

# Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN

## STEALING PUBLIC TRUST

### . Premium Times' Low Premium Reporting

The stupidity of the THOUGHT that a public officer will take such money on a consistent and repeated basis with impunity reveals the mindset of Premium Times about what they can do in such circumstances.

The pen writes what the mind thinks.

That stupidity is magnified by the thought that the public officer who is trying to steal would be paying the money into his bank account where it can be found.

The stupidity initially informed my decision not to respond to Premium Times in their latest publication headlined under my Name. It is a continuing line of a series of Attack FASHOLA.

Regrettably, what Premium Times has done is to damage its reputation as a news medium for those who seek the truth.

Clearly, no investigation was undertaken in respect of this publication as the report was from "Open Portal."

If it was from the Open Portal then there was nothing to hide.

If Premium Times had conducted any investigation it will find and report that payments like this occurred in many other ministries and have been a source of concern reported in other media by Compliance Authorities.

If Premium Times investigated, it would have found and reported that Ministers do not manage accounts and finances of Ministries.

A little investigation would have shown Premium Times that Directors of Finance and Accounts (DFAs) are those who do this job and they are staff of the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation and seconded to the Ministries as part of financial controls.

### IPPIS

If Premium Times investigated it would have found and reported that government in 2007 initiated a payment platform called Integrated Payment Platform and Information System (IPPIS).

Any well meaning and right thinking member of the public will recall that this administration has been engaging all sectors of Government to fully migrate to the IPPIS platform.

What has happened is that not all Government Officials who, from time to time, needed to be paid for approved expenses were registered on the platform.

In order to ensure that government work was not hampered, the DFAs sought and obtained approval of the Accountant General to pay these monies through the Accounts of an Approved few who were on the platform.

Those so approved then collect the money and disburse to the beneficiaries who sign Receipts all of which are retired and available for verification as approved by the Accountant General.

The Accountant General has recently issued new guidelines to deal with this process because not all public officials have fully enrolled on IPPIS and the DFAs have the mandate to comply and not FASHOLA.

In all, no money was stolen or is missing. There is No Smoking Gun to criminalize Fashola.

If anything has been stolen it is the Trust of the public by Premium Times.

I will not believe anything they write again.

This is not investigative Journalism. It is Irresponsible Journalism.

  
BABATUNDE RAJI FASHOLA, SAN  
HON. MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING

Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Honourable Minister, Federal Ministry of Works & Housing**  
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