

# Suspected Arsonists Kill Family of Three

Two tragic incidents in Umuahia South and Arochukwu local governments of Abia State left sour taste in the mouths of people during the festive period as a young family of three was roasted alive by suspected arsonists while a soldier and a civilian died during a masquerade outing on New Year eve.

THISDAY learnt that Mr. Thompson Okechukwu, his wife Ngozi, their daughter, Mmesoma and their househelp, Chidinma were burnt to death on new year eve at Ogbodi-Ofenye village in Umuokpara, Umuahia South council when their house was set ablaze following a family dispute between two brothers.

According to an eyewitness, who pleaded anonymity, Okechukwu was wiped out with his family, which included a breast-feeding baby, when the suspected arsonists alleged to be his elder brother's children set the house ablaze and locked the door while the victims were asleep.

On the likely motive the eye witness said that Okechukwu had ~~early last year~~ failed to reach an amicable settlement with his elder brother on the sharing formula of the proceeds from the family land they sold in Aba, with the junior Okechukwu angrily threatening that his elder brother would not live beyond December 2009.

It was further learnt that the said elder brother eventually died on

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December 25, 2009 and his children, who believed their father was killed by his junior brother decided to take laws into their hands by setting their uncle and his family ablaze.

Following the incident irate youths in the area descended on the

homes of the suspected arsonists now with the police and razed their houses down.

State Police Public Relations Officer Mr. Ali Okechukwu, who confirmed the incident, saying that about six suspects had been arrested in connection with the arson while a fifty litre can, containing fuel was also recovered and investigation was continuing. The charred corpses had since been deposited at the Federal Medical Centre Umuahia.

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