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13-year-old boy dies in Delhi's Rohini, locals say he was beaten by cop

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ht Shiv Sunny
Hindustan Times, New Delhi



The police have requested the constitution of a panel of experts to oversee an autopsy of the body.(Getty Images/iStockphoto)

f A 13-year-old boy died in Rohini's Prashant Vihar on Wednesday, following which local residents accused a policeman of hitting him with a stick while he was waiting outside a shop to photocopy an Aadhaar card to obtain ration. The police denied the allegations, saying it was an accidental death caused by a fall in a public park.

o The police have requested the constitution of a panel of experts to oversee an autopsy of the body.

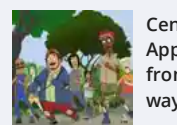
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"I have suffered paralysis twice in the past and have poor health. My son was an intelligent boy and would help me negotiate with customers and receive payments," the boy's father said.

The family used to also run a tea stall, which has been shut since the lockdown.

The boy's mother said, "On Tuesday afternoon, we heard that ration would be provided to the poor (in our neighbourhood) who could provide a copy of their Aadhaar card. Since we were short of money, we also decided to seek ration."

She said her son, accompanied by some neighbours, had gone to get a photocopy of her husband's Aadhaar card.

A youngster, who claimed to be an eyewitness, said that the boy was playing a game on his mobile phone while waiting outside the photocopy shop, when two policemen on a motorcycle approached them. "They began hitting us with a stick. One hit was directed at another man, but it missed its mark and landed on the boy's neck. He collapsed right away," the eyewitness said.

Residents called for CCTV footage from the market to be checked to ascertain the truth.

However, the police had an entirely different version of the events leading to death.

Pramod Kumar Mishra, the deputy commissioner of police (DCP), Rohini, said that as per the initial inquiry, the boy and a few others were seated inside a park, defying the lockdown orders and social distancing norms.

"Two beat constables were patrolling the area on a motorcycle and noticed them. From outside the park boundary, the policemen asked them to leave. The youngsters began running away. It was during that time that the boy fell and fainted. The others managed to escape," said DCP Mishra.

The officer said that while one policeman immediately brought water for the unconscious boy, the other rushed to bring a jeep from the police station in the vicinity. "He was taken to Ambedkar Hospital, from where he was referred to Safdarjung Hospital. He died on Wednesday morning," the DCP said.

Mishra said that while there were no external injuries on the boy's body, a request has been made to form a panel of doctors to carry out his autopsy. "We have not given a clean chit to anyone and will probe the case impartially," said the DCP, adding that a first information report (FIR) will be filed only if there is an indication of foul play.

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