



Case Alert

10 March 2023

ZLHR TAKES ON BUNGLING CoH OVER ABHORRENT AND ILLEGAL IMPOUNDING OF VEHICLES

ZIMBABWE Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) has issued a four-hour ultimatum to **City of Harare (CoH)** to release one of the organisation's vehicles, which was unlawfully impounded by the bungling local authority.

CoH municipal police officers, who were in the company of some **Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP)** officers, on Thursday 9 March 2023 charged a ZLHR driver with obstruction of the road after he had been blocked by a driver of a pirate taxi commonly referred to as "mushika shika" that was picking up some passengers at an undesignated bus stop along Mazowe Street in the Avenues area in Harare.

Upon being charged, the municipal police officers instructed the ZLHR driver to drive his vehicle to CoH's Traffic Station located along Coventry Road, where he was issued with a ticket for traffic infringement with a prescribed penalty of US\$50, US\$10 administration fee and US\$8 as value-added tax bringing the total fine to US\$68.

Thereafter, CoH municipal police officers proceeded to unlawfully impound the vehicle and informed the ZLHR driver that the vehicle would not be released until the fine was paid.

In a letter written to CoH on Thursday 9 March 2023, ZLHR lawyer **Paidamoyo Saurombe** protested against the local authority's abhorrent and illegal conduct of seizing vehicles without following due processes of the law.

Saurombe protested that the local authority had no right to seize the ZLHR vehicle as the organisation's driver was actually a victim, who had been blocked on the road by a pirate taxi driver.

In the letter, Saurombe reminded CoH that ZLHR had on several occasions written to the local authority and ZRP asking them to remove the illegal bus stop in the Avenues area, where long distance buses, pirate taxis and general vehicles stop to pick up some passengers but the pleas had come to nought.

The human rights lawyer gave CoH a four-hour ultimatum to release the vehicle by 6: PM on Thursday 9 March 2023.

Failure to release the vehicle, Saurombe charged, will leave him with no option than to approach the court for recourse on an urgent basis.

ENDS

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