

Two women held over boy's death

By Jude Isiguzo

TWO housewives are being interrogated by the police over their alleged roles in the death of a 10-year-old boy, Akaniyene Effiong.

They were arrested last week at Ajegunle by policemen attached to Layeni Police station.

It was gathered that Effiong died after he left home for an unknown place on February 10, because he was being maltreated by Mrs Comfort Peters, who brought him to Lagos from Akwa-Ibom about two years ago.

He was found dead two months after he left her. The circumstance of his death is still hazy.

Mrs Comfort Peters (50), and Mrs Victoria Nwaju (31), were arrested by the police over alleged negligence.

Peters, in a statement, told the police that she conducted a futile search for Effiong after he left her home.

She said she was shocked when she discovered that the boy was being harboured by Mrs Nwaju.

Her statement led to the arrest of Mrs Nwaju in whose custody the boy allegedly died.

Mrs Peters said: "On January 7, 2010, I brought the boy from my village to live with me. I later enrolled him at the Oremeje Primary School at Ajegunle. On February 10, 2012, I returned from a journey to discover that Effiong had left home, but his school uniform was in the kitchen; my brother who was at home then told me he saw him when he came back from school; we made frantic effort to look for him and I went to the welfare homes at Iko-tun and Alakara, to look for him but we did not see him"

Mrs Nwaju said she saw Effiong wandering at the Cemetery market at Ajegunle and took him home.

She said: "Sometimes last month, I cannot remember the date, I came to my stand (stall) at the cemetery market about

6.00am and I saw this boy under my table sleeping, I was scared, I thought it was a goat but when I later saw it was a boy, I brought him out and as I was about to ask him any question, he ran away. Some weeks later I saw him playing in the market and I made efforts to call him but he ran away again. One market day, I saw people gathered and I went to see what was happening, that was when I discovered that it was the same boy that slept under my table, he had a big cut on his forehead, which he sustained while playing and blood was gushing out. I was moved with pity as I have a boy his age at home, so I told the people gathered that I know him and I took him to my house, I bathe him, gave him food to eat and later took him to the hospital."

Mrs Nwaju said she took the boy to the hospital where his wound was treated but three days later the injury became severe.

"The doctor said the wound has

been infected by tetanus and on April 7, after he was rushed to Tolu Medical Centre at Ajegunle, he died," Mrs Nwaju said.

The case was reported at Layeni Police Station at Ajegunle, and police investigation led to the women's arrest for negligence.

A police officer, who pleaded anonymity said the women, would be charged with negligence leading to death.

"When the boy left home, his guardian should have reported his disappearance to the police and when the other woman picked him up from the street, she ought to have reported the case to the police. That way, the matter would have been officially documented and they would not be in this mess, because it is lack of care for this boy that led to his untimely death"

Police Public Relations Officer Jaiyeoba Joseph, a Superintendent, said investigation is on-going.