

A protest erupted at King's College in Lagos, as staff and parents of the school prevented members of the King's College Old Boys Association (KCOBA) from gaining access into the school premises on Tuesday, September 15.

The action of the staff and parents followed the Federal Government's directive to hand over the management of the college to the Old-Boys Association.

Earlier on Monday, the Minister of Education, Tunji Alausa held an emergency meeting with the leadership of the Trade Union Congress (TUC), Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria (ASCSN) and other related unions addressing the lingering controversy surrounding the college's ownership.

The meeting was also to address the setback affecting academic resumption across Federal Unity Colleges by members of the workers' unions on Monday.

After the meeting, the National Leadership of TUC asked ASCSN and other unions to suspend all industrial action over the concession arrangements.

In line with this, Alausa declared an immediate resumption all Federal Unity Colleges.

However, King's College, failed to follow this directive as the staff refused to grant KCOBA executives access into the school for a press conference previously set up to address the controversy surrounding the concession and follow through with the resumption directive.

It was reported that the situation went out of hand as struggles against KCOBA executives over access to the school entrance led to the injury of some staff.

The President of KCOBA, Kashim Ibrahim-Imam, revealed that the Federal Executive Council (FEC), during a meeting had resolved that the association would be in charge of the college's management under a public-private partnership (PPP) arrangement, emphasizing development as the only interest the association has in the college.

"Also, the old boys are not interested in buying King's College. The role of the Old Boys Association, over the years, has been to invest in developing the infrastructure across the two campuses. That has primarily been our role." he said.

He also clarified rumours regarding the reason behind the partnership, stating that

there will be no increase in fees, and that the salaries of the teachers who stay will be increased.

“At no time did the old boys imply that we are going to increase school fees. Our objective is to develop the college,”

“For those who will elect to remain as teachers in King’s College, we will double their salaries and allowances,” he said.

On the other hand, the National Coordinator of the Federal Workers Forum, Andrew Emelieze assured that the protest would not end until the concession is reversed by the Federal Government, alleging that the actions of KCOBA were forceful, leading to the protest.

“Our leaders are in Abuja meeting the minister of education on this issue, and we were here peacefully until the old boys came, using the Nigeria police, and forcefully entered.”

Meanwhile, Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Tijani Fatai said that the operatives were present to prevent lawlessness and provide protection.

“I told them you have a right to protest, but where their right stops, another man’s rights begin,” he said.

He also revealed that the Old Boys had an agreement with stakeholders to hold its meeting within the school premises on Wednesday.