

Protest as LASTMA officials kill tanker driver in Lagos

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There was pandemonium along the Oshodi expressway, after some officials of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) killed a tanker driver identified as Salisu Sani, 30.

The incident which occurred at about 6:20am at Sanya, halted traffic for almost eight hours on the busy road, as rampaging youths burnt tyres on the expressway.

Chanting that they were tired of harassment from LASTMA, the youths comprising tanker drivers and Hausa Community rebuffed all entreaties from the Rapid Response Squad (RRS), Festac Police Division and soldiers to leave the road.

It was gathered that the driver of the Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) laden tanker marked ABJ 758XD beside Port Terminal to observe his morning prayers when the LASTMA team numbering about four struck.

The team comprising three officials in uniform and another wearing mufti accosted the motorboy who was praying on the culvert and asked him where his driver was.

According to the motorboy, Nurudeen Abdulahi, he showed them where his driver was and one of them went and met him.

“They were arguing. I think it was about money. As the driver and one of the LASTMA men were arguing, another one entered the trailer and was driving it off.

“The driver rushed down and asked the man why he was driving his tanker. He told the man that his tanker was on the service lane and that if he wanted to arrest him, he should have told him to come and drive his vehicle to wherever they wanted to take him.

“The man did not listen. He was still driving the tanker and so the driver ran and was climbing the vehicle through the passenger side.

“By this time, two of the LASTMA people have returned into their vehicle and they had driven off.

“So, as the driver mounted the trailer from the passenger side, the LASTMA man who was on the ground dragged his clothe, pulling him to the ground.

“As soon as he fell, the LASTMA vehicle that went to turn, crushed him on the head. As soon as the one on the ground saw that they have crushed him, he told the man on the steering that he was dead and they both entered the vehicle and all of them escaped, without parking the tanker well. I was the one who applied the hand brakes before taking my driver to the hospital.

“There was only one tanker behind me. I saw what happened from where I said my prayers and when I rushed to the scene, my driver was bleeding from his head.

“I called a tri-cyclist and begged him to assist me. We took the driver to a private hospital but the doctor there said we should take him to general hospital. By the time we got to general hospital, the doctor said he was dead,” said Abdulahi.

Continuing, Abdulahi who said the driver was his Kaduna state brother, told The Nation that the deceased was married with three children.

While some eyewitnesses corroborated the motorboy’s claim, others said it was the LASTMA official inside the trailer that pushed the deceased after hitting him on the neck with a gun.

One Chike Uwadi who said he was on his way to work, told The Nation that he saw the LASTMA official pushed the deceased from the passenger side of the trailer.

“I saw the guy climbing the vehicle from the passenger side and then the LASTMA official pushed him. The man fell and the truck ran over him. The other LASTMA man on the ground told his colleague that the man was dead and they fled,” he said.

An unnamed man claimed that the official after pushing the deceased, used his trailer to crush him, describing his action as ‘deliberate’ murder.