

Woman, 3 daughters perish in Yobe fire

THE Yobe State Fire Service has confirmed that a mother and her three daughters were killed in a fire incident on Tuesday night at Red Bricks Quarters, on Maiduguri road, Damaturu, the state capital.

Damaturu Fire Station Officer, Mr Usman Habu, who confirmed the incident yesterday, said that the incident occurred at about 11pm.

He said: "We were informed about the fire incident at Red Bricks Quarters, Maiduguri Road, Damaturu, around 111pm.

"When we arrived at the scene, we learnt that the victims' father, Malam Adamu Aliyu, had made efforts to rescue his family, but was only able to save his five-year-old son, Faruq Aliyu.

"The fire became too fierce and he could not save the rest of his family members, but he managed to jump

out to safety.

"We forced open the door and recovered the woman's corpse, as well as her three daughters."

Habu blamed the deaths on lack of a back door to serve as an emergency exit. He advised prospective tenants and home owners to always ensure that the property they intended to rent or build had a minimum of two entrances.

"If there was an 'escape door', the

man could have saved his family," Habu said.

The fire station officer also appealed to residents in the state to avoid keeping inflammable items in the home and switch off all electric appliances after power outage and when not at home.

Madam Binta Mohammed, one of the neighbours and a friend to the family, said that the three girls, Aisha Aliyu, Saadatu Aliyu, and Safiya

Aliyu, were 10, eight and two years respectively.

Dr Istifanus Dauda of Damaturu Specialist Hospital, who also confirmed the incident, said the boy was brought in with an inflamed bone and he was receiving medical attention at the hospital.

"The report I was given by the doctor on call last night was that there were people that lost their lives in the incident. According to the report, there was only one survivor in that family, apart from the person that is currently on admission," Dauda explained.

Gunmen kill 2, abduct 4 Customs officers in Katsina

From **Agaju Madugba, Katsina**

RAMPAGING gunmen struck again in Katsina yesterday morning and abducted four men officers of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) at Jibia, a border town with the Republic of Niger.

A witness said that the customs men were taken hostage at the Dan-Bedi customs checkpoint, along with an unspecified number of unsuspecting travellers on the Jibia - Batsari highway at about 10am.

"The bandits, riding on motorcycles, arrived the customs checkpoint this morning (Wednesday)

and overpowered the officers, seized their weapons and fired gunshots sporadically into the air," a witness told reporters, adding: "The gunmen also seized several motorists and passengers and disappeared with them into the nearby Rugu forest."

When contacted on telephone, the Katsina State customs public relations officer, Peter Duniya, declined to comment on the matter explaining that "I am on leave."