Twitter Thread by KASUPDA

KASUPDA
@KASUPDA_KDSG

Statement by KASUPDA on the demolition of Asher Lounge

On Thursday, 31st December 2020, the Kaduna State Urban Development and Planning Authority (KASUPDA) took action to remove the building housing Asher Lounge.

Since this enforcement action, much of the commentary on the matter has centred on the inaccurate statement from KASUPDA's Twitter account.

While regretting the inaccuracy of the handler of our social media account, there is no reservation about the steps taken pursuant to enforce the laws and regulations of Kaduna State on a property that was in violation of its provisions.

Since 26th March 2020, the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Partial Lockdown Order, 2020 have been in force in Kaduna State.

Although some of the regulations were significantly relaxed in June 2020, they were tightened again in December 2020 in response to a second wave of Covid-19 infections.

Indications that an activity in violation of the Covid regulations was planned to be held in Asher Lounge drew attention to the property and made it necessary to examine the status of the building.

Checks of government records showed that the building housing Asher Lounge has neither a valid title nor development permit. Once due diligence revealed the illegal status of the building, there was need for enforcement action

without the notification requirements that the law compels for holders of valid title and development permits.

The illegal status of the building became a very separate matter from the trigger event: the third-party elements who had planned and advertised an unlawful gathering on those premises.

Violation of a set of rules and regulations may lead to a focus on the status of compliance with other laws and regulations. This happened in the case of a school whose management were caught flouting Covid-19 regulations.

This led the relevant authorities to check official records which revealed the school to be a serial violator, quite apart from the Covid-19 infraction that drew attention in the first place.

It is sadly true that many people have developed property without bothering to acquire valid title or secure development permit.

Aware of such mass infractions, the Kaduna State Government has created a pathway since 2015 to enable people to regularise their titles and move away from illegality.

KASUPDA has also tried to assist willing citizens to obtain development permits for new projects and to remedy their lack of same for extant projects.

More recently, Kaduna State Government officials across agencies have been engaged in the Public Service on Wheels programme. As the development control agency,

KASUPDA has been an active participant in this programme along with KADGIS, the agency responsible for land administration in the state.

By virtue of various land administration and development control initiatives conceived and implemented in the last five years, there is no excuse for anyone in Kaduna State to remain without valid title to their property and permits for any development thereon.

Residents that have taken advantage of this opportunity have thereby been assisted to vest their property with legal status. Those who have chosen to remain in violation and have shunned opportunities to regularise

their status cannot argue from sentiment when enforcement actions are taken.

There are many properties in Kaduna State that are in this category. Their sheer number means that KASUPDA does not have the staff strength to undertake enforcement action on all of them.

But those whose cases come to agency’s attention and are found not to have the necessary papers cannot expect inaction.

Signed
Ismail Umaru Dikko
Director-General, KASUPDA
5th January 2021