

Death of journalist, four others in Bauchi: Customs refutes allegations, absolves self

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NIGERIA Customs Service (NCS) has refuted allegations that its operatives attacked a car on Ningi-Kano road which was said to have led to the death of a journalist and four others traveling in the vehicle.

The refutation was contained in a press release signed by the Public Relations Officer, Federal Operations Unit Zone 'D', Bauchi, Suleiman Isah, copies of which were made available to newsmen in Bauchi on Wednesday.

The PRO stated that the allegations were made up

by a friend of the deceased journalist on his Twitter handle.

According to him, "the attention of the Nigerian Customs Service was drawn to the misleading tweets by @KNingi on his Twitter handle, purporting that Officers of the @CustomsNG yesterday (Saturday) on Ningi-Kano road attacked a driver carrying bags of rice.

He further stated that the Twitter user added that, "incidentally, this resulted in the death of about five passengers, including my friend/reporter of @daily-trust, Bashir Musa Liman."

Isah, who is an Assistant Superintendent of Customs II, stated that the tweet was false, mischievous and aimed at "misleading the public that the operatives of the Nigeria Customs Service have a hand in the accident that caused loss of lives".

"This story is mischievous, misleading and false in its entirety. As responsible operatives of the government, our hearts and prayers go to the families of the deceased. We pray the Almighty Allah grant the deceased Aljannatul-Firdausi."

He stated also that "it is important to keep the

Bank of Nigeria (CBN) that led

record of the unfortunate accident straight by stating that there was no operative of the Nigeria Customs Service on that road in question on that fateful day.

"Immediately after reading the misleading tweet, we began to find out what actually happened. Eyewitnesses, including a brother of one of the deceased, have clearly shown that operatives of the Nigeria Customs Service were never associated with the accident since there was none on that road," he explained.

Isah added: "Every narration revolved around

he further disclosed that the arrested persons would be

check the activities of illegal marketers of new naira notes.

over-speeding and attempt to overtake, which led to the fatal accident. We also gathered that one of the vehicles involved in the accident was carrying some bags of rice and some people thought it could have been operatives of the Customs that caused the accident."

The Customs PRO advised that any person interested in further verification of his statement was free to contact any appropriate authority like the Nigeria Police Force "that might have been on the road when this unfortunate accident happened."

"As humans, we share in the pain of losing loved ones. Let me use this opportunity to call on @KNingi.1d and indeed other social media users to be extra careful and verify their stories before posting or tweeting on social media, especially when it concerns such serious issue like human lives."

It will be recalled that the late journalist, a freelance reporter with Daily Trust newspapers in Jos, Bashir Musa Liman died in a ghastly motor accident along with four others while travelling on Ningi-Kano Road last Saturday.

