NANS threatens to shut FUOYE over VC’s alleged sexual harassment, extortion

Date: 2025-01-25

Source: https://thenationonlineng.net/nans-threatens-to-shut-fuoye-over-vcs-alleged-sexual-harassment-extortion/

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The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) has threatened to shut the Federal University, Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE) over allegation of sexual harassment and extortion against the Vice Chancellor of the institution, Prof. Abayomi Fasina.  
  
Fasina was said to have been making inappropriate and emotional advances towards Engr. Folasade Adebayo, a married deputy director in the university’s Directorate of Works and Services.  
  
But the law firm of Ebun-Olu Adegboruwa and Co, lawyers to Fasina, described the allegation against the VC as baseless, emphasising on need to address the unsubstantiated accusations and provide accurate information, refuting the false narratives.  
  
A statement by NANS Senate President, Com. Akinteye Babatunde threatened if the Governing Council of the institution fails to suspend the VC before the upcoming convocation of the university, NANS will take decisive and lawful action by mobilising students nationwide to shut down FUOYE on convocation day to demand accountability.  
  
According to him, the alleged conduct was reprehensible and violates ethical standards expected of someone occupying such a high position of trust and authority in an academic institution.  
  
He said: “This is not a threat but a solemn commitment to defending the rights and dignity of Nigerian students and ensuring that our institutions are governed with transparency, accountability, and fairness. FUOYE deserves better. Nigerian students deserve better.  
  
“We therefore strongly urge the Governing Council of FUOYE to do the needful, not only to salvage the institution’s reputation but also to restore confidence in the integrity of academic leadership in Nigeria. The time to act is now.  
  
“We are appalled by the recent revelations implicating the VC, as the moral compass of any institution, a Vice-Chancellor must embody the values of integrity, discipline, and respect. However, the actions alleged against Professor Fasina severely undermine the sanctity of the office he holds and bring disrepute to FUOYE as a center of learning.  
  
“It is deeply troubling that the leader of an institution tasked with nurturing and protecting its students and staff could be at the center of such a scandal. This incident, if left unaddressed, sets a dangerous precedent and threatens to erode the trust that students, staff, and stakeholders have in the university’s leadership.  
  
“We call on the Governing Council of FUOYE to act decisively and immediately suspend Professor Fasina to allow for a transparent, unbiased, and thorough investigation into the allegations. This suspension is critical to ensure that the investigation is not hindered by undue influence or interference.  
  
“We further urge the council to ensure that all investigative processes prioritize justice and fairness, with adequate protection for the victim and whistleblowers involved in this case.  
  
“Beyond the issue of sexual harassment, the administration of Professor Fasina has been plagued by numerous controversies that raise serious questions about his leadership. Among these is the extortion of students through the university’s part-time program.  
  
“It is disheartening to note that students who have met the requirements for admission into regular programs are being systematically denied admission and coerced into part-time programs solely for financial exploitation. This blatant abuse of power and commercialization of education is a direct assault on the rights of students to affordable and accessible education.  
  
“Professor Fasina’s tenure has been riddled with multiple allegations of financial misconduct and administrative malpractice. Such consistent controversies reflect a leadership that prioritizes personal and financial gain over the welfare of students, staff, and the institution at large.”  
  
The Governing Council of the University in a statement on Friday by the Registrar and Secretary of the Council, Mufutau Ibrahim has approved setting up of a nine-member committee to investigate allegation.  
  
The Registrar said the Committee was directed to conduct comprehensive investigation and uncover the truth behind the allegations, saying the Committee is expected to get to the root of the matter and present its findings to the Council within the stipulated time.  
  
But the Civil Society Coalition on the Leadership of the Federal University of Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE) has distanced the VC from the alleged committal of sexual harassment and staff victimization.  
  
The coalition, led by Com. Shuaib Abdulkadir at a press conference held in Abuja, faulted claims by members of the FUOYE Senior Staff Association of Nigeria Universities (SSANU) that Fasina indulges in administrative recklessness and financial impropriety.  
  
The coalition described the allegations as baseless, politically motivated, and designed to tarnish the reputation of a leader whose impact speaks volumes.  
  
A statement signed by Oluwatosin Adesioye, Esq on behalf of Adegboruwa law firm emphasised the need to address the unsubstantiated accusations and provide accurate information, refuting the false narratives.  
  
The statement reads: “We act as solicitors to the Vice-Chancellor, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti (the Vice-Chancellor) in relation to certain online publications on certain phantom allegations without proof. The publications purport to relay allegations of sexual harassment, victimisation, abuse of office, financial mismanagement and non-compliance with university service schemes, all levelled against the Vice-Chancellor by the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), Federal University, Oye-Ekiti branch (SSANU-FUOYE Branch) and some other disgruntled persons. As retained Solicitors to the Vice-Chancellor, we have found it imperative to put the facts straight while rebutting the criminal allegations and imputations directed at the Vice-Chancellor.  
  
“Beginning with the headliner – “…Sexual Harassment, Victimisation Allegations Against Vice-Chancellor,” the narrative that Engr. Folasade O. Adebayo, a Deputy Director, Works and Service Unit of Federal University Oye-Ekiti (the Institution), was subjected to harassment and later victimization after resisting the advances from the Vice-Chancellor is entirely false and unfounded as such weighty and criminal allegations have been referred and reported to the Nigeria Police Force since year 2023.  
  
“Under and by virtue of section 4 of the Nigeria Police Establishment Act, 2020, it is the police that is empowered with statutory authority to investigate and prosecute all criminal acts of alleged sexual harassment.  
  
“We wish to state for the record that the Nigeria Police carried out its investigations of the allegations of alleged sexual harassment and victimisation of Engr. Folasade O. Adebayo, abuse of office and official corruption, directed at the Vice-Chancellor to which a final and conclusive investigative report absolving the Vice-Chancellor has been released.  
  
“In the course of the police investigation, it was settled unequivocally that there are no evidence of infractions by the Vice-Chancellor (and his management team) on fraud, fraudulent practices, official corruption, inflation of contract amongst other crimes alleged in the petition made against the Vice-Chancellor. As a matter of fact, Engr. Folasade O. Adebayo expressly and voluntarily concurred in writing to the ABSENCE of any sexual harassment or advances by the Vice- Chancellor against her person.  
  
“One then wonders what other statutory/enforcement role should be carried further in respect of the same allegations of sexual harassment and victimization under reference, when the Nigeria Police Force, as statutorily mandated under Section 4 of the Police Act 2020 in carrying out its duties to prevent and detect crimes, has fulfilled the constitutional duties and covered the field as required by law over the now spent allegations and claims under reference.  
  
“This also extends to the professed allegation of abuse of office, financial mismanagement and failure to comply with university service schemes all of which have previously been submitted to the office of the Pro-Chancellor of the Institution for investigation to which the Vice-Chancellor has not been found wanting in carrying out his duties, a confirmation of the Vice-Chancellor’s adherence to the principles of good governance and due process.  
  
“Hence, these false accusations that have already been independently reviewed by the institution’s Governing Council, headed by the erstwhile Pro-Chancellor, Engr. Kayode Ojo, have strangely resurfaced following the recent appointment of a new Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council of the Institution. The fact therefore remains that the instant resort to misleading narratives now been peddled by Saharah Reporters, is a further revelation of the outright desperation by some disgruntled elements within the SSANU-FUOYE Branch to coerce and unjustly exploit the Vice Chancellor into yielding to their selfish schemes and ambitions all to the detriment of the Institution.  
  
“It is regrettable that despite the issuance of a clean bill of health to the Vice-Chancellor confirming the latter has acted in accordance with the highest standards of integrity and professionalism in respect of the management of the Institution, the same complainant has approached Sahara Reporters to publish these serious allegations without first reaching out to the Vice-Chancellor or the University’s management for any clarification or position.  
  
“This breach of journalistic ethics demonstrates a clear intent to ridicule and tarnish the Vice – Chancellor’s impeccable reputation.  
  
“Under section 22 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) true and responsible journalism mandates fairness, accuracy and balance. Sadly, the publication under reference falls short of these standards, contributing to the spread of falsehoods and misinformation, all of which we seek to correct with this Rejoinder.  
  
“The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Abayomi Sunday Fasina, has demonstrated unwavering commitment, through transparency and accountability to the growth and success of the Institution, which has led to University being amongst the top sought-after tertiary institutions in Nigeria by candidates and their parents.  
  
“These malicious attacks will however not deter him from his responsibilities to pilot the Institution even to greater heights. In the mean, we shall continue to advise the Vice – Chancellor while awaiting further instruction in pursuing his right and integrity.”