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How police killed two FUOYE

• Fayemi's wife suspends

Samson Folarin,
Abiodun Nejo
and Tunji Bosun

THE President of the Student Union Government of the Federal University, Oye Ekiti, Oluwaseun Awodola, has narrated how policemen from

the Ekiti State Police Command allegedly killed two students of the institution.

He identified the deceased students as Oluwaseyi Kehinde, a 100-level student of Crop Science and Horticulture, and Joseph Okonofua, a 300-level student of Biology Education.

The student leader said

two others were injured and admitted to hospital.

Awodola insisted that the police must be held accountable for the death of the students.

The protest was said to have been staged against the blackout on the campus of the institution.

The demonstration later degenerated, leading to the killing of the two students.

The school management had issued a statement on Wednesday asking all students to vacate their hostels because the campus had been shut indefinitely.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Caleb Ikechukwu, had claimed that the students attacked the convoy of the wife of the state governor, Bisi Fayemi.

Ikechukwu also alleged that the students assaulted policemen and damaged a police vehicle.

He denied that the police shot any student at the scene.

However, the SUG president noted that the police were responsible for the death of the two students.

Awodola explained that while Okonofua, aka Icon, was shot in the stomach, Kehinde, a class representative, was shot in the head.

He said, "We finished the peaceful demonstration around 1.40pm. When I was done

with a press conference, we discharged all our students by 2pm.

"I went to sleep at my friend's place. I was still asleep when I was called around 4pm that some of our students had been arrested. A student told me that they were arrested on the Ikole campus and the police were bringing them to Oye.

"I decided to meet the soldier, who was with us during the protest, so that we could find a way to bail the arrested students. Together with the soldier, we went to meet the Oye Divisional Police Officer. The DPO assured us that the students would be released."

The 300-level Biochemistry student explained that with the assurance, he returned to his friend's house to continue resting.

He added that a few minutes later, his personal assistant called him that the soldier was looking for him.

Awodola stated, "I thought it was about the bail. When I met the soldier, he said the Chief Security Officer to the governor was around and that I should meet him.

"When we got to where the CSO was, we started talking, but an official came from nowhere and slapped me.

"There were students around and that incident almost degenerated into chaos. Everybody queried the official for slapping me. I was also angry and asked what I did. The soldier and the CSO begged me to remain calm.

"They said we should enter the car to go and see the governor and that they would ensure that the official apologised. The students said I should not go.

"Later, they said I should meet with the wife of the governor and that she was around. The students, again, said I should not go."

Awodola said while the CSO and the soldier tried to appease him, the former told him to meet with the state Commissioner of Police.

He added, "The CSO asked the soldier and I to wait for him for a minute. After a while, I told the soldier that I wanted to go and rest and that I was no longer angry. I stood to go and meet the CSO to tell him that I was leaving.

"As I turned to leave, we heard a gunshot from a policeman, who shot in the air. The CSO to the governor ran to meet the policeman and asked him why he shot in the air. Before we knew it, the police had fired tear



• Kehinde

gas canisters at us and that was how the commotion started.

"The indigenes started throwing stones and the students joined them. Everything turned violent as the police started shooting at the students. That was when they killed a student, which aggravated the already tensed situation. And we later lost another student."

He lamented that the poor handling of the protest by the police led to the loss of two lives.

The SUG leader called for an investigation into the deaths,

Xenophobia: Shop owners count losses, repair vandalised stores



• One of the malls being repaired after the attack

Etim Ekpimah

STORE owners at Shoprite malls in Lagos have lamented the loss of goods worth millions of naira during last week's looting of South Africa-linked outlets in response to xenophobic attacks on Nigerians in the country.

Our correspondent, who went round some of the malls, observed that four shops at the Shoprite mall in Surulere - Valuables Boutique, M&G, US Polo and Household Deluxe - were badly damaged as protesting youths broke into them.

The Managing Director, Valuables Boutique, Castus Lyke, told our correspondent that he lost close to N30m to the incident.

students – SUG President tour, denies wrongdoing



• Okonofua

saying justice must be served. Meanwhile, the governor's wife has given her own account of the incident. She maintained that the killings did not happen while she was at the scene. Mrs Fayemi said she had gone to three local government areas on an empowerment and advocacy tour. She explained that while her team was at Ilejemeje, information filtered in that students of the university were protesting lack of electricity in Oye.

The governor's wife said she and members of her team were later informed that the protest had ended.

She stated, "When my convoy got to the Oye-Isan junction, we were met by a convoy of excited motorcyclists, who led us into Oye. The atmosphere was very peaceful; the women were singing and dancing, and there was nothing to indicate that anything was amiss.

"I stopped at the tent erected for the mobile health clinic in front of the civic centre to greet the elderly patients, who were being attended to, and I also went to greet the beneficiaries of the Food Bank for the Elderly Project (Ounje Arugbo), who were assembled under another tent. I then proceeded to the hall for the programme.

"Half-way through our event, there was a disturbance outside. The FUOYE students (possibly infiltrated by local thugs) had re-grouped and were trying to get into the venue. The security officers prevented this from happening.

"We finished our programme and by the time we got outside, we found that vehicles from my convoy and those of my guests that were parked outside the venue had been vandalised. As we were driving out of

Oye town, we encountered at least two roadblocks that the students had mounted to prevent the movement of vehicles. I could see students and thugs throwing stones and large sticks at us as we drove by.

"However, the casualties that were recorded did not take place while I was there. There are eyewitnesses, photographs and video footage to confirm this."

She denied that the students' protest turned violent because she refused to address them, adding that she was also shocked to read that the students were shot at on her instructions.

Mrs Fayemi added, "I firmly believe in citizens' rights to protest on issues of concern. I am deeply saddened that at least one fatality has been recorded. As a mother, my heart bleeds. All these students are my children and no mother prays to weep over her offspring.

"I extend my sincere condolences to the family concerned, and I wish those who are still receiving treatment a speedy recovery.

"The Obirinkete tour has been suspended pending a review of what transpired yesterday (Tuesday). I thank friends and all members of the

public, who have expressed concern over this. God bless you all."

The management of FUOYE said in a statement on Tuesday that three injured students were receiving medical attention at the Federal Teaching Hospital, Ido Ekiti.

"As of this evening (Tuesday), three students were injured, with two of them having minor injuries, and one having a severe abdominal injury currently hospitalised at the FETHI," the statement said.

The management had on Tuesday evening shut down the institution and proscribed the SUG.

When contacted on the reported death of two students, the Public Relations Officer, FUOYE, Mr Geoffrey Bakji, said, "I cannot confirm that because I don't have any official information to that effect yet."

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Caleb Ikechukwu, also said, "I can't confirm that. I can't confirm the story; as soon as I am briefed, I will tell you."

However, the Commissioner for Information, Mr Muyiwa Oluamilua, said in a statement, "The Ekiti State Government has been informed that there might have been casualties recorded during the incident. We await more details of this sad development from the

school authorities. Nothing is worth the loss of any life."

The Chairman, Nigeria Union of Journalists, Ekiti Council, Rotimi Ojomoyela, condemned the "calculated" attacks on journalists during the incident and urged the security agencies to fish out the perpetrators.

According to him, journalists on the governor wife's entourage narrowly escaped being killed during the incident, with some sustaining varying degrees of injury.

The Speaker of the state House of Assembly, Funminiyi Afuye, who condemned the attack on the entourage of the wife of the governor, called on the police to investigate the matter properly to unravel those behind it.

Robbers kill Osun businessman, flee with N590,000

Bola Bamigbola, Osogbo

THE Osun State Police Command, on Wednesday, said it had launched a manhunt for the killers of a businessman, Lukman Owode, in the Oke Ayepe area of Osogbo.

Sources in the area told our correspondent that the deceased was operating a sawmill in the Oke Baale area

Also, the Afenifere in Ekiti State condemned the incident, saying, "This attack was very sad, ugly and unwarranted, and we join all well-meaning Nigerians to condemn the fracas, which we understand was very deadly.

"It was bad manners for those calling themselves leaders of tomorrow to misbehave and to transfer their aggression with high level of irrational behaviour to the governor's wife, who was on a peaceful visitation across the state."

Meanwhile, the National Association of Nigerian Students has declared Mrs Fayemi a persona non grata on any university campus in the country over the alleged death of two FUOYE students.

The National Public Relations Officer, NANS, Azeez Adeyemi, said this on Wednesday in a statement he issued in Abeokuta, Ogun State.



• Ige