

NIGERIA POLICE SHOT LASU STUDENTS

On Tuesday, November 25, 2008, one hundred and seventy [170] students of Lagos State University, who are indigenes of Epe, left the Ojo Campus of the University, in a convoy of five [5] hired buses [since University buses were otherwise engaged], to attend the Lagos State Indigeneship Verification Exercise at Michael Otedola College of Education, Noforija, Epe. A similar exercise was conducted at other selected locations for students who are indigenes of the other four [4] Divisions of Lagos State. **The indigeneship verification clearance is a pre-condition for the award of the Lagos State bursary to its citizens.**

At the end of the verification exercise, in the evening of Tuesday, November 25, 2008, the 170 LASU students departed Michael Otedola College of Education, Noforija, Epe, to return to the Main Campus of Lagos State University at Ojo. Four [4] of the buses conveying the students, which were ahead, decided to await the arrival of the fifth bus at a location known as "T- Junction" in Epe, where there was a **detachment of MOPOL [Mobile Police]**.

Shortly after the arrival of the fifth bus, all the five [5] buses were set to proceed on the journey in a convoy back to the Main Campus of the University, with all the students seated in the buses. Suddenly, they heard gunshots. The students initially thought that the Police was just shooting into the air. A few seconds later, there were screams and cries that four [4] students had been hit by bullets from the gunshots fired by the Police. **The shootings were without any provocation whatsoever, by the students.**

The four [4] injured students were immediately rushed to the General Hospital, Epe, where two [2] students with minor wounds, were treated and discharged. The two [2] other students with major injuries, after initial medical attention at the General Hospital, Epe, were immediately conveyed, in Lagos State University Epe Campus Ambulance, to hospitals on the Lagos Island, for further medical attention; they are currently receiving treatment there. Both the Lagos State Government and Lagos State University Authorities have been monitoring developments in this respect.

His Excellency, Governor of Lagos State, Mr. Babatunde Raji **FASHOLA**, SAN, has kindly ordered the release of funds to offset costs of medical treatment. Similarly, the Management of Lagos State University has released additional funds to cover any shortfall, regarding settlement of medical bills.

The news of the arrest and the dismissal of the erring policeman by the Nigeria Police has been brought to the attention of Lagos State University Authorities. .../2.

Lagos State University is aware of the prompt efforts of the Epe Divisional Police Officer, the Police Area Commander and the Lagos State Commissioner of Police. The University is also aware that the Nigeria Police has instituted legal prosecution against the erring dismissed police officer.

Nonetheless, as far as Lagos State University is concerned, the shooting of four [4] students of the University on Tuesday, November 25, 2008 at about 7.00 p.m. at Epe, **was and remains a Police action.**

Lagos State University Management is saddened that a policeman shot our innocent and unarmed students whilst they were going about their academic pursuits. **The welfare of our students will continue to be of paramount importance to the University Authorities.**

Consequently and justifiably, the **University Management has resolved to immediately institute legal action against the Nigeria Police, in order to ensure that justice is done.** The University's solicitors have already commenced action accordingly.

The Vice Chancellor and Chairman of the University Senate, Professor Lateef Akanni **Hussain**, briefed members of the Lagos State University Senate on this dastardly incident at its statutory meeting, held on Thursday, November 27, 2008. The University Senate, noted the incident with sadness and wondered why the ugly incident happened. The University Senate is aware that the matter is already in a court of law.

The University Authorities have prevailed on LASU students not to engage in any reprisal actions against the Police.

Lagos State University uses this medium to assure LASU students, their parents and guardians, as well as friends of the University, that the two [2] students with major injuries, are receiving excellent medical care.

For the avoidance of doubt, Lagos State University wishes to emphasise its commitment to ensure that **justice** is done in this matter and the University's solicitors have been instructed to pursue this unfortunate matter to **its logical conclusion**, whilst we pray for the speedy recovery of all affected students.

POSTSCRIPT:

The University Authorities regret to announce that one of the victims of the Police gunshots has succumbed to his injuries despite the combined efforts of Lagos State Government and Lagos State University to save his life. We commiserate with the family of the departed innocent student and we pray that his gentle soul rest in perfect peace. Staff and students of Lagos State University are hereby advised to remain calm, while the University Authorities continue to take steps to ensure that justice is done.

UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT