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Landlady allegedly sets tenant's son ablaze in Ajegunle

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*He was burnt while setting fire to my house—LANDLADY

LAGOS—Controversy is currently trailing the death of a 22-year-old man, who was allegedly set ablaze by his landlady and her children in the densely-populated Ajegunle area of Lagos.

The deceased, simply identified as Emmanuel, reportedly went to ease himself in the early hours of Tuesday, leaving his father and sister inside their one-room apartment.

His sister, who had waited endlessly for his return, went to check on him in the toilet situated at the boys quarters of the building on Alafia Street.

She reportedly found her brother on the ground with his body on fire. She raised an alarm, which attracted tenants.

Two hospitals were said to have rejected Emmanuel. He reportedly breathed his last after writhing in pains.



The house where Emmanuel was allegedly burnt to death.

While the deceased's family alleged that Emmanuel was set ablaze by the landlady and her children, the latter, who is on the run, alleged that the former intended to set the building ablaze but was caught in his own web.

Feud

Investigation by Vanguard revealed that there had been a lingering quarrel between Emmanuel's family and the landlady. It was gathered that both parties had been to the Ajeromi Police Station several times to settle quarrels.

A resident, who spoke on strict condition of anonymity when Vanguard visited, blamed policemen at Ajeromi for not nipping the situation in the bud until it led to Emmanuel's death.

According to the resident, "I blame policemen at Ajeromi for the death of this young man. Emmanuel's father and the landlady have reported their misunderstandings to the police several times. Nothing was done to bring a lasting solution to the quarrel. Had they acted when they were supposed to, this would not have happened."

Although the resident could not tell exactly what happened that fateful night, he said: "I woke up with the alarm raised by some tenants that night. We were told that it was the deceased that lit the fire.

"However, the question is how is it possible judging from the distance between his apartment and where the fire was said to have been lit? This is what the Police should look into."

Another resident, who also spoke with Vanguard, said: "How come he sustained fire burns if he was in his room? How come only the window of the affected room was gutted by fire if he did not intend to set the building ablaze?

"Many are of the view that the petrol could have spilled on him as he struck the match. Besides, he was alone at the scene of the fire."

Police sources hinted that the landlady, whose identity could not be immediately ascertained, had bolted, adding that effort was on to apprehend her with a view to commencing investigation into the matter.

At press time yesterday, operatives at the homicide section of the State Criminal Intelligence and Investigations Department, SCIID, Yaba, had taken over the investigation.

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