

Two feared dead as college students protest in Calabar

By John Ighodaro

CALABAR—TWO persons were feared dead and several million naira worth of property destroyed when students of the Federal College of Education, Obudu in Cross River State went on the rampage protesting late registration fee imposed by the school authorities.

Trouble started when the school authorities insisted that students who couldn't complete their registration for the 2007/2008 academic session as stipulated should pay a late registration fee of N1,000. *Vanguard* gathered that the students had pleaded with the authorities saying the delay in registering was

partly due the last Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) strike. The school authorities however paid deaf ears to their pleas and the students went violent destroying school property worth millions of naira.

The Dean of Students Affairs, Mr. B.A. Oyoyo allegedly took to his heels and the students who were gunning for him got wind that he had taken refuge at the Obudu Divisional Police station. The students in their thousands headed for the police station in a bid to lay hands on Mr. Oyoyo. As the tornado of unruly and rampaging students approached the police station, the policemen on duty released some shots in the air to scare off the

students, but *Vanguard* gathered that the students inspite of the warning shots kept advancing and the police were then forced to release bullets into the violent crowd of students. A student was feared dead and a motorcyclist who was riding past was hit by a bullet and died on the spot. According to the President of the Student Union-Government, Mr. Dominic Obogo who described the authorities demand as excessive extortion, said "they ought to know that late registration of students was no fault of theirs but due to the NLC nationwide strike. The Divisional Police Officer in the area could not be reached as he was said to be busy trying to control the situation.