

Customs Men Kill Cocoa Farmer At Checkpoint

ADEFEMI OMONIYI/
IDIROKO

A 39-year-old cocoa farmer, Mr Samei Moruf (a.k.a. Yaro) was shot dead by a yet to be identified Customs officer at Ajilete checkpoint along Idiroko road in Ogun State at about 6p.m yesterday.

The deceased, according to Mr Tijani Taiwo who was with him inside his Mazda 626 ash colour car with registration number LAGOS EX 356 SMK when he was shot dead, told *P.M.NEWS* that they were coming from Oke-Odan town when the incident happened.

According to him, "we were stopped at Ajilete checkpoint by the customs men and after checking our vehicle and no contraband was found, we were told to go. As Moruf started driving away I heard a gun shot and it hit him from the back of his head.

"He died immediately and I took to my heels. I ran straight to his family house in Ajilete and broke the sad news. Youths in the town on hearing the sad news mobilised themselves and went to confront the Customs men who fled their duty post for fear of being attacked by the youths.

"Seven vehicles belonging to some of the Customs officers and their tents were burnt by the



aggrieved youths at the checkpoint. Soldiers from 192 Battalion were however brought to scene of the incident to curb the activities of the youths."

A relative of the deceased, Alhaji Sharafa Ojelabi, however condemned the Customs men over the killing of his brother.

"The Customs men have killed the bread winner of our family for no just cause. I wonder why he should be their target. He wasn't a smuggler. He was not carrying any contraband and the vehicle he was driving was duly registered with Nigeria Customs Service with all duties on it paid. The Customs authorities should investigate this ugly incident that has taken away the life of our loved one. The killer must be brought to book," Ojelabi lamented.

Traditional rulers in the border towns of Ogun State recently charged authorities of the Nigeria Customs Service to re-orientate their men on how to use their guns at public places as there had been reported cases of stray bullets killing innocent citizens in the area.

The Customs P.R.O, Ogun Command, Mr Chike Ngeje, told *P.M.NEWS* on phone that he is yet to be officially briefed about the incident and could not make any comment for now.

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the progressives and reactionary camps in Yoruba politics.

The Alakasin of Oyo and Permanent Chairman, Oyo State Council of Obas and Chiefs, Oba Lamidi Olayiwola Adeyemi III, yesterday disowned the conference.

The monarch said "I cannot be part of a political jamboree that is organized in the interest