

'How My Only Daughter Died In Kano School'



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Families of Maimuna Sani (Nihal), a 14-year-old Junior Secondary School (JSS2) student at St. Louis Secondary School in Kano, are demanding justice after her controversial death, allegedly from punishment in the boarding school.

The incident, which happened on Saturday at the Catholic girls' boarding school, has prompted a police investigation as her family alleged conflicting accounts of the case.

While her school claimed she suffered an asthma attack, other testimonies suggested she was flogged by senior students and instructed to kneel for a long time.

The late Nihal reportedly slumped at the school on Saturday, after she was allegedly punished for not going to the mosque on time. She was rushed to a hospital, where she was confirmed dead.

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Police in the state have already taken over the case, as relevant stakeholders continue to demand thorough investigation to unravel the circumstances surrounding the teenager's death.

Nihal's mother, Nusaiba, insisted that the death of her only daughter should be thoroughly investigated to ensure justice is served.

She explained that she had received a call from the school on Saturday evening informing her that Nihal was sick and hospitalised.

"I was also sick and hospitalised, so I couldn't go. I told them I would send my sister to get her," she said.

She said her sister went to the school around 7:30pm and later called her after an hour, asking if Nihal was asthmatic.

"I told her no. At the hospital, they said she was late for prayer and had been punished, and that was how she died," she explained.

According to her, when her sister arrived at the hospital, they asked if she was related to “the patient we lost.”

“She screamed and tried to enter the room where Nihal was, but was stopped and directed to the doctor’s office. The doctor told my sister that Nihal was already dead when they brought her, but they claimed she was asthmatic,” Nusaiba recalled.

The mother added that when she eventually saw her daughter’s body, her mouth was black.

“I asked what they gave her that made her mouth appear like that and they said that’s how dead bodies look. I did not agree. I had so many questions, but due to the grief, I couldn’t ask,” she said.

Nusaiba explained that she told her father she wanted to find out the cause of her daughter’s death, but he advised her to be patient and accept it in good faith as a Muslim.

“He said finding out the cause would not bring her back to life. But I prayed that Allah would reveal the truth and everyone involved,” she said.

She further alleged that the school Vice Principal, Hadiza Babayaro, told her to be patient and not to listen to anything she heard about Nihal’s death.

“I asked her if there was anything she hadn’t told me, but she said no. That made me more curious, thinking they were hiding something. This is no longer about school reputation; it is about life,” she stated.

The grieving mother insisted that the circumstances surrounding her daughter’s death were suspicious and demanded a thorough investigation.

“Before morning, my phone was full of screenshots. I believe there is more to this story, and I want the truth to come out,” she added.

She then called on the government and all the relevant agencies to come to her aid to ensure justice is served to her late daughter.

Her maternal grandmother, Safiya Sani Yola, also confirmed that family members were questioned about whether Nihal had asthma when they arrived at the hospital.

“That was when we began to suspect something,” she said.

The family has since called for further investigation into the incident, insisting that the truth must be uncovered.

We won't talk for now – Principal

When contacted, the school principal, Reverend Sister Christiana Diyab, declined to comment on the issue, saying that it was already under police investigation.

“For now, I don't want to say anything to preempt investigation or pass a verdict on an ongoing issue,” the principal added.

Meanwhile, the Kano State Police Command says it has constituted a special investigation panel to probe the case after receiving a formal petition from the late student's family.

According to the Police Public Relations Officer in the state, CSP Abdullahi Haruna Kiyawa, the petition was filed on June 17, 2026, by Nakudu Law Partners on behalf of the girl's mother, Mrs. Nusaiba Rabi Dan Sheriff.

The petition alleged conflicting accounts of the incident. While the school claimed the deceased died of an asthma attack after arriving late to the mosque, other testimonies suggested she was punished by senior students through flogging and prolonged kneeling, which allegedly worsened her condition.

Kiyawa also said the Commissioner of Police in the state, Ibrahim Adamu Bakori, directed that the matter be treated with utmost diligence and transparency.

He added that, “Consequently, a Special Investigation Panel (SIP) has been constituted, led by DCP Shehu Idris of the Criminal Investigation Department, with officials from the Kano State Ministry of Justice included to provide legal oversight.

“The panel has already invited three teachers, three senior female students, and two witnesses, all of whom have given statements. Medical and forensic examinations are ongoing to establish the exact cause of death.

“The Command assured the family and the public that the investigation will be thorough, impartial, and transparent, with anyone found culpable to face prosecution. It also appealed to members of the public, especially the school community, to volunteer credible information to aid the probe.”

We'll take action based on investigation – Kano govt

The Kano State Government has said it will take appropriate action based on the outcome of the police investigation.

Executive Secretary of the state's Private and Voluntary Institutions Board, Baba Abubakar Umar, told Daily Trust that the government is closely monitoring the case. He urged the family and members of the public to remain calm while investigations continue, assuring that the government will act in line with the findings of the police inquiry.

He explained that as government regulators, the board would ensure a proper investigation is carried out to establish the true cause of death.

“It could be natural death, as the school claimed she was asthmatic, or it could be due to something else, as her parents suspect. It is for the police to investigate and come out with the right result. We will, at our own capacity, keep in touch with the police and ensure justice is served,” he added.

Umar stressed that the state had long banned corporal punishment in schools.

“No proprietor of any school, public or private, should allow anyone to bully students. We always monitor these schools to ensure compliance, and I can assure you most of them are abiding by it. We also call on schools to ensure that similar incidents do not repeat themselves,” he said.

Past incidents in Kano private schools

The death of Maimuna at St. Louis Secondary School is not the first time Kano is witnessing controversies involving schools and students.

In December 2021, five-year-old Hanifa Abubakar, a pupil of Noble Kids Academy in Nassarawa LGA, was kidnapped by her school proprietor, Abdulmalik Tanko, who later poisoned her with rat killer and buried her on the school premises after she recognised him.

The case sparked nationwide outrage, and in July 2022, Tanko and an accomplice were sentenced to death by hanging.

More recently, in May 2026, a teacher at Al-Hadeed Private School in Ungogo LGA was accused of raping four underage sisters of the same parents.

The school was shut down indefinitely by the local government, while the suspect, identified as “Uncle Kamal,” was arraigned before a Magistrate Court in Kano and remanded in correctional custody pending trial.

Child rights advocates have raised an alarm that schools in the country are increasingly becoming unsafe for children due to recurring cases of corporal punishment, abuse and neglect.

Aisha Haruna Kabuga of the National Coalition of Child Rights Advocates of Nigeria told Daily Trust that despite the domestication of child protection laws in 2023 under former governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, many schools are unaware of the legal instrument.

“That is why these incidents keep recurring. Just a few months ago, a teacher allegedly raped four girls here in Kano,” she said.

Kabuga warned that the situation is eroding parental confidence in schools, lamenting that schools are gradually turning into places of fear and insecurity to children because there is no protection.

“They could be kidnapped, killed, or abused in schools. Parents no longer have confidence in schools. If not controlled, many parents will begin to remove their wards, and we will end up with more dropouts, out-of-school children, and street hawkers,” she explained.

She stressed that the Child Protection Committee, if fully implemented, would provide a multisectoral framework to address these issues.

Kabuga also emphasised the importance of evidence and eyewitnesses in securing justice.

“If a case is taken to court, that is where we can follow it up with facts and ensure justice is served. But if there is no evidence, it will be difficult to prove. There has to be an enabling environment to make sure witnesses, like fellow students, are not threatened by the school with punishment for testifying,” she added.