FOURTH REPUBLIC
7TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
THIRD SESSION
NO. 53

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Tuesday, 28 January, 2014

---

1. The House met at 11.45 a.m. Mr Speaker read the Prayers.

2. **Votes and Proceedings:**
Mr Speaker announced that he had examined and approved the *Votes and Proceedings* of Thursday, 23 January, 2014.

By unanimous consent, the Votes and Proceedings was adopted.

3. **Announcement:**

(*i*) ***Bereavement*:**
Mr Speaker read a communication from Hon. Ezekiel A. Adaji (*Otukpo/Ohimini Federal Constituency*) announcing the demise of his sister, Mrs Veronica Ejuma Adaji on 24 January, 2014.

(*ii*) ***Change of Political Party*:**
Mr Speaker read a communication from Hon. Joseph Haruna Kigbu (*Lafia/Obi Federal Constituency*) announcing his defection from the former Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) as a result of merger of the CPC with the All Progressive Congress (APC).

4. **Matter of Urgent Public Importance:**
Citing Standing Order VIII, Rule 46, Hon. Suleiman Abdulrahaman Kawu (*Sumaila/Takai Federal Constituency*) drew the attention of the House to the arrest of 320 persons on Sunday, 26 January, 2014 by the Rivers State Police Command on the highway between Imo and Rivers States. He noted that the arrested persons are mostly from Kano and Jigawa States, reportedly traveling in a convoy of 17 buses to Rivers State for legitimate business before their interception by the police as Boko Haram suspects. He thus urged the House to consider the matter as one of urgent public importance and to suspend Order VIII, Rule 46 (3) so that the matter be debated immediately.

Question that the matter be considered as one of urgent public importance, put and agreed to.

Question that the House do suspend Order VIII, Rule 46 (3) *to enable it debate the matter forthwith, put and agreed to.*

320 Suspected Boko Haram Members Arrested in Rivers State:

The House:

Notes that on Sunday, 26 January, 2014 the Rivers State Police Command arrested about 320 persons and tagged them as suspected members of the Boko Haram sect, sparking a furious debate in the polity and raising tension in security circles in the nation;

PRINTED BY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESS, ABUJA

Further notes that the suspects, men, women and children were arrested in the early hours of Sunday in a convoy of 17 buses at the border between Rivers and Imo States as reported by THISDAY newspaper of 27th January, 2014 and several other print and electronic media across the country and outside;

Disturbed that the arrest of the 320 men and women has raised several issues that require immediate attention of every well-meaning Nigerian for the security, economy and political well-being of the country and its citizens;

Further disturbed that the arrested persons were in Rivers for legitimate business as most of them were petty traders and menial job seekers in search for means of livelihood in their fatherland;

Worried that such manner of arrests and injustice portrays obvious danger capable of breeding political instability to the already overheated polity as the suspects were known to be law abiding citizens whose nature of business is well known;

Aware that Section 41 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) guarantees that every citizen of Nigeria is entitled to move freely throughout Nigeria;

Further aware that this was not the first time the said suspects were in Rivers State; they have been there severally in search for legitimate means of livelihood;

Regrets that the police force particularly in Rivers State have jettisoned the primary responsibility of protecting the citizenry to harassing innocent people in pursuit of personal and sectional interest;

Further regrets that if no urgent step is taken, such arrests by the Rivers State Police Command may bring about political instability, insecurity and may as well lead to breakdown of law and order, posing threat to the very existence of the country as a whole;

Resolves to:

Mandate the Committees on Police Affairs, and Human Rights to investigate the issue, make appropriate recommendations and report back within one (1) week (*Hon. Suleiman Abdulrahaman Kawu — Sumaila/Takai Federal Constituency*).

Question put and agreed to.

The House:

Noted that on Sunday, 26 January, 2014 the Rivers State Police Command arrested about 320 persons and tagged them as suspected members of the Boko Haram sect, sparking a furious debate in the polity and raising tension in security circles in the nation;

Further noted that the suspects, men, women and children were arrested in the early hours of Sunday in a convoy of 17 buses at the border between Rivers and Imo States as reported by THISDAY newspaper of 27th January, 2014 and several other print and electronic media across the country and outside;

Disturbed that the arrest of the 320 men and women has raised several issues that require immediate attention of every well-meaning Nigerian for the security, economy and political well-being of the country and its citizens;

Further disturbed that the arrested persons were in Rivers for legitimate business as most of them were petty traders and menial job seekers in search for means of livelihood in their fatherland;

Worried that such manner of arrests and injustice portrays obvious danger capable of breeding political instability to the already overheated polity as the suspects were known to be law abiding citizens whose nature of business is well known;

Aware that Section 41 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) guarantees that every citizen of Nigeria is entitled to move freely throughout Nigeria;

Further aware that this was not the first time the said suspects were in Rivers State; they have been there severally in search for legitimate means of livelihood;

Regretted that the police force particularly in Rivers State have jettisoned the primary responsibility of protecting the citizenry to harassing innocent people in pursuit of personal and sectional interest;

Further regretted that if no urgent step is taken, such arrests by the Rivers State Police Command may bring about political instability, insecurity and may as well lead to breakdown of law and order, posing threat to the very existence of the country as a whole;

Resolved to:

Mandate the Committees on Police Affairs, and Human Rights to investigate the issue, make appropriate recommendations and report back within one (1) week (**HR. 07/2014**).

5. **Presentation of Report:**
Special Ad-hoc Committee on the Review of the Constitution:
Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do receive the Report of the Special *Ad-hoc* Committee on the Review of the Constitution on a Consolidated Bill for an Act to Further Alter the Provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) and for Other Matters Connected Therewith (HB. 147)" (*Hon. Chukwuemeka Nkem Ihedioha — Aboh Mbaise/Ngor Okpala Federal Constituency*).

Question put and agreed to.

Report laid.

6. **Urgent Need to Assist the Victims of a Fire Disaster in Rumuwoji (Mile One) Market in Port Harcourt, Rivers State:**
Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes with serious concern that at about 2.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 17 December, 2013, Rumuwoji Ultra-Modern Market in Port Harcourt Federal Constituency II was gutted by fire;

Further notes that the fire resulted into the massive loss of about two hundred (200) shops filled with goods and other valuable properties including physical cash;

Also notes that the estimated value of the damage caused by this unfortunate fire incident runs into Hundreds of Millions of Naira;

Worried that the fire incident has caused untold hardship to shop owners in the market cutting across traders from all over the country;

Further worried that the situation has brought about obvious hardship on families, since an estimated two thousand (2,000) persons have been adversely affected by the fire disaster;

Concerned that if immediate effort is not made to ameliorate the suffering of the victims by providing alternative shopping centre, they will be further faced with excruciating pains;

Further concerned that the situation may degenerate to causing further pressure on the economy and increase the rate of criminality in the State, and the country at large;

Resolves to:

Call on the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to urgently initiate palliative measures by sending relief materials to cushion the effect of the fire incident on the victims (*Hon. Blessing Nsiegbe —Port Harcourt II Federal Constituency*).

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do dispense with notice to enable it take amendments pursuant to Standing Order VIII, Rule 56 (*Hon. Sani Mohammed Rano — Rano/Kibiya/Bunkure Federal Constituency*).

Question put and agreed to.

Amendments Proposed:

(*i*) *Insert* Prayer (*ii*) as follows:

"Mandate the Committee on National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to go and sympathize with the victims of this disaster in Rivers State, and the entire people of Rivers and also to inspect the venue of the incident access the change and report back to the House within 2 weeks" (*Hon. Sani Mohammed Rano — Rano/Kibiya/Bunkure Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made, put and negatived.

(*ii*) *Insert* Prayer (*ii*) as follows:

"Urge the Rivers State Government to provide alternative shopping centre to ameliorate the suffering of the victims of Rumuwoji market fire incident" (*Hon. Friday Itulah — Esan North East/Esan South East Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made, put and negatived.

Main question put and agreed to.

Motion referred to the Committee on Emergency and Disaster Preparedness pursuant to Standing Order VIII, Rule 51 (5) (**HR. 08/2014**).

7. **Electronic Voting System:**

Mr Speaker called on the House to suspend sitting and conduct a test of the newly restored electronic voting equipment, preparatory to the vote on the Report of the Special *Ad-hoc* Committee on Constitution Review, scheduled for Thursday, 30 January, 2014.

The House accordingly suspended sitting and conducted a test of the efficiency of the electronic voting system — 1. 00 *p.m.*

The House resumed formal sitting following the completion of the test conducted on the electronic voting system — 3.00 *p.m.*

8. **Condolence Delegation to Borno State:**

Mr Speaker announced the under-listed as Members of the House delegation to condole the Government and people of Borno State on the bomb explosion of Tuesday, 14 January, 2014 in Maiduguri, in which many people lost their lives:

(1)	Hon. Ishaka Mohammed Bawa (Chief Whip)	—	*Chairman*
(2)	Hon. Idris Ahmed	—	*Member*
(3)	Hon. Uchendu Andrew	—	*Member*
(4)	Hon. Linus Okorie	—	*Member*
(5)	Hon. Bashir Adamu	—	*Member*
(6)	Hon. Yakubu Dogara	—	*Member*
(7)	Hon. Makinde O. Mikail	—	*Member*
(8)	Hon. Stella Dorgu	—	*Member*
(9)	Hon. Binta Maigari	—	*Member*
(10)	Hon. Nkoyo Toyo	—	*Member*
(11)	All Honourable Members from Borno State.		

9. **Adjournment:**

"*That the House do adjourn till Wednesday,* 29 *January*, 2014 *at* 11.00 *a.m.* (*Hon. Mulikat Akande-Adeola — House Leader*).

The House adjourned accordingly at 3.07 *p.m.*

Aminu Waziri Tambuwal,
Speaker