

# 2-yr-old burnt to death as fire razes Yenagoa slum

## ●Residents begged firemen to help

By Emem Idio

**YENAGOA**—A two-year-old girl was, last Saturday night, burnt beyond recognition in Yenagoa as fire broke out at a slum located opposite the Law Faculty of Niger Delta University, NDU, Ovom, a suburb of the city.

The fire, which started about 8p.m. and lasted for three hours, also destroyed household property and rendered over 20 families homeless.

Eyewitnesses linked the

cause of the fire to a burning candle, said to have been lit in one of the rooms as there was power outage.

A neighbour confirmed that he attempted to rescue the child, but could not because the fire was too much as the houses were constructed with woods.

The unlucky child, who was sleeping in one of the rooms at the time the fire broke out, was also said to have been locked inside the room by the mother, who had gone to attend to her petty trading business around the area.

It was learned that the state Fire Service located close to the scene of the incident responded only after so much damaged had been done.

A staff of Bayelsa State Fire Service, Mr. Prince Ogu, said: "We came with three trucks but unfortunately, the fire had already done much damage before we came."

A victim, Mr. Godwin Arum, an indigene of Abia State who lost everything to the fire, said: "I came back from my shop around 8p.m., dropped my bag and went out to buy

something.

"I was there when I heard people shouting 'fire!' I ran home only to see my house on fire.

"I struggled to bring out some of my property, but unfortunately, hoodlums stole them since the place was rowdy.

"At first, we tried using water to put it out, but the fire was too much so we ran to the office of the Fire Service, which is nearby for help.

"We had to beg them and by the time they came, everything was gone."



Scenes of the Ovom fire incident.