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Smugglers kill Customs officer, set vehicle ablaze

FRIDAY, 30 AUGUST 2013 00:00 BY MOSES EBOSELE [NEWS - METRO](#)



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AN unidentified senior officer of the Seme Area Command of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), was allegedly murdered by smugglers Thursday.

According to the Command, the officer was killed in the Ashipa area of Seme while in his official uniform "unarmed and driving to the Command's headquarters for a routine meeting."

A statement signed by the Command's Public Relations Officer, Ernest Olottah, explained that the officer was accosted by a mob who forced him out of his vehicle. "Buoyed by an identified Chief of the community, the officer was murdered in cold blood and his vehicle set ablaze".

The command attributed the alleged murder to its anti-smuggling operation "which has led to the making of over 686 seizures since January 2013, has placed us on the danger of attacks like this from criminals who are being prevented from using the border for their anti-economic and other nefarious activities."

Olottah said: "Our operatives, due to their uncompromising stance against smuggling and protecting the nation's economy, have come under series of attacks by smugglers and some unpatriotic elements who see smuggling as their right. In some cases attempts made at disarming some of our operatives in the recent past were rebuffed."

"Comptroller Othman Abdu Saleh, Customs Area Controller of Seme Border has in collaboration with sister government agencies including the police, commenced moves to bring the perpetrators of the heinous crime to book. The Controller posits that this unfortunate incident will not deter operatives of the command under his watch from carrying out their lawful duties."

"This is indeed a sad day for us here in this command, but let me emphasise that we are not relenting in the discharge of our duty as we will not allow the darkness of criminality to dampen the light of our service to our great country, Nigeria. In collaboration with the police and other security agencies, we hope to arrest and bring the perpetrators of this crime to book", Saleh was quoted as saying.

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