

Three-year-old boy dies inside Lagos soakaway

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| By Dayo Oyewo

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A three-year-old boy, Chibuike Uba, has lost his life after falling into an open soakaway at Babarinsa in the Ibeju Lekki area of Lagos State.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the incident occurred on Wednesday when the boy's mother, Utoro, visited her aunt in the community.

It was gathered that Utoro, who resides in the Epe area of the state, was packing her belongings and preparing to leave when her son left her in the room to meet her aunt who stepped out to make a phone call.

However, when her aunt returned, Uba asked about the child's whereabouts, only to realise he was nowhere to be found.

In a frantic search, Uba spotted her son's slippers near the open soakaway on the next compound and raised the alarm.

In a voice note sent to our correspondent on Thursday, Utoro, who had since remained inconsolable, said, "I visited my aunt and was packing my bags to head back home when she received a call and my son followed her outside. I continued packing, assuming he was still with her. When she came back inside, I asked about my son's whereabouts, and she claimed he had returned inside. I said no and quickly rushed outside to search for him but couldn't find him.

"That was when I noticed his slippers near the soakaway on the next compound beside the house because it has no fence. I immediately shouted that my baby was inside the soakaway. That was how we quickly made efforts to pull him out and rushed him to the hospital."

The bereaved mother said Chibuike was rushed to a nearby hospital at the Sapati area of the community and later referred to the General Hospital at Akodo.

She said he was placed on oxygen, but was later confirmed dead by doctors on duty.

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Utoro has blamed the landlord for the incident, alleging that her aunt had repeatedly warned him to close the soakaway, but he failed to do so.

“My aunt called the man and said she had repeatedly warned him to close the soakaway, but he kept promising to. Even the plank that my aunt used to cover it was damaged by the flood. As I speak to you, the soakaway is still open.”

PUNCH Metro could not verify this claim as efforts made to get the contact details of the said landlord proved abortive.

However, a human rights advocate and founder, Harmony Advocacy Network, Harmony Tachie, told our correspondent on Thursday that the landlord does not stay in the community.

“We have been unable to reach the landlord because he does not stay in the area. We are also trying to ensure that the incident is reported at the police station to get justice,” she said.

PUNCH Metro reported in November 2024 that a 10-year-old boy, Obinna Okoro, was confirmed dead after drowning in a flood along Liasu Road, Idimu, in the Alimosho Local Government Area of the state.

The incident occurred during the downpour witnessed in the state on Sunday.

It was gathered that the late Okoro and his younger sister were trekking on a walkway close to the Juba Alaro end of the road while returning from church.

Unfortunately, he was said to have slipped and fallen into an open space on the walkway, causing the flood in the drainage to sweep him away in the process.