

Two kids die as fire guts building in Yenagoa

By Samuel Oiyadongha

YENAGOA—THE celebration by residents of Edepie suburb of Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, in the wake of Golden Eaglet's victory over Honduras in the ongoing FIFA under 17 World Cup, was cut short Tuesday, as two kids were burnt to death, following a fire that engulfed their apartment.

Their father, *Vanguard* learnt, was away in a neighbouring community to see a friend and ended up watching the match there.

The deceased children, a girl and a boy, identified as Favour and Anointed, aged eight and six respectively, were said to have died of suffocation before neighbours could break into the house to rescue them.

It was learnt that the tragic incident occurred about 9 pm

following a blackout in the neighbourhood.

According to witnesses, the inferno, caused by a lit candle left on a television set, razed the one room apartment.

The bereaved father, Oyenso Obi, from Ogbia local government, is yet to come to terms with the tragedy.

Obi said he left the house while the two kids were in bed, not knowing that would be the last time he would see them alive.

The disillusioned man noted with sadness that there was power outage in the entire neighbourhood, adding that he had to light a candle to illuminate the room not knowing that would be his greatest undoing.

"I escorted a friend to his house and in the process ended up watching Nigeria's match against Honduras. All the period that the match lasted, I wasn't myself, as my inner man kept telling me that something disastrous was about to happen but I had no reason to relate it to my children. I left them hale and hearty in the house," he lamented.

While Obi was struggling, trying to put aside the evil thought and concentrate on the match, he never knew his entire apartment was on fire and his two kids trapped in the inferno.

"My children struggled till they died. I could see traces of their struggling, as two of them were found close to the door," he said sobbing.

The mother of the two kids was in shock as she could not utter a word.

Set up security outfit to absorb ex-militants, FG urged

By Simon Ebegbulem

BENIN—ACHIEFTAIN Of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Edo State, Mr Sunny Aguebor, has urged the Federal Government to set up a security outfit in the Niger Delta where all the repentant militants would be employed.

Expressing optimism that the amnesty granted the militants by the Federal Government would bring lasting solution to the problems of the area, Aguebor told *Vanguard* in Benin City yesterday that there would be no need to retain the Joint Task Force in the Niger Delta, if a surveillance outfit, where the ex-militants would be employed, was set up by government.

His words: "While we commend the President for his efforts so far in bringing peace to the region, we appeal to him to sustain the

peace by ensuring that these boys are in charge of the surveillance of oil facilities in the region.

"We do not need the JTF in order not to start another round of crisis. If they start clashing again, another problem will commence.

"As they have agreed to lay down their arms, they should be empowered because they know the terrain more than the military.

"The Ministry of Niger Delta should also wake up to its responsibility now that there is peace in the region.

"It should assist in the rehabilitation of these boys and also provide employment for them. It is only by doing this that we can have meaningful development in the region."

Aguebor also commended the Federal Government and Governor Adams Oshiomhole for finding solution to the strike embarked upon by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).