



AP Photo: The body of one of the two men that were killed on the Louisiana State...

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BATON ROUGE, La. - Police searched for suspects Friday in the shooting deaths of two Louisiana State University students, and unlike other schools in the wake of the Virginia Tech massacre, administrators decided against locking down the campus.

Police patrols were increased on the 28,000-student campus, and students were urged to be cautious as they wrapped up final exams and headed home for the holiday break. But LSU Chancellor Sean O'Keefe said police chose not to blockade the campus or reschedule the tests after determining the two Ph.D. students from India were slain in an isolated home invasion.

The victims were found late Thursday after being shot in the head inside an apartment complex for married and graduate students. One was tied up with a computer cable. The killings were the first on campus in more than a decade.

The decision to keep campus open — and let traffic and people move freely — was in sharp contrast to the responses at other colleges to reports of gunfire after the Virginia Tech shootings in April.

"There was no evidence, nothing to suggest that there was a pattern here that would rapidly escalate. And as a consequence of that, a determination was made that we would not lock down the campus," O'Keefe said.

This fall, officials at the University of Memphis canceled class the day after football player Taylor Bradford was shot because authorities were uncertain at the time whether it was a targeted or random attack. After two students were shot in September at Delaware State University, administrators ordered a swift shutdown of the campus, citing the Virginia Tech shootings.

With exams ending, few students were on the LSU campus Friday. Most were going about their usual routine. None expressed concerns about the campus being open, but some were edgy.

Shenid Bhayroo, a graduate student in mass communication, said he was keeping a sharper eye on his surroundings and on the people he sees on the streets because the suspects remained at large.

"A lot of friends I've spoken to today said, certainly, that they'll be more concerned about ensuring their safety, moreso than normal," Bhayroo said.

LSU's campus would be difficult to block off from drivers and walkers. The university does not have gates at its many entrances, and at least two major city roads run through the campus. O'Keefe said the university took many precautions to notify students about the shootings but felt a shutdown of campus was unnecessary.

But at least one of the LSU notification systems — a text-messaging alert system put in place after the Virginia Tech shootings — failed to notify all 8,000 students who signed up.

The two slain students, Chandrasekhar Reddy Komma and Kiran Kumar Allam, were found at Edward Gay apartment complex, on the edge of campus near a high-crime area of Baton Rouge. Komma, 31, had been bound with a computer cable, and Allam, 33, was found near the door, said university spokesman Charles Zewe.

Allam's pregnant wife called 911 after finding the men dead, said Srinivasa Pothakamuri, a friend of Komma. Komma, a biochemistry student, had been visiting Allam, who was in the chemistry program.

O'Keefe said nothing appeared to be stolen from the apartment, leaving police unclear about a motive. Zewe said police were searching for three men seen leaving the area.

The complex has a tall fence separating its 288 residents from the off-campus neighborhood, but the apartments have no gates or surveillance cameras.

Resident Omer Soysal said attempted break-ins and holdups are common at the apartments, where nearly all the residents are international students.

"When it is dark, I tell my kids: 'Don't go outside,'" said Soysal, 37, a third-year Ph.D. candidate in computer science.

LSU officials sent a campus-wide alert out after midnight, more than an hour and a half after the shootings. Officials sent out e-mail and voice-mail messages and posted a message on the university's Web site. But the text message alert did not reach all its recipients.

It was not clear what caused the failure, and the problem was being investigated.

Bhayroo said he signed up for the text-messaging system days after it was set up, but never received any messages, before or after the shootings.

"There haven't been any," Bayroo said. "Many of us took comfort that LSU implemented this system, so it's worrisome that the system doesn't work."

O'Keefe said the company hired to run the text-messaging system hasn't determined how many people received the message.

Less than one-third of the student body had even signed up for the cell phone notification, though O'Keefe said university officials had stressed the need to do so after Virginia Tech.

"Registration spiked at one point, as I recall, over the summer and then trickled off," O'Keefe said. "This horrific incident is yet another reason why it is really a very good idea to register for the system, and we will again redouble our efforts."

The efforts will run into trouble with students like Cameron Hanover, a senior in political science, who said he didn't sign up and neither did any of his friends.

"I didn't want them to have my phone number. It's a privacy issue," he said.

Associated Press writers Mary Foster and Doug Simpson contributed to this story.