

Customs impounds 19 trucks of rice, groundnut oil worth N70.3m

The Federal Operations Unit, Zone 'A', Ikeja, of the Nigeria Customs Service, said on Monday that it has impounded 19 trucks laden with smuggled rice and groundnut oil with a duty paid value of N70.37 million.

The Acting Controller of the unit, Mr Usman Turaki, said the trucks were intercepted on October 24 in Saki, Oyo State by his men.

He said his officers and men, acting on a tip-off, swooped on

two private warehouses in the town (Saki) at about 6.00 a.m. where a large consignment of 50kg bags of rice and groundnut oil were stored, according to NAN reports.

"The Federal Government gave a directive on zero tolerance for importation of rice through the land borders and other unapproved routes."

"The policy is meant to protect organisations and individuals who have invested heavily in rice farming."

"Since my assumption of of-

fice on July 15, 2014, one of our strategies is intelligence gathering which has paid off."

"It led to a massive seizure of over 11,264 bags of 50kg par-boiled rice recently at Igbesa creeks in Ogun," the controller said in a statement.

Turaki, however, said that the anti-smuggling team was confronted by armed bandits, who attempted to dislodge them.

"The evacuation of the smuggled items lasted four days and the 19 trucks laden with rice are now in our custody," he said.

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