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I'm not responsible for girl's death —Corps member who caned student

Written by Oluw atoyin Malik | Sunday, 09 February 2014 01:00 | font size | Print | Email

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COULD two strokes of cane administered on the palm of an erring student result in her death? This is the mystery detectives at Homicide section of State Criminal Investigation Department, Iyaganku, Ibadan, have been trying resolve through investigations since a member of the National Youths Service Corps (names withheld) serving at Akingbile Oluana Grammar

School, Moniya, Ibadan was brought to them on the allegation that a student she caned died six days after.

Crime Reports learnt that the female corper disciplined about six students, among who was one Esther Oyeleke, a 14-year-old girl in JSS1. The corper reportedly gave the six students two strokes of cane each on January 24 for playing during teaching period and for not responding when she asked their colleagues to call them.

Surprisingly, the parents of the girl brought her back to the school on January 27 and said the hand on which she was beaten was swollen. With the belief that two strokes of cane could not cause such an injury, the parents were advised to take the girl to the hospital for medical treatment.

From a swollen hand, the girl's condition deteriorated so much that by January 30, her entire body became swollen, according to information gathered by Crime Reports, and it was then she was taken to one Osoko Maternity Hospital where she was confirmed dead.

Her death reportedly led to a mini protest as the girl's relations went to the school to disrupt academic activities. When the case was reported at Moniya Division, it was immediately transferred

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to the State CID for investigations.

In an interview with Crime Reports, the youth corps member, an indigene of a town in Oke Ogun area of Oyo State and a 2012 graduate of a polytechnic, said she believed she was not responsible for the girl's death and should not be made to suffer unjustly. According to the Office Technology and Management graduate, "I am one of the corpsers deployed to Akingbale Oluana Memorial School, Moniya. I was teaching JSS1 students Basic Science.

"On January 24, the students went to play outside the class and I told some of their colleagues to go and call them so that I could mark the attendance for the day. I could not speak loud then because I lost my voice. Some of them responded to my call while others did not. Because of this, I gave the disobedient ones two strokes of cane each on their palms in the classroom.

"On January 27, one of them, a female, was brought to the school and I was told that her hand was swollen. I said it could not be because of the caning, as there was even no mark on her palm. As her teacher, I asked her colleagues whether they knew her residence so that I could go and greet her but they said they did not.

"On January 30, the principal called me and said that she learnt that the entire body of the girl was swollen. Her family was said to have brought some people who disrupted the activities of the school. The principal said she enquired whether she had been taken to the hospital but the family members replied in the negative. She asked that she should be taken to the hospital.

"I was at a meeting of youth corps members when I was called that we should go and pay the girl a visit in the hospital. By the time we got to the hospital, one of the teachers came to me and said she learnt that the student was dead.

"On January 1, I went to our coordinator at the local government council before going to the state council of the NYSC to report what happened. I was brought to the State CID by the coordinators and I have been in detention since then.

"I am surprised because she was not the only that I gave two strokes of cane. What I know is that whatever is hidden from man is clear before God Almighty. I believe that it was not the strokes of cane that caused the girl's death. I know I have done nothing wrong and it would not be good to make an innocent person suffer unjustly."

The police spokesperson in Oyo State, Olabisi Okuwobi-Ilobanafor confirmed the story, when contacted, stating that detectives were still investigating the story. She said that the corpse of the deceased girl had been deposited at the State Hospital, Adeoyo, Ibadan for autopsy.

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