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7th April 2022

The Director-General
Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority
Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport,
Federal Capital Territory,
Abuja.

Dear Sir,

REQUEST TO INVESTIGATE THE POOR PASSENGER TREATMENT METED ON MY PERSON BY STAFF OF IBOM AIR AT THE CALABAR AIRPORT ON THE 6TH OF APRIL 2022, FOLLOWING MY COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES BY THE AIRLINE STAFF ON THE APPLICATION OF THE MAXIMUM WEIGHT OF CARRY-ON LUGGAGE:

FURTHER REQUEST TO OBTAIN AND PRESERVE THE CCTV FOOTAGE (RECORDINGS) OF THE INCIDENTS IN THE CHECK-IN AREA OF THE CALABAR AIRPORT BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 10:00 HOURS AND 12:00 HOURS (LOCAL NIGERIAN TIME) ON THE 6TH OF APRIL 2022

I write to bring to your attention the poor treatment I received at the hands of Ibom Air staff at the Calabar Airport on the 6th of April 2022. The details are contained in the formal complaint hereto attached, which I have also submitted to the Airline through their contact form on their website: <https://www.ibomair.com/feedback/> and by email to: ibomflyersupport@ibomair.com. I am yet to receive any reply from the airline at the time of this writing.

The summary of my complaint is that I was subjected to so much hardship and humiliation when my only luggage bag which I intentionally made small to fit the plane cabin so as to make it carryon luggage was weighed and found to be 11kg, that is 4 kg in excess and above the stated maximum on the airline's website.

I complied with the demands of the staff to make it check-in luggage and I was also made to remove my 15" HP laptop and an 11" Samsung Tablet which I had to hold in my hands all through the time I waited to board and throughout the flight period.

Just after, I complained about the difficulty I was passing through in compliance with the regulations, I saw another passenger with two bags, one of which was obviously bigger than mine, but he did not subject them to be weighed even when the airliner staff had attempted but he merely rebuffed them, and they left him peacefully. He got his boarding pass and headed to the Departure Lounge when I confronted him about why he got such preferential treatment and he referred to my not giving inducement (bribe) as the reason I was denied my bag as a carry-on luggage.

While the said passenger was still there in the hall, I protested to the airline staff because they allowed the man to freely go with two bags that were not even weighed yet they subjected me to the hardship of having to carry two computers in my hands just because I had to comply to the regulations.

The worst part of my experience beyond the discriminatory practice is the way and manner the airline supervisors treated me when the SERVICOM Desk attendants intervened. The details are contained in the attached formal complaint.

Such treatment was so undignifying and unbecoming of any corporate entity not to mention an airline company that should be known for sticking to all standards of practice and procedure in aviation. I am still in a state of shock from the bad treatment of my person and poor service hence, I am calling for an immediate investigation.

Therefore, I am requesting that the CCTV recording of the hours of 10:00 hours and 12:00 hours (Local Nigerian Time) on the 6th of April at the Check-in section of the Calabar Airport be viewed to corroborate my claims and such recording be preserved as evidence in the event of possible litigation in this matter.

Also note that I may exercise my citizen's rights under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act in due course to make further requests on the standards of service delivery of the airline in addition to its operational standards in general since my experience in Calabar reveals an airline company that is so poorly managed.

Kindly note that all I have requested from the airline is an APOLOGY in whatever form on account of the mistreatment and bad service that I have received from its staff, to prevent a recurrence against any other passenger in the future. I HAVE NOT REQUESTED FOR ANY MONETARY COMPENSATION, at least for now.

I am driven purely by principles of respect and dignity for the human person, especially as a consumer of public and private services.

Thank you.

With utmost regards..



Frank Tietie, Esq.

CC:

1. The Honourable Minister of Aviation
2. The Managing Director, Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria
3. The National Coordinator and Chief Executive Officer of SERVICOM Office, Presidency

FORMAL COMPLAINT OF BAD SERVICE FROM IBOM AIR STAFF AT CALABAR AIRPORT: DEMAND FOR AN IMMEDIATE APOLOGY

I write as a highly aggrieved passenger of Ibom Air flight QI0500 from Calabar to Abuja of 6th April, 2022.

It started at the check-in area at about 10:45 am or thereabout. I sought to get my boarding pass when a staff of the airline demanded to weigh the single pilot bag I was carrying.

I told him that I intended to make it carry-on luggage and I had carefully made sure that it was a small bag enough to fit the plane cabin, but he insisted on weighing the bag which I obliged him.

Upon weighing the bag, it had 11kg weight and he informed me that I couldn't take it on the plane as carry-on luggage. I protested to him that the size of the bag was small and the only heavy thing I had in the bag was an HP Envy Laptop and an 11-inch Samsung Tablet, but he insisted that the size didn't matter but the weight and the airline regulation is that a passenger couldn't bring onboard a carry-on luggage that is beyond 7kg in weight.

I told him that I had arrived Calabar from Abuja two days earlier on the same Ibom Airline with the same bag and same weight as carry-on luggage and made known to the airline's attendants in Abuja to be carry-on luggage and they allowed me. They didn't even weigh it. I told him that I didn't see the minimum weight of carry-on luggage in the terms and conditions written on the earlier mail the airline sent to me. I brought out a copy and showed him, yet he insisted, saying the regulation is stated on their website.

When I opened the website, I saw the minimum weight of carry-on luggage stated to be 7kg indeed and I agreed to have the item checked in but again the attendant said I should remove the laptop and the big Samsung Tablet from the bag before it would be checked in. I told him it would be difficult for me to hold the laptop, the 11-inch tablet and my phone in my hands since I am carrying a single small bag which he was demanding I must check-in. He insisted!

So I demanded to see the manager if there could be any consideration for my situation and if I could make the bag carry-on luggage since the bag could fit into the cabin though over and above 7kg as stated in the website of the airline. But the attendant told me that I couldn't see the manager as he/she was not on sit.

I was then in the open hall, forced to open my already arranged bag to remove my laptop and the 11-inch Samsung Tablet. The airline attendant took the bag from me again and weighed it and it became 9kg in weight. He brought the bag from the scale himself and asked me to push down the flip-up handle of the bag. I vehemently asked him why he couldn't do it? He insisted that I must do it myself. I was very angry and asked him in a high tone whether he had anything against me to fail to reason that I

was carrying two delicate machines in addition to my phone in my two hands yet he was insisting I must push down the flip-up handle of the bag? He insisted that he was not going to push the handle down. I asked him whether he wasn't the one who had just carried the bag onto the scale by himself and weighed it? And why couldn't he just push down an ordinary flip-up handle of a bag? I raised my voice at him asking if anything was wrong with him? He insisted he wasn't going to help push down the flip handle before he would put it on the scanning carriage as he was expected to do. So, I leaned and bent down to use my elbow to push down the flip-up handle of the bag before he carried off the bag on the scanner and it rolled off.

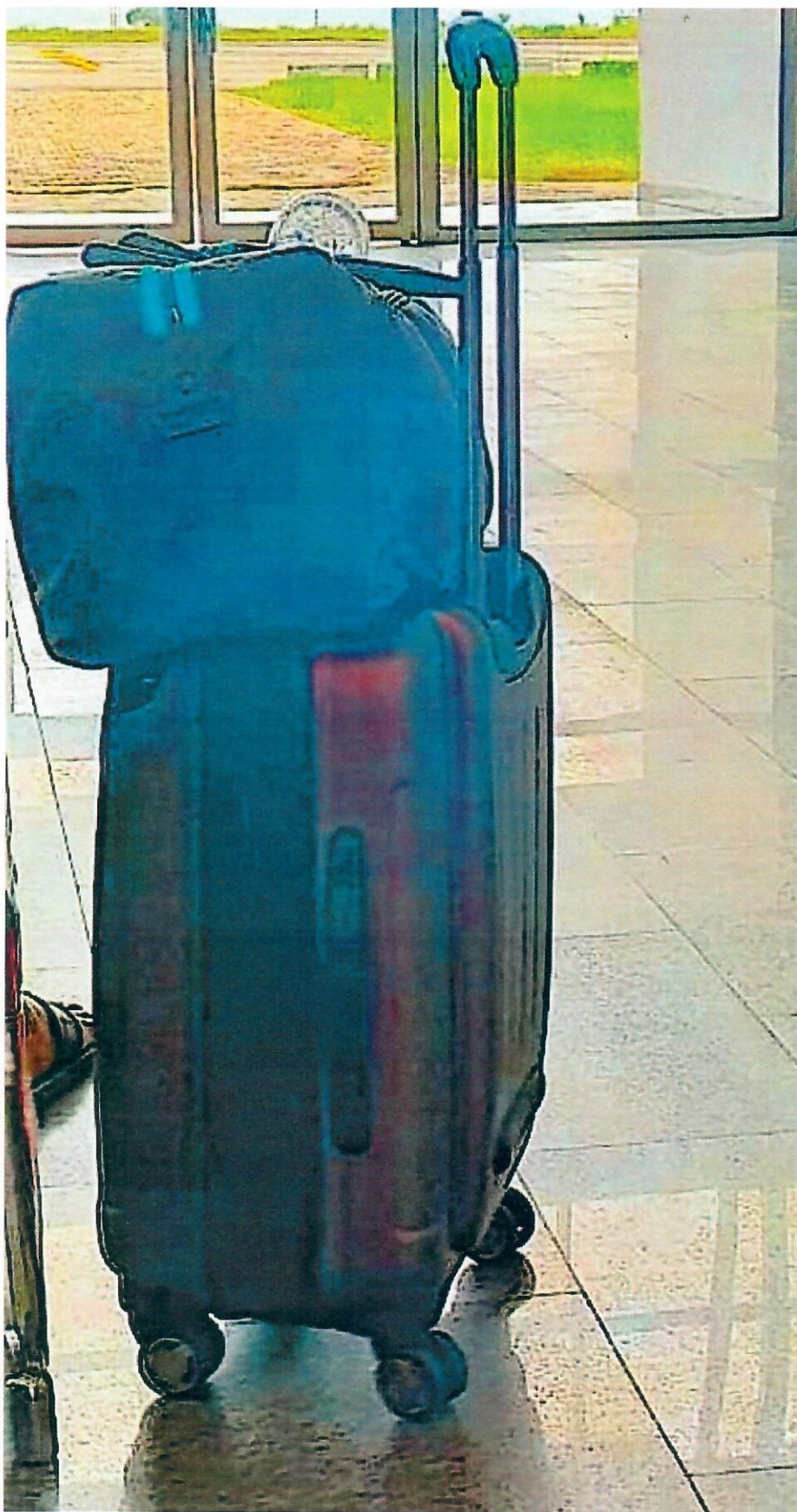
Reeling from the humiliation I had just received from the airline attendant, as a lawyer wearing a three-piece suit and now holding my laptop, the 11-inch Samsung Tablet and my phone- three gadgets in my bare hands and without a bag, I not only felt awkward within, I became an irregular sight from peering eyes.

At that moment while holding my gadgets, near the counter I saw a man who sauntered to collect his boarding pass. I noticed that he had two bags with him and one of the bags was obviously much bigger than the one I was carrying which was subjected to the airline's scrutiny. I also noticed that the man did not subject his bag to be weighed and when another of the airline attendant demanded that the bag be weighed, the man (passenger) said something to him, and the airline attendant backed off.

The said passenger who was casually dressed quickly collected his boarding pass and began to proceed to the departure lounge. Again, I became curious and asked myself if the airline attendants had anything against me, perhaps for dressing in a three-piece suit. So, I paced up to the passenger who had just enjoyed the privilege I was denied and asked him how he was able to carry carry-on luggage with one apparently bigger than the one I was denied entry. I further asked if he was a military man or had a business class ticket and he smiled and said no. And that if I was ready to "play ball" (give a bribe), the airline attendants would have allowed me to take in my bag as carry-on luggage.

At that point I became infuriated and while he was there, I turned to the airline's attendants and questioned them why they were allowing the other passenger to go with two carry-on luggage which was not weighed or was it because I didn't give them a bribe? The attendant replied that I had defamed him for insinuating he had taken a bribe for allowing the other passenger to proceed without weighing his bags.

With a sense of discrimination from the unprofessional conduct of the attendant and with no superintendent of the airline to complain to, having been told they were not available, I quickly turned to the SERVICOM desk in the departure hall and demanded to lodge a complaint of discrimination on account of perceived refusal to give a bribe.



The two bags that belonged to the passenger that were not weighed yet he boarded the plane with them as carry-on luggage who told me that the airline attendant was giving me a hard time because I didn't "play ball"

The SERVICOM officials refused to accept my complaint in writing but chose to take me to the Ibom Air office at the airport where I was further humiliated by a woman said to be the manager but with a highly untrained and temperamental personality.

When the SERVICOM officials brought me to the office of the airline, I met a courteous man seated at the front desk, who asked me what the problem was and thinking he was the manager, I began to explain to him that I would have come to him earlier but his staff in the hall had said he wasn't around and that I had a complaint of discrimination against his staff and concluded that they gave preferential treatment to a man who told me that it was because I didn't "play ball". The man then pointed me to talk to a woman sitting beside him who is the manager.



My single bag that was denied entry for weighing 4kg more.

The said manager started interrogating me and challenging me for daring to say her staff took bribes? I tried to explain to her that I didn't say so but that she should listen to my complaint first, but she kept ranting that I cannot prove that I saw her staff collecting bribes. At that point, the man I met earlier in the office corrected her that I never said that the staff collected bribes. Instead of taking the correction, she pounced on the man (her colleague) with a verbal attack on him that he should stay

away from the matter and turned to the SERVICOM staff for rescue, but they repeated to her that I never said her staff collected bribes. Realising that she had goofed, she kept a bold face and began to raise her voice at me that I said her staff collected bribes. I told her that I was so disappointed in her if that was her reaction as a manager. She further raised her voice again threatening me that I shouldn't insult her. And I simply walked away to stay by the SERVICOM desk but she briskly and defiantly walked past me to the SERVICOM desk and demanded to see the supervisor and when they told her that she he wasn't around, it was then she decided for the first time to go and question her said staff on what actually happened. She never got back to me. I am supposed to be a passenger of the airline that employs her.



I was forced to hold my laptop and tablet in my bare hands all through the time flight was delayed in the departure lounge and all through the flight.

The flight was delayed, and I took pictures of the bags with the man who did not weigh them. I also waited to the point of boarding to see whether the man would be requested to submit his bags for check-in on account of the size being bigger than mine that was checked in earlier. It didn't happen. I saw the said manager standing

by as the passengers filed along to board the aircraft. Thinking she was going to apologize for her unprofessional conduct, it was then another attendant demanded to put sanitisers on my hands. Which hands? I said that I had just washed them and I was holding in my bare hands my laptop, an 11-inch Samsung Galaxy Tablet, my boarding pass and my identity card, how am I supposed to apply sanitiser to my hands? Which hands? At that point, the manager blocked me and said if I didn't apply the sanitiser, I wouldn't be allowed to board the plane. When I realised that she was incorrigible and unwilling to reason with me and being at the foot of the plane preparing to board, I cramped my items in one hand and stretched out the other hand for them to apply the hand sanitiser. And they made sure they poured a handful of it on my palm. I simply immediately swung off the stuff from my hands and boarded.

I consider all of the above to be bad treatment and bad service. Therefore, I am giving the airline 72 hours to publish an apology to me in whatever form or else I will deploy every known legal resource to seek redress.

I was in Calabar as a Guest Speaker at the ongoing NBA Calabar Law Week. And in my address on the way forward for the future of Nigeria, I identified the need for the government and all authorities to treat individual Nigerians' rights by respecting their rights as individuals. Such focus on individualism will change the paradigm of both public and private treatment of citizens which will make for a better and enduring country.

I will not accept such cold-hearted, poor treatment and violation of my consumer rights by fellow Nigerians who assume that working for a government airline makes them above the law and can treat people anyhow. Thus, after spending time to come to Calabar for two days to urge lawyers and hundreds of other people for the rebirth of our country's values through active engagement of institutional wrongs, I will not accept this kind of mistreatment from an indigenous airline. Mark my resolve on this matter. If they can do this to me, I wonder what they may have been doing to others? This is unacceptable!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Frank Tietie', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Frank Tietie