

Crime

Taiwo Jimoh

Murdered

An 18-year-old girl, Uzoamaka Agbuagwu, has been beaten to death by her father and brother for allegedly being seen in company of boys in their village, Umuobiala, Isikwuato Local Government Area of Abia State.

The deceased father, Augustine Agbuagwu and his son, Chigozie, flogged the girl to death, because the brother claimed he saw her in a vehicle with some boys around their village.

It was learnt that Uzoamaka, a Senior Secondary School 3 student of the Queen of Apostles Catholic Church, Umuobiala, was also said to be among the four female students who had been on scholarship sponsored by a United States of America based Nigerian body, identified as Winson Tinubu, since 2018, because of her brilliance along with three other girls.

New Telegraph was reliably informed that the suspects allegedly beat the deceased on December 4, 2023 and in the process, broke her spinal cord because she was seen in company of some boys.

After the beating, she was said to have been unable to go to school for close to a month, but was never taken to the hospital for treatment, until her demise due to the injury she sustained on her spinal cord.

Genesis

Speaking with our correspondent from his Miami, Florida base in the United States of America, her benefactor, Tinubu, called for discreet investigation into the matter, wondering what offense she could have committed that warranted the magnitude of beating that led to her death.

According to him: "I have been very happy with the arrangement I have in Abia. The four girls were admitted to a good school, Queen of Apostles Catholic School, in their village of Umuobiala. I always remit their school fees and other payments through my friend Kathy, who had since relocated to the UK with her family from Nigeria.

"The money for the school fees, uniforms, books and other miscellaneous items for the four pupils was a small fortune in the local currency, but not much when I send it in dollars. In fact, this year I planned to add four more students.

"In return, I get frequent photos and videos of the girls and their exam report cards. I was a very proud 'father', and it gave me an immense feeling of satisfaction. I could not wait for these young ladies to grow up and be able to pass this gift on to others. Their WAEC exam was coming up. Everything was working out perfectly until she was beaten to death.

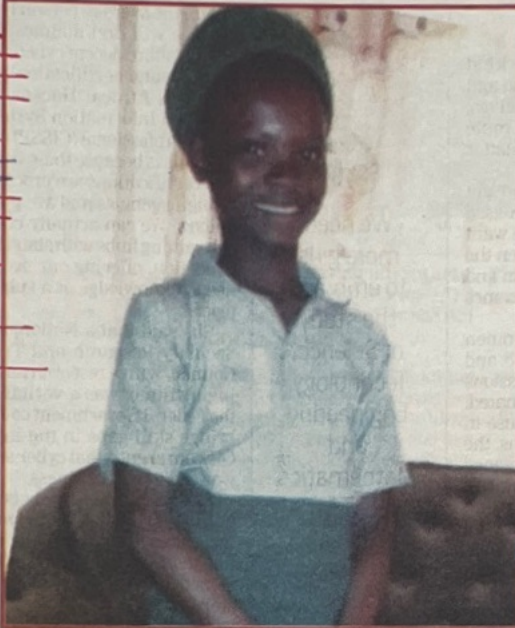
"I could never have imagined what was about to happen. On the morning of January 17, 2024, I received a text message from Kathy from the U.K, saying that Uzoamaka was sick and said she had been beaten so severely by her older brother and his father as a result, she was paralysed down one side of her body and bedridden for a month.

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Father, brother, beat girl to death for being with boys

...we were only trying to discipline her -Father



Uzoamaka



IGP Kayode Egbetokun

"Apparently, it had happened three weeks earlier. Kathy found out because the principal had visited her home to find out why she had been absent from school for so long.

"Uzoamaka's family had not taken her to the hospital nor obtained any form of help, leaving her to languish at home. My first response was that it was a Police matter. To be beaten up to the point of paralysis was nothing to be taken lightly. At the same time, my friend's mother was on her way to visit the principal of Uzoamaka's school, to see if they could use his vehicle to transport her to the hospital.

"I was informed that a delegation, including the school principal, arrived at Uzoamaka's house and met with Uzoamaka's father, mother and brother, the same brother that assaulted her!

"They claimed they did not seek medical attention because they could not afford it. Uzoamaka was lying on the bed. She could not move or respond in any way. We had been told earlier that she was paralyzed down one side of her body, but she could barely even move her other supposedly good arm.

"It later emerged that her spine was broken. No explanation was given for the beating. At this time however, emphasis was on getting care for the victim and not getting answers to obvious questions. The school principal gave the money Uzoamaka would have used to pay for her upcoming WAEC exam to Uzoamaka's family to take her to hospital.

"After taking the money, the concerned delegation was asked to leave, as the family said they would take care of the situation. When

they informed me of their response, I was skeptical as they had made no previous attempt at getting medical attention or seeking funds to do so. I believed they knew they would be questioned at the hospital and wanted to keep it a secret. Nevertheless, they assured everyone she would be taken care of, and the school principal left.

"About two hours later, the principal received a phone call from Uzoamaka's family that she was dead. Nothing has been done to date. No police. No autopsy. The father insisted the Police should not be involved. I cannot accept that this child, who could be my child, would just die a senseless death and nothing is done about it," he stated.

Father, son arrested

However, our correspondent was reliably informed that some people in the community reported the matter to the Police at the Ovim Police Division, Isikwuato Local Government Area, consequent upon which the deceased father and his son were arrested on January 25.

However in their statement, they claimed that they only attempted to discipline her.

Her brother, a tricycle operator, explained that, "I saw my younger sister and her friend in the company of two boys, inside a vehicle, on December 4, 2023. When I asked where they were going, she said they were going to repair their phones. I told them to come down from the vehicle and go home.

"When I got home, I asked if she told our father that she was going out. I collected the phones from them and discovered they were not faulty as claimed. She came and dragged the phones from me and I beat her and my

father also joined in the beating."

He could however not state what was used to hit his deceased sister. Asked why she was not taken to the hospital, his father said there was no money.

Police react

Meanwhile, the Abia State Police Public Relation Officer (PPRO), ASP Maureen Chinaka, confirmed the arrest of father and son.

She said: "The arrest was made by the Divisional Police Station, Isikwuato and the matter has been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department for discreet investigation.

"While the corpse was deposited at the morgue. We would give more updates as the investigation continues."

Village youths

Concerned elders and youths in Umuobiala village have appealed to the Commissioner of Police, Abia State Police Command, to prosecute the father and son, so as to serve as a lesson to other people in the community in particular and Nigeria as a whole.

Mr. John Okafor, said it is cruel and wickedness to beat such young girl to death, simply because she was seen with boys.

We the concerned elders and youths of the village want to warn the police not to sweep the case under the carpet, as the girl deserves justice, because of the manner she was killed. We are going to take legal action if the case is not treated well.

"She was among the girls we were looking up to, to train other girls in the village, but now she's no more, this is a lesson to everyone one of us, who beat carelessly."