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CUSTOMS OPERATIVE KILLS VILLAGER, INJURES 2 OTHERS

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A Customs operative allegedly shot dead a villager at Seme, border area of Lagos and injured two others, Daily Trust gathered.

The deceased identified as Friday Poku was driving into Nigeria in a red Volkswagen Jetta car with registration number GGE 81 AH, with three of his friends when the incident occurred.

The shooting sparked protest as angry youths in their hundreds set fire with used tyres in the middle of the road, denying road users access to the area.

A witness told Daily Trust that the deceased who was in a Jetta, was flagged down by some Customs men who were allegedly operating an unofficial check point at Gbetrome area of the border.

The witness, who could not say what transpired between the deceased and the Customs operatives, said they were shocked when the officer pulled out his pistol and fired at the victim twice at close range.

He said the victim who had earlier alighted from the vehicle died on the spot while his friends who attempted to attack the fleeing Customs operatives sustained bullet wounds.

"Nobody knew what transpired between the victims and the Customs operatives. All we saw was that the officer pulled his pistol and fired twice at the deceased. The team fled the area when the victim died," the witness said.

Angry youths barricaded the major road in the area, chanting war songs. It took the intervention of the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) Seme Division, Chief Superintendent of Police Umar Mu'azu to restore normalcy.

It was gathered that the body of the deceased was taken away by the youths who urged the comptroller to hand over the Customs operative to them.

Chairman of Youths at J5 Park, Seme, located near the scene of the incident, who identified himself as Dosu, said they would ensure that the matter is not swept under the carpet.

Dosu, who alleged that the killing of villagers was becoming rampant said, "Enough is enough of this wanton killings. We want the comptroller to hand over the killer to the police to investigate the matter. Why is it that the officers involved in the incident have not gone to make statement at the station? Why is it that the vehicle belonging to the deceased was taken away by Customs and not the police? This is to afford them the opportunity to conceal vital evidence that might unravel the situation that led to the death."

Customs Public Relations Officer, Seme Command, Deputy Superintendent of Customs, Ernest Ollotah said the comptroller has set up a panel to investigate the matter.

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Though he said he was not aware of any killing, he added that the command was investigating a case of an attempt to disarm some Customs officers by some smugglers who fled the area after they were repelled by security men.

"I am not aware of any killing, but we are investigating an attempt to disarm some of our men by smugglers. However we will make the outcome of the investigation known to the public," he said.

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