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Pupil feared drowned in Lagos drainage, sibling hospitalised

JULY 2, 2014 BY SAMSON FOLARIN 3 COMMENTS

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Victims' mother, the drainage channel

| credits: Samson Folarin

A nine-year-old Primary three pupil, Gbenga Oladejo, and his sister, Tolani, were swept inside a drainage channel on Tuesday on Agege Motor Road, Mushin, Lagos.

While Gbenga drowned and his body had yet to be recovered, 10-year-old Tolani held to an iron inside the channel and was rescued by residents.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the victims were pupils of Myyoung Barracks Primary School in the Fadeyi, Yaba area of Lagos and were heading for school when the incident happened.

An eyewitness, Bayo Olowa, said the

incident happened around 9am.

He said, "When the rain started, we were all seated here. It had gone down a little when we saw a kid slip into the drainage channel. His sister wanted to save him, but fell headlong into it as well.

"We quickly ran to the other end of the drainage channel and tried pulling the legs of one of them, but the water was too forceful.

"We however saw the elder sister holding on to an iron inside the drainage. One of us pulled her out."

Our correspondent was taken to a private hospital in the area where Tolani was receiving treatment.

A doctor in the hospital, who did not identify herself, told our correspondent that she was in stable condition and was asleep.

When our correspondent approached her bed, she slightly opened her eyes.

Asked what she could remember last before she was taken to the hospital, Tolani said, "I and my brother were going to school this morning when we fell into the drainage channel. I don't know where Gbenga is. I feel pains in different parts of my head now."

PUNCH Metro visited the mother of the victim in her house on Akobi Crescent, in front of Birch Freeman School in Surulere.

Bose, a hairdresser and Ibadan, Oyo State indigene, said she was devastated by the loss of her child.

While fighting back tears, she said, "It was around 8.45am, after the rain had subsided, that I told them to go to school.

"Ten minutes later, I decided to also go out. I saw a crowd of people saying two kids fell into the drainage. I



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didn't care much and passed by them.

"It was later that I learnt that the victims were my children."

The Social Secretary of Kubada Community Development Association, Odi Olowo Council, Adeshina Adigun said, "The flood water that forms on this road can be heavy most times and the channel is too small. Rain waters from the Railway Line, Kubiya and Bada areas flow to this junction and flood the streets.

"Two years ago, I was involved in a weeklong search for a man's son that was carried away by flood water. Up till now, we have not seen the boy's corpse and that is why I doubt if we can ever see this one too."

A resident, Jamiu Keru, suggested that an iron wall be constructed around the drainage channel so that in the event of another mishap, it would be easier for victims to be rescued.

Our correspondent called the Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, Ngozi Braide, but she was not reachable.

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