

4yr-old dies, family of 6 unconscious in Benue

From **Scholastica Hlr,**
Makurdi

TRAGEDY struck yesterday at Akaajime community, Mbakpegh, Ipav, Gboko Local Government (LG), Benue State, after a family of six was found unconscious in their one room apartment.

It was gathered that when the family was discovered lying unconscious, one of them, a four-year-old, was found dead after which the remaining five were rushed to a nearby private Hospital, at Akaajime.

A member of the family, Mohivinze Terkura, who survived the tragedy told newsmen that, she returned in the morning by 10am because she was trapped by the rain from where she spent a night with her Aunty in the same Akaajime area.

She said on her return, she was surprised to discover that her mother and siblings were still in the room with door locked from inside which to her was very unusual.

She explained that, after several attempts of calling out their names to open the door failed, she then forced the door open only to discover her mother and others unconscious.

"That was when I raised the alarm that attracted the attention of our neighbours, who helped me convey them to the nearest hospital. But before they were taken to hospital, my younger brother, four years old, Sunday Surnen, was confirmed dead"

Terkura, who was still in shock, said she could not tell what led to the incidence, but confirmed that she noticed an unusual harsh smell of chemical in the room. She further explained that they don't have gas cooker in

the room nor use insecticide, but that they have constantly been using mosquito nets.

One of the victims, Aondohemba Joseph, 11, who was revived by the doctor, said, "I woke up this morning as usual to prepare for school and I couldn't move myself from the bed. I called our mother, but she couldn't answer me. Then I discovered that the rest in the room were unconscious, and helpless. We were there till the intervention of my sister, Movihinze, who return later around 10am."

He explained further that their mother mistakenly wake up to cook for them by 2am only for her to discover that it was still midnight and she went back to join them in the room hoping to continue with the cooking at the usual hours of 5am only for the devil to struck them leaving all of them unconscious.

The survivors are: Mde

Joseph (mother), Miss Terkuma Kumawuese, 12, Chivirter Avalumun, 10 and Teryange Avalumun, seven.

At Vawar Hospital Akaajime Gboko LG, where they were revived, a large number of people, especially relatives, neighbours and passersby were seen discussing in low tones, while the doctors and nurses were seen collaborating and battling to save the lives of the victims.

The doctor in charge of the hospital, Joshua Atime said he was yet to confirm the actual cause of the incidence. He noted that his major concern was to revive the victims, which according him, he did up to 95 percent before transferring them.

Atime said, "It's true they brought some patients to my hospital and I only stabilized them and transferred them to General Hospital, Gboko. One of them died at home."