

CITY SCOPE

Strange fire consume mother and son in Ikorodu

By Evelyn Usman

"Help!, help! Heeeeeeeelp!" those were the piercing screams from the lips of Mr Onwansa immediately he rushed out of the gate to his Ayenibadejo Samsondeen residence in Sabo, Ikorodu, Lagos last week Sunday. As he rushed out he pointed to the direction of his flat, unable to speak before he fainted. At first, those that saw him rush out, could not comprehend what the matter was. But curious passers-by who pushed the gate open to behold what was going on, were choked by thick smoke that emanated from the building. That was when it dawned on them that the two bedroom apartment occupied by the Onwansa was on fire.

Efforts to put out the raging fire failed as it had already engulfed the whole bungalow. While sympathisers and other residents in the area were still battling hard to prevent the raging fire from spreading to other buildings, Mr Onwansa woke up, looked round and when he became conscious of where he was, he let out a loud cry and at the same time jumped to his feet and tried to find his way to the apartment which was still on fire. But he was prevented by the sympathisers.

"Let me go inside and save my wife and son. Let me go in please. They must not die. Did you see them? Have they been brought out? He asked rhetorically. Unfortunately, the fire had already consumed both his wife and son and efforts made to rescue them failed. He was later taken away from the scene.

City scope investigation at the scene, revealed, that the apartment went up in flames at about 1am on Sunday. There were however two versions of the possible cause of the fire which totally razed the two bedroom apartment.

A version of the account had it that there was an explosion at about that particular time which could have led to the fire outbreak. Another account said that the fire might have emanated from the victims' electric cooker which was left on before they retired to bed.

But the Police said investigations are still going on to ascertain the possible cause of the fire outbreak which roasted both mother and son to death and destroyed property which monetary value are yet to be estimated.

Effort to reach the only survivor, Mr Onwansa on Tuesday failed as *City scope* was informed that he had traveled to his home town to bury his late wife and son.

However, an eye witness who simply identified himself as Mr Gboyega Aiyetoro told *Cityscope* that, 'I was inside with my family on that fateful day when we heard, help! Help! At first I wanted to run out but my wife prevented me, saying it could be a ploys by criminals. But when we heard people shouting outside, we rushed out and behold, it was Mr Onwansa's building that was on fire.

"Mr Onwansa had at that time fainted. We tried as much as we could to put out the fire but could not. Even two men who mustered courage to go in were burnt. We would have equally lost them

because they were chocked by thick smoke. We managed to bring them out and rushed them to the hospital. Infact, I don't know what caused the fire. It was not until about the next morning that we saw the charred bodies of Mrs Ngozi Nwasa and her 12 year old son. Infact, she carried her son and was running with him when they were burnt. I believe she could not see clearly because she was running towards her shop position instead of the opposite direction. She was in a sitting position with her son Chiso in her arms when they were roasted to death. Infact, this is strange.

Perhaps if fire service official had arrived on time, there would not have been casualties. In spite of several calls made there was no response", he stated.



Charred remains of the house