

...CRIME, SECURITY, COURT

Students protest as kidnappers kill abducted LAUTECH student, hotelier after 'payment of N5m ransom'

·Barricade Ogbomoso/Ilorin expressway

By Soji Ajibola

A kidnapped final year student of the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Rachael Opadele, and a hotelier, Olugbenga Owolabi, who were kidnapped recently in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, have been killed after payment of N5 million ransom demanded by their abductors. Opadele was kidnapped last Thursday at Abaa community in Surulere Local

Government Area of the state.

A source who preferred anonymity informed the *Nigerian Tribune* that the families of the victims had rallied round to raise the ransom, but were shocked to receive the news of their death.

It was gathered that the families allegedly paid the ransom through an established link who went to the kidnappers' hideout along the Ogbomoso-Ilorin expressway with a motorcycle.

It was learnt that the kid-

nappers, fearing possible arrest by soldiers deployed to monitor the security situation in Ogbomoso area, became suspicious of the link person.

The source said after collecting the ransom, the kidnappers shot the victims, the link person and the okada rider who took the link person to the hideout.

The kidnap victims, as reliably informed, died on the spot, while the okada rider escaped with bullet wounds and is currently receiving treatment in the hospital.

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Adewale Osifeso, said an update into the development would be provided.

He said: "You will be provided updates accordingly, please."

Meanwhile, students of the university staged a protest on Wednesday, where they called on government and relevant security agencies to fish out those responsible for the killing of Opadele and two other persons.

The protesting students barricaded the Ogbomo-

so-Ilorin highway, thereby disrupting free flow of traffic.

The Students Union Government (SUG) of the institution, in a statement by its president, Adeboye Anuoluwa, lamented the murder of Opadele and two others, just as it demanded justice to be served on the perpetrators.

The statement reads: "It is with heavy heart that we announce the gruesome killing of our dear student, Rachael, a final year student of LAUTECH, who was kid-

napped where she was working in Ogbomoso due to the ongoing ASUU strike.

"This is a dark period in our school. We were gutted when we first heard about her kidnap and we wrote to the governments, security agencies and all concerned stakeholders to see to her release.

"It's so disheartening to learn of her death in the early hours of today [Wednesday].

"Our condolences are with her family, friends, and well-wishers. May justice be granted for the loss."