

FUTH Lokoja attendants protest colleague's death, claim doctors negligent

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Protesting ward attendants at FUTH Lokoja

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In what could be best described as a case of dog-eat-dog, Ward Attendants at the Federal Teaching Hospital Lokoja on Thursday staged a peaceful protest over the death of one of their colleagues, late Salamatu Aliu of the post-natal ward.

Arewa PUNCH who visited the hospital learnt that while the protests lasted, the health workers in a twist of irony prevailed on the Federal Ministry of Health to beam its searchlight on the hospital.

Narrating the incident that sparked off the protest, one of the attendants who volunteered to speak on condition of anonymity, told *Arewa PUNCH* that, “Salamatu Aliu was rushed to the hospital for medical attention on Sunday evening after her seven days night shift but was not immediately attended to and instead was referred to the Specialist Hospital, Lokoja by the doctors and nurses on duty who cited absence of power supply and a general lack of electricity as their excuse for being unable to attend to her.”

According to the attendant, “Sadly, Aliu died upon getting to the Specialist Hospital in Lokoja before any form of medical care could be administered to her.”

Angered by the reports of the death of one of their own, which they say was a “needless” one, the aggrieved Ward Attendants thus called out the hospital’s doctors and nurses whom they accused of negligently killing Aliu.

Not done, they equally pointed accusing fingers at the medics while alleging a “nonchalant attitude” on the part of the doctors and nurses of the Federal Teaching Hospital, Lokoja.

“The protesting health workers particularly carpeted the doctors and nurses for their ‘uncaring and nonchalant’ attitude towards patients, a situation they lamented has led to the untimely and ‘needless’ deaths of many patients in the past.

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The Ward Attendants further described it as “unbecoming,” especially in the “Accident and Emergency Ward section” of the hospital which they also noted has acquired the notoriety sobriquet of “negligence to duty”, especially the section’s doctors and nurses.

“These unwholesome practices and attitude of these doctors and nurses which has now ‘needlessly’ claimed one of our own is what has necessitated the peaceful protest by the Ward Attendants,” the source told our correspondent.

Meanwhile, *Arewa PUNCH* equally sighted some of the protesting health workers chanting various emotive songs and bearing different placards with such inscriptions as: “All lives matter and are equal,” “Stop treating us unfairly as if we are not humans.”

Our correspondent gathered that the timely intervention of some senior officials and other health workers involving the supporting arms of the hospital may have finally calmed frayed nerves and doused already pent-up anger as moves were seen to pacify the Ward Attendants who were later urged to return to work, even as the intervening officials promised that the issues leading to the cause of Aliu’s death will be thoroughly investigated.

Attempts to speak with the Chief Medical Director of the hospital, Dr Alabi, proved abortive as he was not on his seat during the various times that the *PUNCH* visited.

However, also speaking on the sad incident and the protest, a staff of the hospital, Mr Enny O. said, “The matter just got to my notice, and it is being addressed to ascertain what actually transpired, and we will take the necessary action on it.”

Arewa PUNCH recalls that a similar incident happened only a few months ago, which led to the beating of some medical personnel by relatives of a patient who died due to alleged negligence on the

part of the doctors.