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Doctors' Strike: Lack of oxygen kills two-month-old baby

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BY JOHNBOSCO AGBAKWURU, Abuja

A two-month-old baby has died at the Daughters of Charity Hospital, Kubwa, the Federal Capital Territory, FCT, as a result of lack of oxygen for treatment following the nation wide strike embarked upon by doctors.

Meantime, a member of the Senate Committee on Health, Senator Magery Okadigbo, has appealed to the striking doctors to consider the poor Nigerian masses and call off the industrial action they embarked upon as a result of unresolved welfare packages with the Federal Government.

Hospital sources told Sunday Vanguard that the baby had high fever and was brought to the hospital when the situation became critical and the mother was allegedly told by the doctor on duty that the condition was extremely bad.

Although the medical team was said to have made frantic efforts to revive the baby that was brought to the hospital about 12 am Sunday, the efforts did not yield result as the baby gave up at about 4pm that day.

The hospital sources said if the baby had been placed on oxygen at the time he was brought there, perhaps, he would have lived.

Efforts made to speak to the mother of the baby, who was crying uncontrollably, did not yield result even as the hospital management kept mute while the medical doctor who tried to revive the baby to no avail was in a bad mood.

Speaking in an interview, the senator representing Anambra North and a member of the Senate Committee on Health, Okadigbo, appealed to the doctors to respect the ethics of the profession they sworn-to and go back to work.

Okadigbo, who has attracted five health centers to her constituency and will be giving out empowerment packages to over 700 people including 100 widows and physically challenged people, said that it was the masses that were suffering the effect of the strike.

She said, “I have a personal experience on the issue of strike in the health sector. About 11 years ago, when my husband (the late Chuba Okadigbo) was sick and we had to take him to hospital, we took him round three hospitals in Abuja here and he eventually gave up.

“It is a bit difficult to understand while someone who took an oath to save lives and failed to think about it but rather chooses to go against that oath. To me, it is personal but we can only appeal. We at the Senate Committee level had a meeting with them.

“Yes, some of their demands were reasonable. They need improved conditions of service, but some of the demands are a bit frivolous in my opinion but we can only appeal that they should all come together and find a way to resolve the issue.

“People are dying daily as a result of the strike while the demands include mundane things like justifying the need for better conditions of service because you spent more years in the university than other health workers. The NMA should be reasonable with their demands.”

Okadigbo disclosed that she has attracted five health centers to his constituency, adding that three out of the five health centers had been completed while two were near completion,” she added.

”I was two years in the senate on July 17, I will say I was effectively in the upper chamber for one year because the first year was spent in the court room chasing after judgement.

”But I also feel it is right to appreciate the constituency that had stood by me, throughout the struggle in court. So on the 18th; I want to have my empowerment day which will be the first in my constituency.

”Members of my constituency are all excited about it because it has never happened in such a large scale before in the entire seven local government areas consisting 99 wards of the senatorial district. We are trying to empower about 700 people with various items while the Senate President, David Mark, is expected as the special guest of honour.”

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