

How Abuja rising singer Ifunanya died after snake bite

February 2, 2026 12:02 am



Abuja-based music talent, Ifunanya Nwangene.

| By Gift Habib

An Abuja-based rising singer, Ifunanya Nwangene, has died after she was bitten by a snake, an incident that has raised concerns about emergency medical response in the Federal Capital Territory.

PUNCH Metro learnt on Sunday that Nwangene, a soprano singer with the Amemusos Choir, died on Saturday at the Federal Medical Centre, Abuja, after efforts to save her life reportedly stalled due to the unavailability of sufficient antivenom.

Confirming her death, the Amemusos Choir issued a statement on its Facebook page on Sunday afternoon.

The statement, signed by the choir's music director, Sam Ezugwu, announced the circumstances of her passing.

“We regret to announce the sudden demise of our beloved soprano, Ifunanya Nwangene, who passed away yesterday, 31st January 2026, at the Federal Medical Centre due to a snake bite,” the statement read.

The choir described her as a fast-rising talent within Abuja's music community, noting that her death came at a critical stage of her artistic journey.

“A rising star, Ifunanya was on the cusp of sharing her incredible talent with the world.

“Her voice and spirit will be deeply missed,” the statement added, while indicating that burial arrangements would be communicated later.

Providing further details on how the incident unfolded, Ezugwu told *PUNCH Metro* that Nwangene was bitten by a snake in her residence while asleep and initially sought medical help at a private facility.

“We were there when she gave up the ghost. The snake bit her. She rushed herself to a private hospital at Lugbe, where she stays. The name of the hospital is Divine Health, located at Trademore, Lugbe. The hospital didn’t have antivenom,” he said.

According to him, challenges with transportation and the lack of antivenom at the first hospital delayed her transfer to a tertiary health facility.

“She rushed back home. Her landlord tried to take her to FMC, Jabi, but his car refused to start. She booked a Bolt to FMC. She narrated to the medical personnel who were on the ground what happened to her,” Ezugwu added.

He explained that although she was attended to at FMC, the hospital also faced limitations in treating her condition.

“When we got the call, we rushed down to FMC and met the doctors attending to her. She was struggling. The hospital informed us that they had one antivenom but did not have the second one.

“We were running around to buy the second one. The period we were rushing to get the second one, she gave up,” he said.

Ezugwu further disclosed that steps were taken after her death to confirm the species of snake involved in the incident.

Related News

Police urge NLC, TUC to reschedule Tuesday’s Abuja protest

Kwara sets up committee to boost disease surveillance

Primary healthcare should take 70% of budgetary allocation – Lagos

NMA chair

“Afterwards, we contacted the services of a snake charmer who went to her house (room) to get the snake. The snake that was killed inside her house was a cobra. And then, there was another snake that was seen outside her house by the entrance that was also killed,” he said.

He added that the incident occurred in the morning and that she died a few hours later.

“She was sleeping when the snake bit her. This happened around 8/9am on Saturday, and she died at 12:20pm at FMC,” Ezugwu stated.

The incident has continued to attract public reactions, particularly from health advocates who have questioned the state of emergency preparedness in hospitals.

A popular social media health influencer, Aproko Doctor, criticised the lack of anti-venom injections in Nigerian hospitals.

“What if I tell you that it was not the snake that killed her because snakes bite people anywhere and everywhere?

“But the people don’t die like that but because they went to two different hospitals, and they said they do not have anti-venom injections in 2026,” he said in a Facebook post.

He argued that Nigeria already had a locally developed anti-venom injection and blamed poor prioritisation in the health sector for the outcome.

“Nigeria has a particular antivenom injection developed for Nigerian snakes. It is called Echi-Tab. Why were these injections not in the fridges of these hospitals? Simply because we have forgotten the basics,” he added.

Aproko Doctor also linked the incident to broader systemic failures in healthcare delivery.

“Our politicians are building flyovers where ambulances don’t exist. Politicians are focused on the next election rather than the lives of Nigerians that they are supposed to save. Doctors have been on strike, but nobody is talking about it,” he said.

The incident comes amid a similar case in FCT. Recently, the village chief of the Jamigbe community in Gawu ward of the Abaji Area Council, Danladi Aliyu, reported that a head teacher, Usman Mohammed, died after being attacked by a venomous snake in his office.

According to the chief, the snake entered through a crack in the wall, hid under a chair, and struck the teacher as he attempted to sit. The victim was rushed to a hospital in neighbouring Niger State, where he was pronounced dead hours later.

The World Health Organisation estimates that snakebite envenoming causes up to 138,000 deaths and 400,000 permanent disabilities each year, representing nearly half the global burden of all neglected tropical diseases. WHO designated snakebite a priority neglected tropical disease in 2017 and set a global target in 2019 to halve deaths and disabilities by 2030.

Nigeria is among the countries struggling with systemic healthcare failures. A recent survey of Nigerian healthcare workers found that 98 per cent reported challenges administering antivenom, citing delayed

patient arrival, poor infrastructure, and gaps in clinical training as major contributors to preventable deaths.