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2 dead, 100 shanties razed in Lagos fire

ON MARCH 22, 2016 12:09 AM / IN [NEWS](#) / [COMMENTS](#)

By Monsurudeen Olowoopejo,

LAGOS—Two persons were confirmed dead in an early morning fire incident, which razed over 100 shanties in Kuramo, near Lekki in Lagos yesterday.

When *Vanguard* visited the scene, the two victims were identified as Azeez, a 27-year-old trader and a lady, simply identified as Kemi.

Though there were conflicting reports as to what led to the fire disaster,



which the Secretary of the Community, Mr. Michael Onuwaje, said destroyed property worth over N50 million as “it cost N500,000 to

construct each of the burnt structures.”

While some report noted that the inferno was caused by a generating set, another report said that a young lady was cooking in one of the shanties with a fuel container nearby, which caught fire and spread to other parts.

The residents lamented that the fire spread so fast that many could not salvage their property as they explained that the fire was beyond their reach.

I lost N3m to the inferno—*Trader*

A trader, Jude Obi, who owns two of the affected structures, lamented that he lost N3 million including a cabin and the goods stocked in it.

According to him, “I was sleeping when I heard a bang on my door, with someone saying the entire community was on fire. I rushed out immediately and I could not take a pin from the shop.

“My shop is well stocked with cloths. This is where most of us manage to make a living and now it is gone. I just pray we will not be evicted by Lagos

State Government. I could not salvage a cloth from my shop.

I don't know where to start—*Resident*

Another resident, who gave his name as Mr. Michael Orioye, told *Vanguard* in an emotional tone: “I have been living here for decades. This is where we live and sell to make a living. We are not selling illegal commodities.

“We need government to help us. We have children; we have wives. Everyone depends on us. If only we can be given a permanent space. We are not saying we want permanent structures. If only we can be given allocation.”

Fire extinguishers couldn't save us—*Secretary*

Secretary to the Community, Onuwaje, said: “I learnt someone was refuelling a generator that was on when it exploded. Before the fire service officials came, some young men managed to put out the fire.

“Every shop here has a five-kilogramme fire extinguisher. Unfortunately, they were meant for first aid. It is a pity we lost two lives.

“Late Azeez was a trader here, but I do not know the girl involved. I called Ilasan Police Station, who took the bodies away. It was a big loss. We cannot count our losses.

“I was able to salvage a plasma television from a cabin.”

Confirming the inferno, Director, Lagos State Fire Service, Mr. Rasak Fadipe, said that the fire destroyed over 100 shanty structures, killing a male and

female adults who reside in the community.

He said the shanties were built on three acres of land, with the fire consuming houses on about four plots.

The fire service boss appealed to Lagosians to desist from storing fuel in their houses or cooking indoors apart from the kitchen.



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