

eration Communities' protest in Lagos yesterday, over the  
them to vacate their homes

Photo: Benedict Uwalaka

she later confessed to the act at the  
hospital," Abigael narrated.

## 2 brothers feared killed in Customs officials, smugglers shootout

From Eugene Agha, Lagos

Two persons, believed to be brothers, were feared killed while many others were injured when some officers of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) yesterday engaged suspected smugglers in a shoot-out at the Alakuko area of Lagos State.

Most of the victims were said to be school children on their way to school when they were hit by bullets.

An eye-witness told City News: "Two of the victims were brothers on their way to school. I am sure they died on the spot. The two brothers lay by the side of the road bleeding while the shooting continued.

"I think that the Customs men were pursuing some smugglers and in a bid to shake off the fast approaching Customs patrol van, the hoodlums opened fire, which the Customs men replied. It was during the confusion that the children got hit by bullets. Many persons sustained varying degrees of injuries in the process."

It was gathered that the Customs officials actually trailed the smugglers, who were in three cars from the Owode area of Ogun State before they eventually cornered them at Alakuko.

Confirming the shooting, the Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, Dolapo Badmos,

however, said that only one person died in the incident.

"Some Customs officers were on the trail of a vehicle and, in the process, they went berserk and started shooting indiscriminately. One passer-by was shot died around the Ajegunle area of Alakuko. The name of the deceased is Saheed Omotosho," she added.

On the Customs side, the Public Relations Officer (PRO) in charge of the Federal Operations Unit (FOU), Zone A, Ikeja, Jerry Attah, however, denied there were deaths from the incident. Attah maintained "nobody died and nobody sustained any injury in the process."

He said: "Yesterday morning, some of our men on patrol were on the trail of some suspected smugglers who were in three vehicles. Sensing that they would be arrested and their consignments seized, the smugglers called on their members. The criminals opened fire on the Customs men, but our men succeeded in arresting two vehicles being used to convey the smuggled items.

"A Mazda bus, a Vinto Gulf and about 75 bags of rice were seized from the smugglers. However, the criminals succeeded in bolting away with one of the vehicles. One of the drivers was arrested."