

NEWS

Customs' stray bullets kill Ogun pupil, injure 15

Published March 30, 2020



Comptroller-General, Nigeria Customs Service, Hameed Ali

Daud Olatunji, Abeokuta

A stray bullet allegedly fired by men of the Nigeria Customs Service, Ogun State Command 1, who were pursuing rice smugglers, has killed a pupil, one Sekinat Agbelade, at Agosasa in the Ipokia Local Government Area of the state.

Stray bullets from the Customs men's guns also allegedly injured 15 residents of the area during a clash between the operatives and suspected smugglers.

Our correspondent gathered that Agbelade, a Senior Secondary School 3 pupil, was hit by a bullet while returning from an errand for her parents on Saturday.

The victim was rushed to a nearby hospital but died before she got to there.

The acting Coordinator, Ipokia Youth Forum, Deji Mawutin, told *PUNCH Metro* that apart from the deceased, 15 other persons were injured by stray bullets.

Mawutin said there was pandemonium in the area when a team of Customs officers invaded Agosasa to bust a smuggling syndicate.

He added that in the process, there was a shootout between the Customs men and the smugglers, which lasted hours.

He claimed that the bullets fired by the Customs men killed Agbelade and injured 15 others.

According to him, Agbelade was preparing to sit the Senior Secondary School Examinations when the incident happened.

He stated, “In this trying time of COVID-19, we regret to announce the untimely death of one of the promising youths in the Ipokia Local Government Area, Miss Sekinat Agbelade, an SSS3 pupil, who was preparing for her examinations.

“She lost her life to a stray bullet from men of the Nigeria Customs Service, Command I, Ogun State.

“Miss Sekinat Agbelade was said to be returning from an errand for her parents when she was hit by a bullet and died before she got to a nearby health centre.

“Eyewitnesses said it was a raid by men of the NCS, Ogun State Command, on alleged smugglers, which turned to a shoot-at-sight that cut short the life of youthful Sekinat, while leaving many persons seriously injured in the Agosasa ward of the local government.”

Mawutin recalled that a similar incident had occurred not too long ago when a young man, Odushina Opeyemi, was shot dead.

He said, “We totally frown on the way and manner in which the men of the NCS in our local government go about their activities with alleged smugglers.

“We call on the Area Comptroller, Agbara, to fish out the perpetrators and ensure that they face justice or he should await a rugged demonstration from the youths.

“We can’t continue to live in fear because we are from a border community.”

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Abimbola Oyeyemi, confirmed the incident.

Oyeyemi, however, said he had yet to get a brief about the incident from the Divisional Police Officer in Ipokia.

The PPRO pledged to get back to our correspondent once he got the briefing from the DPO, but had yet to do so of the time of filing this report.

When contacted, the Public Relations Officer of the NCS, Abdullahi Maiwadah, did not pick his calls or reply to a message sent to his mobile telephone.