

# Ogun: One Dies In Customs, Smugglers Fracas

By Gbenga Akinfenwa

## • Customs Denies Allegation, Claims Officer Was Attacked

**A** GAIN, men of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), yesterday, allegedly shot and killed a man in Papalanto area of Ogun State, during an early morning fracas with suspected smugglers, along the Ilaro Road.

This incident, *The Guardian*, learnt led to pandemonium, as commuter, drivers and residents, out of anger, blocked the Sango-Abeokuta Expressway for about half an hour.

Vehicular movements

were brought to a standstill, in solidarity with the victim and to protest incessant harassments by the customs officials.

A witness told *The Guardian* the incident occurred

at about 10:00a.m. when the customs officers accosted suspected smugglers, who were coming from Ilaro axis. This led to confrontation during which the suspected smuggler and a customs officer struggled over a gun, which incidentally triggered and

hit a driver. He died instantly.

The source revealed that for the fear of being lynched, the customs' officers fled, a development that prompted the protest.

When *The Guardian* called the Ogun Command's Public Relations Officer (PRO), Abdullahi Maiwada, he confirmed the incident, but denied that the officer shot and killed the driver as alleged.

He said a team that was sent for reinforcement

were attacked, during which someone (not a customs officer) shot into the air, which created chaos in the area.

"During the melee, one of our officers was abducted and macheted by the smugglers. They destroyed all the checkpoints along the Papalanto/Ajegunle Road on the Ilaro axis. We are facing stiff hostilities. None of our officers shot into the air or killed anybody. The shooting did not emanate from us, but we were attacked," he said.