

Megacity Spotlight

By Olanukanmi Akoni

DESPITE on-going efforts to construct pedestrian bridges in some identified spots in Lagos metropolis, pedestrians, young and old of both genders, have continued to ignore the use of bridges by crossing the highway.

Bolaji and Akin were friends, working in one of the firms in Ilupeju area of the state. One day after the close of work, they were to board a bus to Ojota from the other side of the road.

When they got to the highway, Bolaji decided to use the pedestrian Bridge at Town Planning Way, but Akin preferred to dash across the road, but he was unlucky. He did not make it to the other side as a vehicle knocked him down. He died on the spot according to an official of Lagos State Traffic Management Authority, LASTMA, an eyewitness, who preferred anonymity.

The above was one of the many instances witnessed in Lagos on daily basis. According to Administrator of Kick Against Indiscipline, KAI, Mr. Deji Badejo, through his Public Relations Officer, Mr. Olusese, an average of 3,000 pedestrians cross Ojota highway, close to the popular pedestrian bridge.

Pedestrian bridge

This seems to have made nonsense of the state government's decision to add new bridges at Berger bus stop on Lagos-Ibadan expressway end as disclosed recently, by governor, Akinwunmi Ambode.

Also, worried by residents defying the use of pedestrian bridges in the state, members of Lagos State Assembly at one of its Plenary, recently, warned that henceforth, offenders be sanctioned for indulging in the act.

The development arose from the resolution of the House.

Hon. Rotimi Olowo, representing Somolu Constituency 2 had during matter of public importance, alerted his colleagues on the prevalence of avoidable deaths in the state arising from knock downs by fast moving vehicles on Lagos roads, particularly the expressway.

The lawmaker noted that sometimes ago, the Governor was briefed on the need to have a pedestrian bridge around 7up via Ojota area, and the request was expeditiously granted.

He added that, despite the huge amount committed towards providing this infrastructure, a lot of people still defy the use of the pedestrian bridges.

The lawmaker therefore, urged the Assembly to enforce strict

compliance with the use of the pedestrian bridges by the relevant agencies and that the ministry of information should embark on public enlightenment to re-orientate the populace on the safety of using the bridges.

Olowo suggested that punitive measures which may not be fines, can also be applied. He suggested that delaying offenders caught for a period of time, while others may be subjected to cleaning of drains to serve as a deterrent to others.

They also suggested the use of wire mesh under the Ojota bridge and other places to assist enforcement agencies as well as deter people from crossing the express road in those axes.

The lawmakers added that construction of bridges should be included in the state's template

We have decided to use persuasion to deter pedestrians from dashing across highways. We are collaborating with other sister agencies such as Safety Commission, and other Non Governmental Organisations on public enlightenment

when roads are to be constructed while Abiodun solicited for the co-operation of the media in disseminating viable information that would help nip the situation in the bud.

They expressed the need for all to cultivate the right attitude. "The change that we all clamour for starts with all of us. Democracy is about everybody, the government and the people. We must play our part".

Olufemi Martins, Alhaji Mustapha Akinolu, Hassan Sabitiu, Kamoru Goriola, Chief Mufutau Rufai and Yusuf Akinlolu.

The applicants are praying the court to restrain the IGP, along with nine other respondents to desist from inviting, intimidating or arresting them.

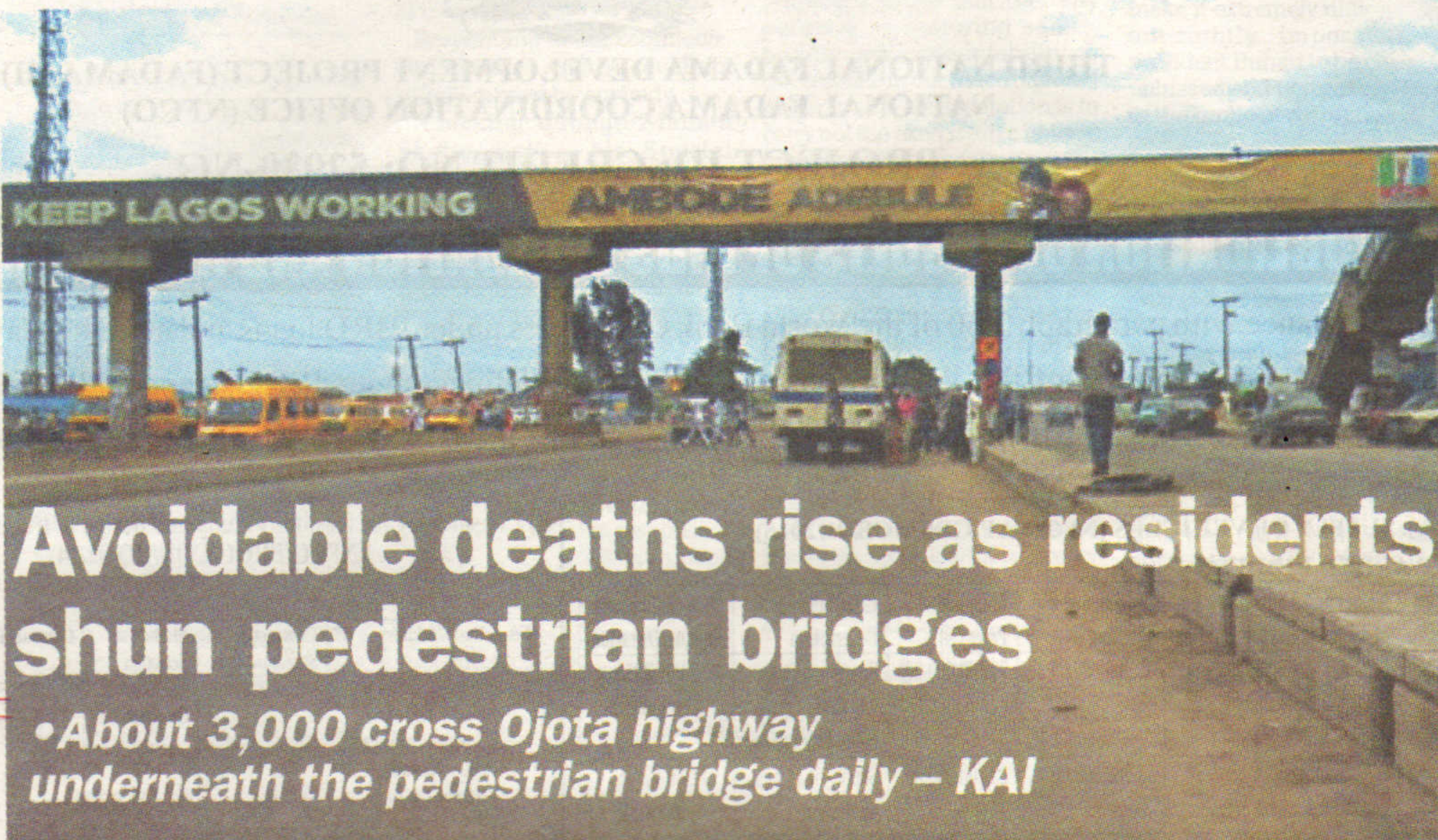
Other defendants in the suit are Chief Deji Oloko, Alhaji Jimoh Ajose, Alhaji Ibrahim Badaru, Miu Apanshile, Alhaji Ligali Saibu, Chief Kazeem Sanusi, Chief Superintendent of Police, Idowu and an Assistant

Meanwhile, the KAI Image Maker, Olusese, said the present administration led by Ambode, is determined to save lives, hence, the agency had been directed to step up public enlightenment and advocacy on the use of pedestrian bridges rather than enforcement.

According to him, "We have decided to use persuasion to deter pedestrians from dashing across highways. We are

collaborating with other sister agencies such as Safety Commission, and other Non Governmental Organisations on public enlightenment. Fliers will be distributed bearing dangers inherent in crossing highway where pedestrian bridges were provided."

He said the new strategy is aimed at discouraging as well as reduce number of pedestrians who dash across roads.



Avoidable deaths rise as residents shun pedestrian bridges

• About 3,000 cross Ojota highway underneath the pedestrian bridge daily – KAI

• A pedestrian bridge

alleged violation of their fundamental human rights.

In an affidavit deposed to by the General Secretary, Kuje Amuwo chieftaincy family, Akanni Akinolu, he averred that members of Kuje family were the owners of a large expanse of land located at 6th and 7th Avenue, Festac expansion, Festac town, in Amuwo-Odofin area of Lagos State.

According to him, part of the family land was acquired by the Federal Government for the construction of Festac town in Lagos some years ago.

are, Olowu, Ajose, Olaniran, Ikugbomola, Ommoya, Ogbebusin Pekun, Odu Akande and Emidawo Akaketu branches.

He added that the Kuje family engaged the services of the 2nd applicant to manage the land released to the family by the Federal Government.

He averred that to the surprise of the applicants, the 2nd – 7th respondents allegedly created a pseudo family name known as Adeyi Orofin chieftaincy family and executed a Power of Attorney in favour of the 1st respondent.