

Policemen arrested for torturing student to death

**Olamilekan Lartey,
Delta**

THE Delta State Police Command has arrested three of its men for allegedly torturing a student to death.

The men, including an inspector, were alleged to have caused the death of 23-year-old Peter Aigui, a student of the Federal Polytechnic, Auchi, at Agbor police station.

The policemen (names withheld) are currently being detained at the police headquarters in Asaba, the state capital.

Family sources said the deceased was arrested on the roadside on allegations that he was a cult member.

He was allegedly wearing a particular type of fez cap said to be associated with notorious gang members from nearby higher institutions.

His relatives who went to the police station where he was detained reportedly saw him in handcuffs and heard him begging for help as the policemen were allegedly torturing him to sign a statement.

It was during the torture that Aigui became unconscious.

The policemen then ordered his father to take his son to the hospital when all attempts to revive him at the station failed.

The father, a retired headmaster, however, refused because, according to him, the boy was beaten into a coma by police officers.

The policemen then carried the unconscious boy to the Agbor General Hospital on a commercial motorcycle at about 9:30 pm the same day he was arrested.

When it became obvious that doctors on duty at the hospital could not handle the case, they were referred to the University of Benin Teaching

Hospital, and later the University College Hospital, Ibadan where boy died.

Attempts by the family to get explanations from the police met a rebuff. The divisional police officer was quoted as saying that he was not aware the case.

This prompted the youths in Agbor, under the aegis of the Concerned Indigenes of Ika South Local Government, to petition the state House of Assembly for justice.

But the police account of the events that led to the boy's death, despite the denials of the DPO at Agbor is different.

The command's Public Relations Officer, Olabisi Okuwobi, an assistant superintendent of police, said Aigui was arrested following complaints about the theft of a

camera at a party, where there had been a gang fight.

A rival group at the party reportedly indicted the deceased.

Okuwobi told newsmen in Asaba that the suspect lost consciousness while at the Agbor police station.

According to her, the boy developed what the police suspected was an epileptic seizure and was rushed to the Agbor General Hospital.

But the father of the deceased said his son was not an epileptic and could not have had a seizure as claimed by the police.

Although official medical reports are being withheld, our correspondent gathered that Aigui sustained spinal cord injuries.

Man caught with 193 identity cards

Olalekan Adetayo

MEN of the Lagos State Police Command have arrested a man simply identified as Peter for allegedly being in possession of about 193 national identity cards.

The suspect was arrested by policemen attached to Tolu Division in Ajegunle, a suburb of Lagos, on Saturday following a tip-off from a member of the public.

The command's spokesman, Mr. Olubode Ojajuni, a deputy superintendent of police, told our correspondent on the phone on Sunday that the divisional police officer, CSP Isaac Obafaye, led his men to arrest the man after receiving an anonymous phone call.

The man, a resident of Egbayelo Street, Tolu, Ajegunle, was said to be going from house to house to 'sell' the national identity cards

to their owners at N300 each.

Ojajuni said policemen were now on the trail of about four other suspects that the man indicted in his confessional statement.

The police spokesman said the man had confessed that he was working in consonance with a member of staff of a local government in the state.

He said he deposited about N11, 000 for the cards that was recovered from him and he was expected to balance the council official once he finished 'selling' them.

While commending the anonymous caller that intimated the police of the nefarious activities of the suspect, Ojajuni called on the public to continue to assist the police in their move to rid the state of criminals.