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Pupil Dies After Falling Into School Pit Toilet

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A seven-year old pupil of a dilapidated public primary school at Alapere in Kosofe Local Government area of Lagos State Southwest Nigeria has died after falling into an open pit

toilet in his school. The deceased, **Master Lawal Buhari**, was a primary one pupil at Irepodun Primary School, a stone's throw from Oriola bus stop at Alapere in Ketu.

The acting Head Mistress of the school, Mrs. Sotonwa Olayinka, an assistant Head Mistress, who was not identified, the teacher of the boy, Mrs. Ibuola and another teacher have been arrested by the police and detained at Alapere Police Station in connection with the death. P.M.NEWS learnt that Lawal had gone to ease himself after school closed at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, but slipped and fell, his head downward. It was gathered that about thirty minutes after the tragic fall, at 1.30 p.m., other pupils who had also gone to ease themselves saw Lawal's still legs and alerted the school authorities. Lawal was brought out dead, with human waste all over his body, eyewitnesses said.

But the family of the deceased yesterday told P.M.NEWS that the boy fell into the pit at about 11.30am before the school closed and was in the pit for about three hours before he was discovered dead with excreta all over his body.

“My daughter called me yesterday (Wednesday) at about 2.30 pm and told me that Lawal had fallen into the pit in his school and was already dead. I was told that the incident took place at about 11.30a.m. I cannot still believe that nobody among the school authorities knew that my grandson had fallen into the pit until after 2p.m.

“I suspect that he was harmed and pushed into the pit because how can Lawal remain in the pit for over two hours and nobody knew. I am charging them for negligence because if they had done their work correctly such a thing would never have happened,” Buhari Sulaiman, the grand father of the deceased told P.MNEWS

yesterday.

Lawal was the first son of Abiodun Buhari and Oluwatomisin Buhari. His mother described her son as a bright and promising child. She said she is shocked and can not come to terms with what happened. Sources in the school told our correspondent this morning that several letters had been sent to Agboyi-Ketu Local Government council to fix the toilets and other dilapidated facilities at the school, but nothing was done. The source said that a meeting was held last Friday concerning the toilet, lack of water and the collapsed fence of the public school. The source added that some council members had visited the school on Tuesday, but did not fix the toilets or agreed on a date to fix them.

When our correspondent visited the school yesterday, Lawal's school uniform was still lying by the open pit. The school was deserted after violence broke out yesterday as a result of the incident.

It was learnt that those who knew Lawal went to the school after information reached them that he had fallen into the pit and died. They attempted to attack the school authorities over the boy's death, accusing them of negligence. But policemen from Alapere arrived the scene on time to restore order. Lawal was one of the 60 students sharing an over crowded space that hosts two different classes. Pupils in Class C and Class D share the same classroom, the same blackboard, simply divided in the middle.

It was learnt that as one teacher teaches English language, the other teacher might be teaching Yoruba, thereby creating confusion in the class. Class 5C has 31 students, 15 boys

and 16 girls and Class 5D has 29 students in the same small space.

P.M.NEWS observed that the school's fence has collapsed, heaps of refuse litter the surroundings classrooms which do not have windows. The roofs of some classrooms have been blown off. The computer classroom is partially broken. The blackboards are partially conked out and classrooms renovated by an unknown contractor have no doors, windows, or fans. There are some broken tables and seats. There is no water in the school. A modern toilet built by the contractor is said to be exclusively used by the teachers.

A source at the school told P.M.NEWS that the contractor did a shoddy job and left many buildings uncompleted. Government waste bins were provided, the source said, but no vehicle comes to empty them, and they have remained unused.

“The fence has collapsed all around the school. The contractors left tanks but there is nothing to pump water, so we don't even use them. That is why you see heaps of wastes everywhere,” the source said.

In the midst of the dilapidated classrooms, toilets and fence, a torn Nigerian flag is hoisted.

“We want Fashola to come here on Monday. We want him to resume with us on Monday so that he can see things for himself,” the source who works in the school but preferred to remain anonymous told our correspondent yesterday.

Source: PM News



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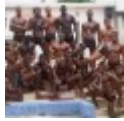
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