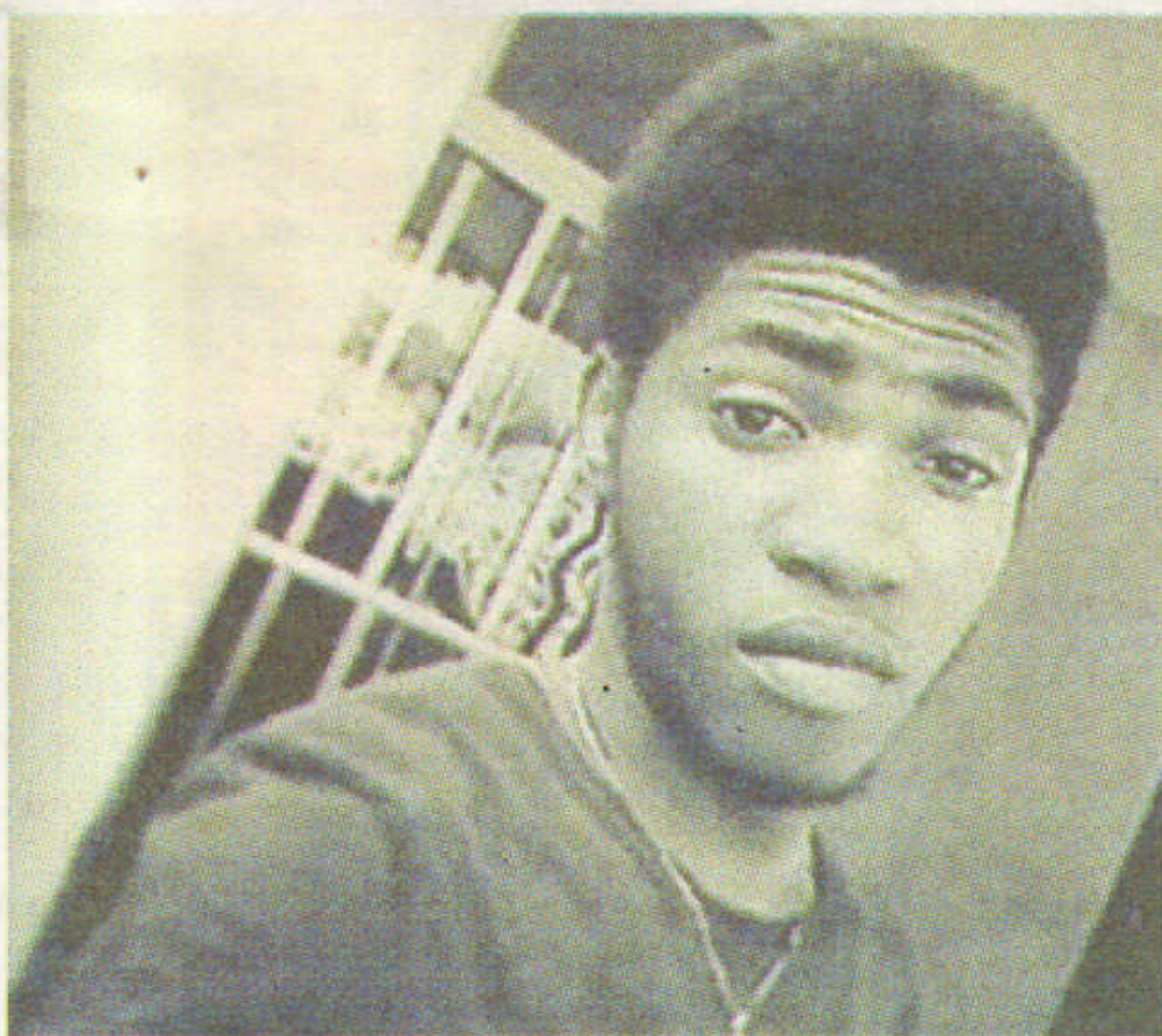


but she answered that she did not know.

After a futile attempt to steal money and other valuables, the robber threatened to kill the young girl and later dragged her towards the bush not far from the house.

The little girl said she started crying and the man lay her head on a boulder near the building and raised his cutlass with the intention of cutting off her head.



•Clement

Everest Amaefule, Abuja

**M**argaret Ukwu, a lecturer at the Theatre Arts Department of the University of Port Harcourt, had promised his son, Justin, a second-year student of International Studies and Diplomacy at the Benson Idahosa University that she would bag her PhD soon and make him proud.

"Make sure you get your PhD this year so that I can attend your convocation," Justin told his mother.

Margaret also threw a challenge to her 19-year old son. "Make sure that you make a first class so that I'll attend your own convocation too," she told him.

Such was the regular exchange that usually took place between them. Justin and his mother were best of friends.

But before Justin could keep his own end of this challenge with his mother, he died tragically on the campus of the Benson Idahosa University, in a controversial circumstance that led students of the institution to march in protest.

The bereaved mother alleged that Justin died out of negligence by both the university and the Health Management Organisation, Marina Medical Services, which leased and operated the medical facility in the school.

He was admitted to the school's medical centre on Sunday afternoon, apparently for malaria and by Tuesday morning, he had died.

the attack.

She said, "The strange man wanted to slaughter my daughter to avoid being identified. I am not sure whether he is a ritualist or a robber but I am thankful to God for sparing Zainab's life.

"I am very happy that my daughter is alive today, because when I was alerted that something terrible had happened in my house, I thought my children had poured the hot food I was cooking

## BIU hospital caused my son's death – Grieving mother of student

There was no doubt Margaret was in deep grief as she told her son's heartbreaking story.

She said, "Justin and I were extremely close. We discussed most things, shared a lot of interests. Our favourite colour is navy blue. Our football club is Arsenal FC. We shared common intellectual interests. We both dreamt of setting up a youth-based Non-Governmental Organisation.

"On Sunday, May 24, 2015, in the afternoon, Justin told me through a phone chat that he had been admitted to the school clinic and they had told him that he had malaria. That week, some of his roommates also had malaria. So I joked that he had copied them. He said that he had been told that he would be discharged the next day, Monday 25th May.

"I believe that he wasn't treated at all. No care, attention or diagnosis was carried out. It was a flagrant violation of the regulations governing the activities of National Health Insurance Scheme accredited by both Benson Idahosa University and the HMO, Marina Medical Services.

"First of all, he wasn't referred to a specialist clinic within the 24-hour time frame when a patient should be moved from a primary health care provider to a specialist centre.

"Secondly BIU leased out a fully equipped medical centre to Marina Medical Services to staff and run in violation of another NHIS regulation which states that an HMO must not own, run and staff a facility.

"This is odd because BIU is an affiliate of Idahosa World Outreach which owns Faith Mediplex, the biggest and best private hospital in Benin which has American doctors and well trained nurses who could have been seconded to the BIU Health Centre.

"Rather, staff from an HMO sat around watching television, ignoring my son until 9.12am on Tuesday, May 26, when I was called by someone I later learnt was the doctor on night duty, who said my son was being moved to have a blood transfusion at Faith Mediplex and would be discharged that evening.

"Justin's friends attempted to get a taxi or bus but the medical staff insisted that he had to be moved in an ambulance, which arrived at about 10am because they claimed that there wasn't petrol. They didn't phone to alert the Mediplex that an emergency was on its way.

"They did everything to ensure that my son didn't survive. He died in the ambulance at 10.15am. He didn't leave the premises. I learnt

who had gone to pick mangoes and reportedly drugged the girl and inflicted machete cuts on her head, ankles and wrists. The victim, who was also raped during the attack, crawled out of the bush and it was noticed that maggots were already coming out of the wounds by the time she got out.

The girl was, however, saved at the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Teaching Hospital, Osogbo after weeks of medical treatment.

that the doctor ran away as soon as she finished talking to me."

"I got to Benin at 5.17pm on Tuesday evening and had to trace the Mediplex myself and was left unattended to until almost 6pm when I had to shout at someone: 'I've been here for about 30 minutes and no one is saying anything to me. Someone should tell me whether my son is dead, in intensive care or in a ward.

"Eventually they took me to the top floor of the hospital. The Marina consultant spouted his lies. The consultant said my son had a sudden sickle cell crisis and died at 2.15pm in the Mediplex but my son didn't have sickle cell disease, nor was his ill-health sudden.

"I cried; the matron held me for a while. After that I told the fellow that my son wasn't a sickle cell patient. He was AA. I asked to see him. I went to the mortuary, saw him lying there as if he was sleeping, ruffled his hair, was there for some minutes then left for my in-laws' house.

"After initially terming my complaints a series of "unverifiable allegations by a grieving overemotional mother" BIU turned around to state that their investigations had indicted Marina Medical Services and that the institution aligned themselves with whatever legal action my family chose to take.

"However, they haven't been cooperating at all. Now they say their investigations are still on-going and have refused to release requested documents which would assist us in deciding our next line of action."

Before Justin was buried an autopsy was conducted on the body.

On the autopsy, the mother said, "The autopsy report put the cause of death as cardiac failure due to anaemia. His spleen was enlarged, even his brain was white. The report concluded thus, 'this could have been avoided by administering a blood transfusion'.

"My argument on why they refused to give my son blood transfusion even on Sunday was vindicated by the autopsy report."

Margaret contends not only with the death of her son but also the apathy the school had shown.

According to her, it has only been the Dean of Student Affairs of the university, Mrs. Laura Idahosa, an American married to Dr. Feb Idahosa, President of the university, that had shown empathy and concern over the incident at her personal level.

When our correspondent called the university, a lady who declined to identify herself said the university was investigating the death of Justin and would get back to the family when it was through with its investigation.