



JPA

JUSTICE AND PEACE ATTORNEYS

20, Mojidi Street, Off Toyin Street,
Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria.

+2348163681991;
+2348024290229

justiceandpeaceattorneys@gmail.com
justiceandpeacejpa@gmail.com

26th September, 2022.

His Excellency,

The Executive Governor of Lagos State,

Lagos State Governor's Office,

Alausa, Ikeja,

Lagos State.

Dear Sir,

**THE MENACES OF SOME OFFICIALS OF LAGOS STATE TRAFFIC
MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (LASTMA): A NEED FOR SANITIZE THE
ORGANISATION IN THE INTEREST OF JUSTICE FOR THE COMMON
LAGOS MOTORISTS AND ROAD USERS.**

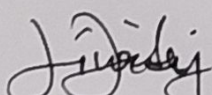
We act and speak on behalf of ourselves and a group of Motorist in Lagos State who are affected by the menaces exhibited by the ill motivated actions of some officials of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) that have become terrors on the roads of Lagos and making life terrible and unbearable for motorists and "Lagosians".

Your Excellency Sir, our letter to your good office in respect of this subject matter is belated but it is better late than never written. Our office has gotten several complaints of misconduct of some officials of LASTMA who have become monsters on Lagos roads. The heartbreaking news is that this bad elements in the Agency have increased in number than the good, honest, diligent and hardworking ones. We were informed that some of them make

contributions/savings of N20,000.00 and above daily out of the money extorted from motorists. Maybe this is the motivation behind their monstrous acts on the roads by holding motorists to ransom. We shall elucidate on how they achieve this subsequently in this letter. May it not be that the Judiciary is being "used" to aid and promote the extortion of Motorist by the Agency who have become monsters on the road with their heartless punishments and wickedness meted on motorists. Unfortunately, we shall not be able to exhaust the complaints received by our office to institute legal proceedings against the Agency and Lagos State Government.

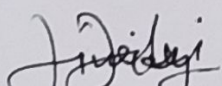
In order to save the ink of our pen and reduce the number of papers our office will deploy here due to the economic realities of our dear Country. The recent economic situation of the Country is more than enough hardship to deal with by Lagosians and Motorists than to be faced with the menaces of LASTMA, hence our call for your urgent intervention and rescue of the poor masses from being extorted by these overzealous and wicked LASTMA operatives.

Our office is in receipt of complaints and evidences of misconduct of some LASTMA Officials that is totally heartbreaking and clear cases of wickedness. We now agree again that much needs to be done by the citizenry on display of love for one another before we put the whole blame on the ruling class. To begin with, the father of one of our Colleagues was beaten by some LASTMA officials recently and we felt bad when we received the report. A graduate Taxi driver, Oluwayomi Adeleke was once terrorized by one K. Olododo because the former had refused to yield to the request of the latter to "settling" him weekly. K. Olododo was seen harassing Oluwayomi for an offence he did not commit. This incident was witnessed by one of our partners. As mentioned earlier, we shall not exhaust the several complaints we got due to management of resources at a time like this.



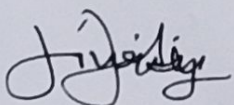
This is not to say that some Operatives of the LASTMA are not worthy of praise and accolades. There are few officials of the Agency that have been seen to be of good conduct, loving and dutiful. Unlike some wicked and monstrous elements in the Agency who instead of controlling traffic and assisting motorists when they have one issue or the other with their vehicle will only be after the arrest of such motorist with an offence they did not commit. The few good officials of LASTMA will be seen controlling traffic dutifully and diligently without having their major interest in apprehension of motorist for offences they did not commit in order to complete their N20,000.00 daily contribution target. We commend Mr. Timothy Adefolalu and Mrs. Orowusi Mojisola who are usually seen performing their duty of controlling traffic with love and passion. They have been spotted dancing while controlling traffic with joy and motorists obey them. A senior official that has been noticed to be reasonable, just and understanding in his judgement when his junior officers apprehend motorists is one Mr. Williams Bamidele. Another dutiful LASTMA official that we have observed to be with good conduct and fear of God is one Mr. Olufemi Ajiboso. There may be many other good ones that we have not met. Our prayer for them is that all these good LASTMA officials will serve and retire well in success and sound health. We hereby use this medium to also appeal to your good office to come to the rescue of the families of LASTMA officials who died in service by ensuring that the entitlements of the deceased LASTMA officials are paid seamlessly to their dependents or beneficiaries. A process that would give access to the funds by their families within less than a year may be better than making them go through rigorous processes for two or more years before paying their families or dependents.

Some law abiding and obedient motorists have been dealt with by these monstrous elements for crossing the stoppage line at traffic light by a few inches just because they want to obey the yellow light in order to avert the occurrence of accident. Rather than directing these persons to reverse or manage the situation, the monstrous LASTMA officials who have daily contributions of over N20,000.00 to make will descend on them with their



phones camera already set in order to apprehend any slightest breach or instance not minding the circumstances. We shall now state how the Government and Judiciary appear to be aiding these monstrous Officials of LASTMA in their indecent acts. Permit us to mention this laughable act of some officials of the LASTMA. There is a bridge at Dopemu that should not be used by motorists coming into Dopemu from Akowonjo axis from 3:00 pm upwards. Until recently and after public criticism, the sign that indicates that "do no enter after 3:00 pm" had been covered by a tree and the LASTMA officials there would only go to hide at the other end of the bridge waiting to apprehend motorists that would enter through the bridge after 3:00 pm and thereafter extorted them. In Fact, one of our Colleagues had to park his car and challenged the officials disapproving their act of staying at that end of the bridge rather than staying at the other end where motorists are not allowed to enter from and directing them in that regard. It was about two months ago that the tree was either cut or another mark/sign installed indicating that motorists coming inward from Akowonjo should not use the bridge even though we do not know if that rule of usage of the bridge is still relevant. Many Lagos roads that are one-way roads are without indications and motorists are being apprehended daily as some motorists are new on the road. We pity people who not resident in Lagos or just came into Lagos. We appeal to your highly exalted office to direct that indicator be marked conspicuously on these roads for clarity in order to stop this extortion of innocent persons. Clearer road signs should also be installed.

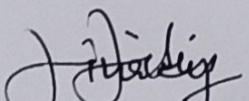
The judgement of Justice Olalekan Oresanya on Thursday the 22nd day of September 2022 against the unlawful arrest and punishment of a Motorist, Mr. Lawal Aliyu and awarding damages in favour of Mr. Aliyu is highly commendable and worthy of celebration. The Court stated that a careful perusal of Section 27(1) b,c,d and e of the Traffic Management Law relied upon by the respondents in this case revealed that LASTMA cannot impose fine without arraigning an alleged traffic offender in Court. Based on this judgement, we hereby entreat Lagos State Government to refund all the money of Motorist collected through various ticketing by LASTMA officials



without going through trial by a constituted Court of Law. Those that have suffered this injustice and can produce their evidence of payment should be refunded.

How is Lagos State Government and the Judiciary aiding these extortionist LASTMA officials? The fines imposed on traffic offences are too high. What is the aim of these fines, is it to deter the commission of Traffic Offences or to generate revenue to the purse of government and that of the monstrous LASTMA officials who would coerce a motorist to pay N10,000.00 to them instead of paying N50,000.00 ticket? If it is an offence that ought to be taken to the Mobile Court, the alleged offender upon being arraigned at the Mobile Court as we once witnessed would be asked to make his/her plea of "guilty" or "not guilty". If he/she pleads guilty, he/she would be fined accordingly and his/her vehicle would be released upon payment of the fine though the LASTMA officials would have deflected all the tyres of the vehicle. If he/she pleads "not guilty", the presiding Magistrate would note the plea and adjourn the case to a later date of about a month's time of which the vehicle would not be released to the owner but kept in the custody of LASTMA until the conclusion of the case thereby punishing the motorist and depriving him/her of the use of the vehicle for weeks or months. This system or practice is draconian and unjust in nature because it leaves a motorist who has only one car and wants to go back with his car that day with the option of pleading guilty even when he is not guilty so that he can pay the fine and go back with his/her vehicle rather than being deprive of its use for weeks or months.

We hereby call on the Honourable Chief Judge of Lagos State to look into the practice and procedure of the Mobile Court to prevent the judiciary that should uphold Justice from being continuously used by the Agency as tool of injustice. It is our humble opinion that where an alleged traffic offender gets arraigned in the mobile Court and pleads "not guilty", the magistrate should order the released his/her vehicle to him/her and lien be placed on the drivers' licence or if the computerized vehicle licencing platform can accommodate it, a restriction should be placed on the licences in such a way



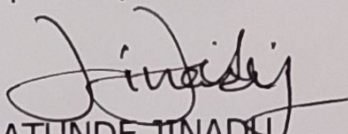
that the alleged offender would not be allowed to renew his/her drivers' licence and/or vehicle licences until he/she has attended to the case and same is disposed of.

Concerning the punitive fines, the philosophy of fines is to deter the commission of an act sought to be prevented. When the lowest fine is about N30,000.00, which is equal to the amount of the minimum wage of N30,000.00., it is no longer a fine but life-threatening punishment. For instance, where company driver whose monthly salary is N30,000 or N40,000.00 falls into the hands of such hungry LASTMA officials and is fined N30,000.00 or more and must pay back the fine from his salary as contained in the company policy. What option is left for him as the head of a family?

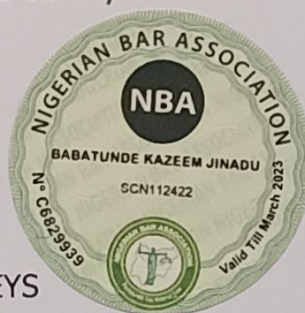
Your Excellency Sir, in Conclusion, while we look forward to seeing your urgent action against the socially reprehensible acts of these extortionist LASTMA officials, we wish to appreciate your initiative and implementation of the installation of security cameras in almost all the active and major roads in Lagos State. This is a great idea that we sincerely appreciate. We do hope that it would be maintained and sustained and that other states would emulate this initiative to make the whole country a safer place for us.

We pray that Lagos State shall continue to remain a peaceful and progressive State and almighty God shall restore Sanity and Peace to our dear Country.

Accept our professional regard.


BABATUNDE JINADU

PER PRO: JUSTICE AND PEACE ATTORNEYS



CC:

1. HONOURABLE CHIEF JUDGE, HIGH COURT OF LAGOS STATE.
2. GENERAL MANAGER, LAGOS STATE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY.



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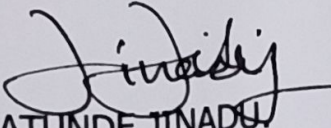
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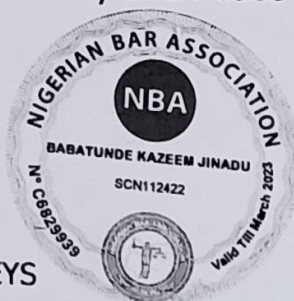
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