

Cleric Dies In Abia Generator Explosion

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A man said to be a pastor with Foursquare Gospel Church was burnt to death when his generator caught fire and exploded. The incident occurred on Wednesday evening at Plot 100 Nkwere Street in Umuahia, the Abia State capital. Also, a yet-to-be identified generator repairer was severely injured in the fire outbreak.

It was learnt that the deceased had called the mechanic to service his generator. But while the pastor was helping the artisan to start the generator, it caught

fire and exploded. It was also learnt that while the mechanic, who was closer to the door leading to the staircase where the generator was kept was able to escape, the pastor was not. The mechanic is currently receiving treatment at an undisclosed hospital in Umuahia, while the pastor's body was deposited in a mortuary.

A witness, who spoke under condition of anonymity, told our correspondent that efforts to put out the fire could not save the victim as he was already dead by the time he was brought out. He said: "When we saw smoke coming out from the building, many of us rushed to find out what was happening. When we got there, we saw the mechanic struggling with fire all over his body. But the pastor was on the staircase and smoke enveloped the whole place.

“We tried pulling out the generator with a stick, but we found out that it was chained to the staircase. Before we could put out the fire, the man had died.” The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Ogbonaya Nta, confirmed the incident. He said: “The pastor actually called a generator repairer to service his generator and in the process the generator caught fire and burnt the two of them.” Nta added that both of them were taken to a hospital but the pastor was confirmed dead, while the mechanic was currently receiving treatment