

Protesters clash with LASTMA, Police over death of motorist



By Evelyn Usman

Pandemonium broke out yesterday, at Super area of Abule-Egba, Lagos, as some youths protesting the death of a motorist, attacked officials of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority, LASTMA, and a team of police escorts.

The protesters accused the LASTMA officials and the policemen of being responsible for the death of the motorist, who was crushed by a driver of a vehicle, in his attempt to evade arrest for plying the BRT lane.

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An eye witness said the deceased, accompanied by his younger brother, was arrested by LASTMA officials for driving on the BRT lane.

The eye witness alleged that after much plea with the officials, he was asked to part with N100,000 before he would be released.

While pleading with the LASTMA to allegedly accept N70,000, another vehicle which committed same offense rammed into the stationed Toyota vehicle, hitting the first offender and his brother.

It was gathered that the driver died on the spot while his brother was rushed to an undisclosed hospital for treatment.

Another witness, who gave his name simply as Dave, said: " The man initially pleaded with N40, 000, but they refused. They said they would tow his vehicle to their office. The driver and his brother increased the amount to N70, 000, yet they refused. We overheard the driver telling the LASTMA officials that his wedding was next week Saturday. While the negotiation was ongoing, another vehicle that committed same offence ran into the Toyota Corolla, where the driver and his brother were, while attempting to avoid being arrested."

The protesters were said to have barricaded the BRT lane with the Corolla car, threatening to carry out jungle justice on any LASTMA or policeman sighted within the vicinity. They were chanting "No LASTMA, Police on this road again."

At press time, teams of policemen had stormed the scene to avoid an escalation of the protest.

But the protesters kept chanting "No LASTMA, no Police."