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One killed, others injured, as protest rocks Rivers Polytechnic

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By **Daniel Abia** / *Snr Correspondent*

P/Harcourt

There is fear that one student lost his life while many others sustained various degree of injuries following a protest that broke out in the Rivers state owned Polytechnic in Khana Local Government Area between students and security personnel attached to the institution.

Trouble started on Wednesday afternoon when security operatives responded to reports at the venue of an election by members of the National Association of Akwa Ibom State Students, Rivers Polytechnic chapter.

It was gathered that while the election to elect new executive was on, a student identified as Effiong was accosted by some members of the school security, but during interrogation the student refused to corporate with the operative, a development that attracted the Chief Security Officer.

The offence of the student was not clear, it was learnt that the police came into the scene and got the student beaten and reportedly took him away in a van.

Later on Wednesday evening, rumours went viral on the campus that the student had passed on, though security operatives dismissed it as false.

As some students started going to the venue of their examination on Thursday morning, the situation of the previous evening resonated, especially as Effiong had not yet returned.

In the twinkling of an eye, students gathered in large numbers and started singing that they wanted to see Effiong, if he was not dead, but the Chief Security Officer (CSO) calmed the rampaging students, assuring that their colleague was alive and would be back soon.

The situation went out of control as some persons used the opportunity to loot property, including computer at the school ICT centre, while offices of the Rector and the Bursar were touched with valuable property stolen.

Several minutes into the chaos, a team of Policemen from the Bori Area Command and some operatives of the Joint Taskforce moved into the campus and fired tear gas canisters to quell the riot, even as students took to their heels.

Confirming the incident, the state Commissioner of Police, Dan Bature, said some students of the Polytechnic had an altercation with their CSO over their colleagues that were detained.

“As soon as I received the information I ordered that the students should be released. There is no report of death or casualty in the polytechnic. There is calm now because our men are there to ensure that there is no breakdown of law and order”, Bature said.

Meanwhile, it was gathered that the school authority ordered the students to vacate the hostels immediately until further notice.

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