

Food vendor dies inside UNILAG campus

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File: UNILAG frontgate

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A male food vendor, identified simply as Lekan, died on Sunday morning at the College of Medicine of the University of Lagos, Idi-Araba campus.

PUNCH Metro gathered from eyewitnesses that the vendor was electrocuted at a water point within the campus premises.

The incident reportedly occurred in the morning at the South Side of the Idi-Araba campus when Lekan allegedly went to dispose of waste and stopped to wash his hands.

A student, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the incident, said the deceased was electrocuted after holding a metal railing near a tap.

The Secretary-General of the UNILAG Students' Union Government, Joshua Saanumi, also confirmed the incident in a telephone interview with PUNCH Metro on Sunday.

He said, "From the report we got, he wanted to dispose of waste. After that, he went to wash his hands at a tap. When he finished washing, he wanted to turn off the tap and held a railing close to it. That was how he got electrocuted," said the insider.

According to the source, the student was alone at the scene when the incident occurred and only got help after a security operative noticed the situation and raised the alarm.

"He was alone there. It was a security man who noticed something was wrong and started shouting, which attracted people to the scene. By the time I got there, people were already trying to help him," the source stated.

He disclosed that the incident happened around 10 a.m., adding that efforts were immediately made to revive the victim before he was rushed to the school's medical facility.

"I got there past 10 a.m. Some of us performed CPR on him for about 10 minutes. He regained consciousness briefly and was rushed to the Accident and Emergency unit inside the school," he explained.

He, however, noted that the student later died at the hospital.

"He was not confirmed dead at the spot. He died later at the A&E inside the school," he added.

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The operatives of the state police command, according to the insider, were notified and arrived at the scene shortly after the incident.

“The police came to the location where it happened. From there, we all went to where the body was and later returned to the scene. Engineers were also around to assess the situation,” the source stated.

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He added that preliminary findings did not immediately indicate a faulty railing, noting that students and security personnel regularly used the area without prior incidents.

“Even a security man said he washed clothes there earlier that morning. The place was still wet, showing that people used it regularly. So, at the moment, it’s difficult to conclude that the railing was faulty,” he said.

On the response of the school authorities, the source said several officials were present, including security heads and engineers, although the provost could not be reached at the time.

“We called the provost, but he didn’t pick up. However, the chief security officer, engineers, and the chairman in charge of the complex were all around,” he stated.

In a statement signed by the Head of the Communication Unit, Adejoke Alaga-Ibraheem, the varsity confirmed the fatal incident.

The statement read, “The University of Lagos Management regrets to confirm a fatal electrocution incident at the College of Medicine, Idi-Araba campus.

“The tragic incident involved a sales assistant of a food vendor within a commercial outlet at the CMUL premises.

“The University is deeply saddened by this unfortunate development and extends its heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and associates of the deceased.

“We urge members of the University community and the general public to refrain from speculations on the incident, which is currently under investigation by the appropriate authorities.

“Please be assured that the safety and wellbeing of all members of the University community remain our highest priority.”