

SPORTS

Player Slumps, Dies At Football Scouting Exercise In Abuja



By David Ngobua

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A scouting programme organised by a foremost football agent, Babawo Mohammed was hit by tragedy yesterday as one of the players died in the screening exercise holding at the FIFA Goal Project training pitch inside Package B of the MKO Abiola national stadium in Abuja

Daily Trust learnt that the player whose name was given as Emmanuel Jumbo from Zaria slumped while playing and died on the way to a nearby hospital.

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Babawo is known for inviting some of the top football scouts and agents in Europe to come and hunt for young talented football players.

A member of the organising committee who confirmed the unfortunate incident to our reporter expressed shock at what happened.

He said nobody had any premonition about what happened as he said the programme which started on Monday was going as planned.

"We are still in shock over the incident because we didn't see it coming. The boy was playing but suddenly fell. We tried to revive him but when we noticed it wasn't working, we decided to rush him to hospital. Unfortunately, he couldn't make it," he disclosed.

He, however, said even as the death of the young player is painful, the exercise will continue and end on Thursday.

An eyewitness who spoke on condition of anonymity blamed the death of the player on absence of medics at the venue of the exercise.

"The organisers tried to help the boy but they are not medical personnel so there was nothing they could do.

"It is sad that people who organise these programmes put the lives of players at risk. Sometimes, the matches are played under the scorching sun yet you won't see medics around."

"Had the player received the right support, I believe his life would have been saved," he said.