

Lawal Ibrahim, Gombe

THE killing of Mohammed Kabir, a 200 level Biology student of the Federal College of Education (FCE) Gombe by a member of Anti-Kalare Squad, a unit established to check hoodlums and political thugs in Gombe on Monday may ground activities across institutions the country.

Protest had trailed the death of Kabir, who was killed by a stray bullet from gunshot by security operatives.

Security operatives, comprising soldiers and mobile policemen, had driven into the school premises in pursuit of a student allegedly in a pair of military camouflage trousers.

The crisis, according to investigation, degenerated when some students prevented the security operatives from arresting their colleagues inside the school.

The squad insisted on arresting and taking the student away, while his colleagues prevailed on them to allow him go and change his attire. This the security would not accept, thus leading to disagreement. The disagreement reportedly led to the booing and stoning of the squad by some students.

A student Mohammed Salisu who witnessed the incident told newsmen that while the disagreement ensued, the men began to shoot indiscriminately into the air to disperse the students, in the process a stray bullet hit Kabir, killing him instantly.

He was said to have performed ablution and was about to say his afternoon prayers when he was hit.

The president of the college's Student Union Government (SUG) Comrade Hamza Umar Birma told newsmen that the deceased student was actually calming the students and was about to cross over to the mosque when the bullet hit him on the chest.

The incident grounded activities on the campus and in the town as the students and college staff took to the street in protest. The student who were accompanied by the school provost, Dr Adamu Gimba Abbas matched along the streets setting bonfires and brandishing green leaves and shouting "we no gree", "justice must prevail," among others.

The students wondered what prompted the squad to enter the school when there was no report of crisis, saying security operatives should have concentrated on crimes in the state capital rather than forcing themselves into the school without due process to kill innocent students.

Our correspondent reports that, shortly after the incident, the two major unions in the school resolved to in a joint press conference addressed by their chairmen, Mr Biwe Ephraim and Mr Danladi A Msheliza to condemn the killing and issue a 14-day ultimatum to the Inspector General of Police as well as Gombe State government to fish out the killers or risk unrest.

The two unions, in their list of demands, had asked for an unreserved apology to the school management for what they called the security agencies' forceful entry into the college without due process, while also demanding payment of full compensation to the family of the deceased student and a pledge to ensure proper medical care to all the other students wounded in the fracas.

According to Efraim, "we condemn this dastardly act, it's wrong and improper, it's unfortunate, because they all have children who go to school, if they will continue to be exposed to this kind of hazard, what do you think will happen in future? We will forthwith stop academic activities until they are brought them to book."

Their resolve was quickly endorsed by their lecturers' union of COAESU in a message by the National Chairman delivered by Mr. Ayuba Isa, the North East Zonal Coordinator who said the national secretariat has endorsed the decision of the students and the demand contained



STUDENTS set bonfires to protest the killing of their colleague

Killing of student: NANS, COAESU threaten to shut down all COEs



ENTRANCE of FCE Gombe

therein, and will on the expiration of the two-week ultimatum direct all the 63 colleges of education in the country to close if nothing is done to arrest and bring the culprits to book.

"Our secretariat has received with shock and sense of bewilderment the death of a young student whose life was cut short by the barbaric and unprofessional conduct of some security agents while he was trying to get himself prepared to contribute himself towards educational development of our country, we cannot allow such acts to continue.

"Our schools are not shooting ranges where they can go and try their hands and if security agencies will go into the campus, shoot and kill at will, then our campuses are not safe and something must be done to

preserve it," the COAESU leader said.

Mr. Danladi said, "it's unacceptable, barbaric and we reject it wholly and we are going to down tools. In fact, we could have lost many of our valuable people because right now the school's highly respected quantity surveyor is in the hospital for a fracture when he fell into the gutter while trying to run away from the incident."

So far, the students of the college has in a message through their president, Hamza Umar Birma drummed support to the position of their lecturers and demanded justice for the death of their colleague and those in the hospital.

"We are very disciplined and not violent students, that is why we cannot decipher why they will in the first place slap one of our securitymen at the gate, forced

themselves into the hostel, instead of going to students affairs officer and to shoot our colleague who was only trying to calm the students before turning to say his afternoon prayers," the student leader said.

The state Police Commissioner Alhaji Ibrahim Abdu who confirmed the development to newsmen after the incident said, his men had since commenced a full scale investigation into the matter and assured that, everything would be done to fish out the culprits.

Also, the Gombe State Government has promised to set up a committee to look into the remote and immediate causes of the incident just as the state governor, Ibrahim Hassan Dankwambo sent a delegation to family of the bereaved in Dukku local government area to condole and assured them of its determination to wade into the matter.

The state Deputy Governor Mr Than'anda Rubainu who addressed the protesting students at the Government House in Gombe, urged them to remain calm, while assuring that justice would be done to the deceased and those who sustained injuries and were recuperating at Federal Medical Centre, Gombe.

In another development, the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) has also in a statement signed by its President Hussen Bappa and Secretary Sajjad Babayo Ibrahim promised to mobilize a mass rally if within the expiration of the two weeks nothing constructive is done to fish out the culprits and bring them to book.

Weekly Trust gathered that, so far, parents are expressing serious concern about the future of their children's academic activities should the academic and non academic staff unions of the college lived up to their threat and bring all the school activities to a halt if at the expiration of the period nothing is done.