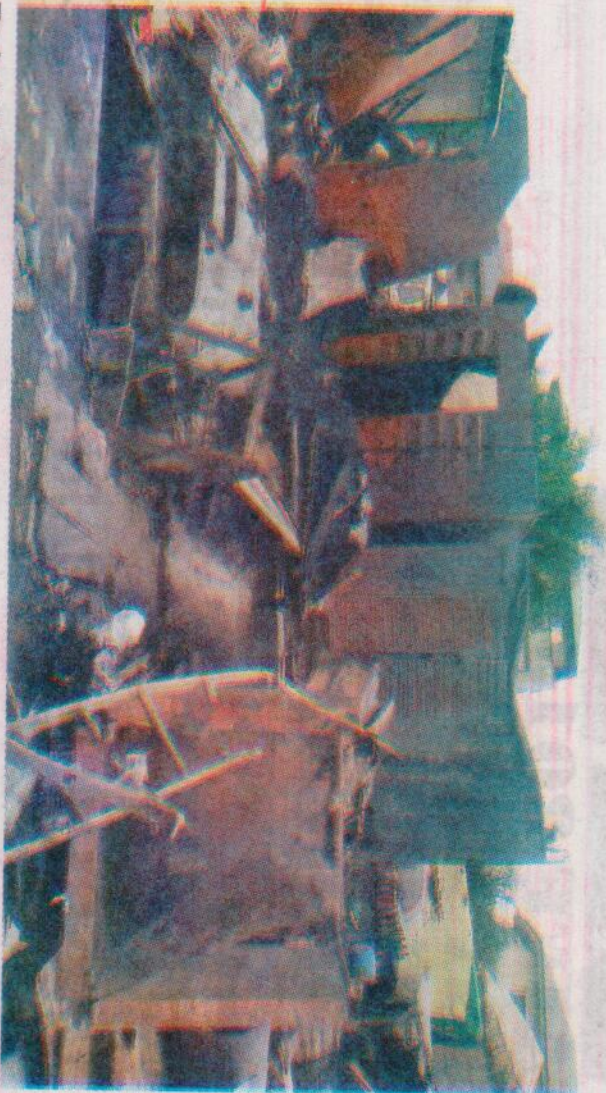
A resident, who identified himself as Mr. Mukaia said after the day's business activities, the deceased was sleeping in the shop.

Hear him: “I was in my house when suddenly I heard the noise, ‘fire, fire’, in the neighbourhood. I had thought it was something small. I thought maybe a vehicle was on fire. By the time I got outside, I saw several people battling with the fire in the shop across. I ran down to join others to combat the

fire, which was already very heavy. I believed Iya Kudus was already sleeping in the shop when the fire disaster struck, otherwise, she would have been rescued. Another thing that made the fire to spread so fast was because of the petrol that she was selling in the shop.”

Another trader within the neighbourhood, regretted that it was the third time that fire outbreak would occur in the area. To her, the shop location might need spiritual intervention, as a similar fire incident had happened there less than a year ago.

Her words: “In fact, this is a disaster. And I am beginning to suspect that this is abnormal. It is abnormal to continue to witness fire disaster on a particular spot. It has happened three times just within the last few years. Would you then not say, they need prayers around here? Though we lost somebody, we still thank God it did not happen at midnight. The disaster would have been more, as several houses, cars and even lives would have been lost.”



The burnt building