

Woman dies from forced female genital mutilation after childbirth

A YOUNG woman, simply identified as Emeterhire, has died in Ogwashi-Uku, Delta State, after being forced to undergo female genital mutilation (FGM) following complications during childbirth.

Emeterhire, from Ogwashi-Uku in Aniocha South Local Government, had fled her village years ago to escape the harmful ritual.

FGM has been upheld in the community, seen as a sa-

cred practice to 'purify' young women and prepare them for marriage.

Sources in the village said Emeterhire's mother, Erhuvvun, had also undergone the ritual as a young woman, surviving the ordeal but living with its scars.

Emeterhire had built a new life in Asaba. She lived peacefully, fell in love, and was expecting her first child. However, as her due date approached, her mother urged

her to return to Ogwashi-Uku, fearing that her grandchild would be cursed without the traditional blessings of the village.

Emeterhire returned home, ignorant that the village elders, who had resented her, were waiting. When complications arose during her labour, they imposed on her the ritual she had escaped years earlier.

In the dead of night, as she lay in agony from childbirth, the elders stormed her home.

Weak and unable to resist, she was dragged to the ceremonial grounds where FGM was performed without her consent.

The procedure, in addition to the strain of labour, was too much for her fragile state. By dawn, Emeterhire was dead, leaving behind a child.

Her death has sparked outrage among rights activists, who have condemned the practice of FGM in the region.

"This is a tragic example of how harmful cultural practice

rob women of their lives," said a local advocate, calling for action to protect women and girls from such customs.

Emeterhire's mother, devastated by the loss of her daughter, has vowed to ensure her granddaughter does not suffer same fate. She hopes her daughter's death will serve as a turning point in the fight against FGM in Ogwashi-Uku.

Emeterhire's story may have ended in tragedy, but her bravery in resisting the

brutal tradition has sparked renewed calls for education and reform in communities where harmful practice still persist in Nigeria. The legacy of her struggle will live on in her child, a symbol of hope for future generations.

While local authorities are yet to comment, pressure is mounting for the government to enforce stricter laws against FGM, and to bring those responsible for Emeterhire's death to justice.