



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

## VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 5 March, 2020

1. The House met at 11.15 a.m. Mr Speaker read the Prayers.
2. The House recited the National Pledge
3. **Votes and Proceedings**  
Mr Speaker announced that he had examined and approved the *Votes and Proceedings* of Wednesday, 4 March, 2020.

*The Votes and Proceedings was adopted by unanimous consent.*

4. **Announcements**

(a) *Visitors in the Gallery:*

Mr Speaker recognised the presence of the following:

- (i) Staff and Students of *Kings Ambassadors Academy*, Keffi, Nasarawa State;
- (ii) Staff and Students of *Ronacs International School*, Kuje, Abuja;
- (iii) Staff and Students of *Royal Ambassadors Academy*, Kubwa, Abuja.

(b) *Inauguration of the ECOWAS Parliament:*

Mr Speaker announced Members to Delegation to the ECOWAS Parliament as follows:

- |      |                           |   |                                 |
|------|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| (1)  | Hon. Ahmed Idris          | — | <i>Leader of the Delegation</i> |
| (2)  | Hon. Umeoji Michael       | — | <i>Member</i>                   |
| (3)  | Hon. Saleh Gabriel Zack   | — | <i>Member</i>                   |
| (4)  | Hon. Oghene Ego           | — | <i>Member</i>                   |
| (5)  | Hon. Nasir Gabasawa       | — | <i>Member</i>                   |
| (6)  | Hon. Isah Murtala         | — | <i>Member</i>                   |
| (7)  | Hon. Ibrahim Auyo         | — | <i>Member</i>                   |
| (8)  | Hon. Abdullahi Umar Kamba | — | <i>Member</i>                   |
| (9)  | Hon. Haruna Mshelia       | — | <i>Member</i>                   |
| (10) | Hon. Lynda Chuba Ikpeazu  | — | <i>Member</i>                   |
| (11) | Hon. Kolawole Taiwo       | — | <i>Member</i>                   |
| (12) | Hon. Bamidele Salam       | — | <i>Member</i>                   |

(13)	Hon. Bashir Dawodu	—	Member
(14)	Hon. Haruna Maitala	—	Member
(15)	Hon. Awaji-Inombek Abiante Dagomie	—	Member
(16)	Hon. Bayo Balogun	—	Member
(17)	Hon. Taiwo Adewale	—	Member
(18)	Hon. Abdullahi Balarabe Salame	—	Member

5. **Matter of Urgent Public Importance (Standing Order Eight, Rule 4)**

***Need to Rescue the Country from Over \$30 Billion Annual Revenue Leakages:***

Hon. James Abiodun Faleke (*Ikeja Federal Constituency*) introduced the matter and prayed the House to:

- (a) consider and approve the matter as one of urgent public importance; and
- (b) suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to allow debate on the matter forthwith.

*Question that the matter be considered as one of urgent public importance — Agreed to.*

*Question that the House do suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to enable it debate the matter forthwith — Agreed to.*

***Need to Rescue the Country from Over \$30 Billion Annual Revenue Leakages:***

The House:

*Notes* the annual revenue leakages arising from various malpractices in foreign exchange allocation to companies from sources such as Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Autonomous Forex Market, Interbank, Domiciliary and over the counter purchases for the importation of physical goods, payments of foreign service vendors, dividend repatriation, foreign loan and interest payments, including foreign currency denominated contracts' payments by companies in engineering, procurement, construction, installation and marine transportation;

*Aware* of the low performance of the country's economy at this critical time;

*Also aware* that in the past years Nigeria has not been able to fund capital aspect of its Appropriation year in year out for lack of funds due to low remittances of revenue by revenue generating agencies, low payment of taxes by private companies and diversion of expected revenue by corporate organisations;

*Further aware* that the crude oil price bench mark in 2020 Appropriation Act was put at \$57 dollars per barrel but the price of crude oil in the international market has dropped to \$47 dollars per barrel, this clearly indicates that the major source of revenue towards funding the 2020 Appropriation Act is already in the jeopardy;

*Concerned* that there is the urgent need to rescue the country from over \$30 billion dollars annual revenue leakages arising from tax evasion, malpractices, mis-use and diversion of foreign exchange allocations by companies and other entities;

*Cognizant* of the following facts:

- (a) pro-forma invoices overstatement by importers with the intention of obtaining large forex allocation above the international cost, insurance and freight value of goods, thereby increasing the domestic inflation rate;
- (b) fictitious transfer of forex allocation for the payments of dividends to foreign shareholders of Nigeria companies above the dividend approved by the company's board of directors and audited accounts thereby leading to evasion of statutory 30% company income Tax thereof;

- (c) allocation of foreign exchange to companies for the repayment of principal foreign loan and interest that were in some cases found to be non-existent, which is a fictitious loan backed by mere packaged documents without evidence of utilization in Nigeria and related taxes paid;
- (d) companies in some cases were allocated foreign exchange for the purpose of investing same in other countries stocks, i.e. United State treasury stock, that neither contribute to federally collectible revenue nor reflate the Nigerian economy;
- (e) abuse of millions of dollars in foreign allocation to companies for the purpose of payment of foreign vendors for services rendered in Nigeria were in most cases found to have evaded the then statutory 5% VAT and 5% WHT accordingly;
- (f) the value of imported physical goods, materials, equipment on account of forex allocation by most companies were always understated to Nigeria Customs Service at the port of arrival in order to reduce import duty payable and based on verifiable information, importers at the post clearance stage do inflate the value of these items in their books in order to obtain frivolous capital allowance or expense claims from Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) which ultimately deny the Government of much needed revenue from Company Income Tax and Education Tax;
- (g) companies in offshore engineering, procurement, construction, installation and transportation whose forex funding source are from cash calls and, operators sourced foreign loan do pay their foreign vendors billions of dollars in contract payments on annual basis without any significant payment of all applicable Taxes, Levies and likewise, these companies were not being incorporated in Nigeria nor have affiliate in Nigeria as statutorily provided for in the Companies and Allied Matters Act.

*Resolves to mandate the Committees on Finance, and Banking and Currency to:*

- (i) conduct an investigative hearing on the various originating documents maintained by Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Deposit Money Banks, Forex Dealers, Federal Inland Revenue Services (FIRS), Importers and other beneficiary companies;
- (ii) identify perpetrators and the atrocities committed based on verifiable documents obtained from the valuable records;
- (iii) determine in a statutory and professional manner, the revenue amount involved in the malpractices by each organization based on every revenue line item collectible by agencies of Government for the purpose of timely recovery into Government accounts;
- (iv) make a formal report of findings and provide necessary recommendation towards the correction and regularisation of the problems aimed at putting a stop to the menace in the future; and
- (v) advice the House on the statutory provisions/amendment for penalties as provided in the applicable Law for various related offences as a deterrent to others and report back within twelve (12) weeks (*Hon. James Abiodun Faleke — Ikeja Federal Constituency*).

*Debate.*

*Agreed to.*

The House:

*Noted* the annual revenue leakages arising from various malpractices in foreign exchange allocation to companies from sources such as Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Autonomous Forex Market, Interbank, Domiciliary and over the counter purchases for the importation of physical goods, payments of foreign service vendors, dividend repatriation, foreign loan and interest payments, including foreign currency denominated contracts' payments by companies in engineering, procurement, construction, installation and marine transportation;

*Aware* of the low performance of the country's economy at this critical time;

*Also aware* that in the past years Nigeria has not been able to fund capital aspect of its Appropriation year in year out for lack of funds due to low remittances of revenue by revenue generating agencies, low payment of taxes by private companies and diversion of expected revenue by corporate organisations;

*Further aware* that the crude oil price bench mark in 2020 Appropriation Act was put at \$57 dollars per barrel but the price of crude oil in the international market has dropped to \$47 dollars per barrel, this clearly indicates that the major source of revenue towards funding the 2020 Appropriation Act is already in the jeopardy;

*Concerned* that there is the urgent need to rescue the country from over \$30 billion dollars annual revenue leakages arising from tax evasion, malpractices, mis-use and diversion of foreign exchange allocations by companies and other entities;

*Cognizant* of the following facts:

- (a) pro-forma invoices overstatement by importers with the intention of obtaining large forex allocation above the international cost, insurance and freight value of goods, thereby increasing the domestic inflation rate;
- (b) fictitious transfer of forex allocation for the payments of dividends to foreign shareholders of Nigeria companies above the dividend approved by the company's board of directors and audited accounts thereby leading to evasion of statutory 30% company income Tax thereof;
- (c) allocation of foreign exchange to companies for the repayment of principal foreign loan and interest that were in some cases found to be non-existent, which is a fictitious loan backed by mere packaged documents without evidence of utilization in Nigeria and related taxes paid;
- (d) companies in some cases were allocated foreign exchange for the purpose of investing same in other countries stocks, i.e. United State treasury stock, that neither contribute to federally collectible revenue nor reflate the Nigerian economy;
- (e) abuse of millions of dollars in foreign allocation to companies for the purpose of payment of foreign vendors for services rendered in Nigeria were in most cases found to have evaded the then statutory 5% VAT and 5% WHT accordingly;
- (f) the value of imported physical goods, materials, equipment on account of forex allocation by most companies were always understated to Nigeria Customs Service at the port of arrival in order to reduce import duty payable and based on verifiable information, importers at the post clearance stage do inflate the value of these items in their books in order to obtain frivolous capital allowance or expense claims from Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) which ultimately deny the Government of much needed revenue from Company Income Tax and Education Tax;

- (g) companies in offshore engineering, procurement, construction, installation and transportation whose forex funding source are from cash calls and, operators sourced foreign loan do pay their foreign vendors billions of dollars in contract payments on annual basis without any significant payment of all applicable Taxes, Levies and likewise, these companies were not being incorporated in Nigeria nor have affiliate in Nigeria as statutorily provided for in the Companies and Allied Matters Act.

*Resolves to mandate the Committees on Finance, and Banking and Currency to:*

- (i) conduct an investigative hearing on the various originating documents maintained by Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Deposit Money Banks, Forex Dealers, Federal Inland Revenue Services (FIRS), Importers and other beneficiary companies;
- (ii) identify perpetrators and the atrocities committed based on verifiable documents obtained from the verifiable records;
- (iii) determine in a statutory and professional manner, the revenue amount involved in the malpractices by each organization based on every revenue line item collectible by agencies of Government for the purpose of timely recovery into Government accounts;
- (iv) make a formal report of findings and provide necessary recommendation towards the correction and regularisation of the problems aimed at putting a stop to the menace in the future; and
- (v) advice the House on the statutory provisions/amendment for penalties as provided in the applicable Law for various related offences as a deterrent to others and report back within twelve (12) weeks (HR. 85/03/2020).

## 6. Presentation of Bills

The following Bills were read the *First Time*:

- (1) Fiscal Responsibility Act (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (HB.773).
- (2) Immigration Act (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (HB.774).
- (3) Federal College of Education, Gbajimba, (Establishment) Bill, 2020 (HB.775).
- (4) Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (Alteration) (Educational Qualification for Certain Political Offices) Bill, 2020 (HB.776).
- (5) Administration of Criminal Justice Act (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (HB.777).
- (6) Coastal and Inland Shipping (Cabotage) Act (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (HB.778).
- (7) National Youth Development Commission Bill, 2020 (HB.779).
- (8) National Poverty Alleviation and Eradication Commission of Nigeria, (Establishment, etc.) Bill, 2020 (HB.780).
- (9) Drug Abuse Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act, 2020 (HB.781).
- (10) Federal College of Fisheries, Ibi, Taraba State Bill, 2020 (HB.782).
- (11) Federal Roads and Highways Forests Guard (Establishment) Bill, 2020 (HB.783).
- (12) Federal Eye Centre, Ogbomicha (Establishment, etc.) Bill, 2020 (HB.784).

- (13) Federal College of Education, Aloma (Establishment, etc.) Bill, 2020(HB.785).
- (14) Federal College of Nursing and Midwifery, Lemu, Niger State (Establishment) Bill, 2020(HB.786).
- (15) Shea Council Bill (HB.787).
- (16) Customs and Excise Management Act (Amendment) Bill, 2020(HB.788).
- (17) Federal University of Agriculture, Kabba (Establishment, Etc.) Bill (HB.789).
- (18) Federal Entrepreneurship Centers (Establishment) Bill, 2020 (HB. 790).

7. **Presentation of Report.**

*Committee on Aids, Loans and Debt Management:*

*Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do receive the Report of the Committee on Aids, Loans and Debt Management on the 2016-2018 Federal Government External Borrowing (Rolling) Plan" (Hon. Ahmed Dayyabu Safana — Batsari/Safana/Damusa Federal Constituency).*

*Agreed to.*

*Report laid.*

8. **A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Companies and Allied Matters Act, Cap. C 20 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Enact the Companies Limited Liability Partnerships, Limited Partnerships, Registration of Business Names together with Incorporations of Trustees of certain Communities, Bodies, Associations; and for Related Matters (HB.544) — Third Reading**
- Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Bill for an Act to Repeal the Companies and Allied Matters Act, Cap. C 20 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Enact the Companies Limited Liability Partnerships, Limited Partnerships, Registration of Business Names together with Incorporations of Trustees of certain Communities, Bodies, Associations; and for Related Matters (HB.544) be now read the Third Time" (Hon. Alhassan Ado Garba — House Leader).*

*Agreed to.*

*Bill read the Third Time and passed.*

9. **A Bill for an Act to Establish the Federal College of Education, Umuunneochi, Abia State, to Provide Full-Time Courses, Teaching, Instruction and Training in Technology, Applied Science, Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities and Management; and for Related Matters (HB. 724) — Second Reading**
- Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Bill for an Act to Establish the Federal College of Education, Umuunneochi, Abia State, to Provide Full-Time Courses, Teaching, Instruction and Training in Technology, Applied Science, Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities and Management; and for Related Matters (HB. 724) be now read a Second Time" (Hon. Nkeiruka Onyejeocha — Isuikwuani Umuunneochi Federal Constituency).*

*Debate.*

*Question: When the Bill be now read a Second Time — Agreed to.*

*Bill read the Second Time.*

*Bill referred to the Committee on Tertiary Education and Services.*

10. A Bill for an Act to Establish the Federal University of Agriculture and Technology, Orerokpe to identify the agricultural and Technological problems and Needs of Nigeria to find solution to them within the Context of the Overall national development; and for Related Matters (HB. 663) — *Second Reading*

*Motion made and Question proposed.* "That a Bill for an Act to Establish the Federal University of Agriculture and Technology, Orerokpe to identify the agricultural and Technological problems and Needs of Nigeria to find solution to them within the Context of the Overall national development; and for Related Matters (HB. 663) be read a Second Time" (*Hon. Anthony Afe Obeṛuakpefe — Okpe/Sapele/Uvwie Federal Constituency*).

*Debate.*

*Question that the Bill be now read a Second Time — Agreed to.*

*Bill read the Second Time.*

*Bill referred to the Committee on Tertiary Education and Services.*

11. A Bill for an Act to Amend the Births, Deaths, Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act; and for Related Matters (IIB. 74 and HB. 385) — *Second Reading*

*Order read: deferred by leave of the House.*

12. Need to Complete the Abandoned Kafin Zaki Dam Project in Bauchi State

*Motion made and Question proposed:*

*The House:*

*Notes* that the Kafin Zaki Dam Project was initiated in 1973 by the Yakubu Gowon Administration and was proposed as a reservoir with a projected storage capacity of 2,700 million cubic meters on the Jama'are River;

*Also notes* that the Dam was projected to irrigate about 120,000 hectares of arable land to support the production of a potential one million tonnes of sugarcane annually as well as provide over one million jobs in the agricultural sector;

*Further notes* that the proposed dam would, when completed, generate about 15 megawatts of hydro-electric power and 45 megawatts or more from bio-fuels, as well as develop about 100,000 tonnes of fisheries annually;

*Aware* that the Kafin Zaki Dam is a significant project which would greatly enhance the wellbeing of citizens of Bauchi and the neighbouring Jigawa, Yobe and Borno States;

*Also aware* that the benefits derivable from the proposed dam project include the development of several agro-allied industries, including sugar refinery, flour mills and vegetables as well as providing recreation and tourism potentials for the region;

*Concerned* that the contract for the construction of the dam, which was first awarded to Dwidag Nigeria Limited in 1981 by the Shehu Shagari Administration has since been abandoned for undisclosed reasons and since the abandonment of the first contract, other contracts for construction of the Dam had been awarded to other companies, yet it has never being completed despite promises by successive Administration to ensure its completion;

*Further aware* that in 2009, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources engaged the services of Sahel Consult to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment on Kafin Zaki Dam and after submitting its Report, controversies have arisen from different quarters against the completion of the project;

*Cognizant* that the project would engage thousands of citizens in irrigation farming, thereby raising their means of livelihood and significantly contributing to the economic growth and development of the sub-region and the country at large;

*Resolves to:*

- (ii) urge the Federal Ministries of Water Resources, Power, and Works and Housing to expedite action on the completion of the Kafin Zaki Dam by making provisions for the project in the 2021 Budget estimates;
- (iii) mandate the Committees on Water Resources, Power, and Works to conduct a public hearing and to liaise with relevant stakeholders with a view to ensuring that all factors militating against the construction of the dam are resolved to ensure that the dam is completed in due time (*Hon. Abdullahi Sa'ad Abdulkadir — Ningi/Warji Federal Constituency*).

*Agreed to.*

(HR. 86/03/2020).

*Motion referred to the Committees on Water Resources, Power, and Works, pursuant to Order Eight, Rule 9 (5).*

13. **Need to Repair the Roads at Tobago Junction and Araromi Sea Side, Araromi in Ilaje Local Government Area, Ondo State**

*Motion made and Question proposed:*

The House:

*Notes* that the roads leading to Tobago junction and Araromi Sea Side, in Ilaje Local Government Area of Ondo State are in a terrible state of disrepair and thus making it difficult for commuters to ply the roads with ease;

*Aware* that during rainy seasons the roads are nearly impassable thereby slowing down economic activities in the area;

*Disturbed* that the continued neglect of the roads deprives the people of the area much revenue which they would have earned and utilize to improve their lives;

*Believes* that unless urgent steps are taken by the Federal Government to address the deplorable condition of the roads, economic activities in the area may wind up resulting to lawlessness negative social, economic and political consequences;

*Regrets* that despite appeals to the Federal Government by concerned citizens and stakeholders, the roads at Tobago Junction and Araromi Sea side in Ilaje Local Government Area of Ondo State remain in the state of despair;

*Resolves to:*

- (i) urge the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs and the Niger Delta Development Commission to commence remedial work on the road;
- (iii) mandate the Committee on Works to liaise with the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to address the challenges;



- (iii) also mandate the Committees on Works, Niger Delta Affairs, Niger Delta Development Commission, and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (*Hon. Kolade Akinjo — Ilaje/Ese-Odo Federal Constituency*).

*Agreed to.*

(HR. 87/03/2020).

*Motion referred to the Committees on Works, Niger Delta Affairs, Niger Delta Development Commission, and Legislative Compliance, pursuant to Order Eight, Rule 9 (5).*

**14. Need to Re-Assess and Re-Evaluate the Tactical Squads of the Nigeria Police Force**

*Motion made and Question proposed:*

The House:

*Notes that the brutality, overbearing intimidation, recklessness and lack of professionalism on the part of the tactical squads of the Nigeria Police Force, particularly the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, otherwise known as SARS, and the Zonal Intervention Squad (ZIS) which have once again been shown with the recent death of a young, vibrant and promising footballer, Tiyamiyu Kazeem of the Remo Stars Football Club, who met his untimely death on Orileinno-Sium road, in the hands of some SARS operatives;*

*Also notes that cases of indiscriminate arrest, illegal detention and torture to extort money from both young and old members of the public is rife with operatives of SARS cum ZIS and this recent case is no different;*

*Recalls that not too long ago, the #ENDSARS campaign was the anthem on the streets of many States of the Federation and different platforms on social media, which led to the President setting up a panel headed by the Executive Secretary, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Mr Anthony Ojukwu, to investigate and submit reports on the allegations of misconduct against SARS;*

*Also recalls that the panel came up with recommendations to the President which included among other things, the dismissal of 37 officers, prosecution of 24 officers, some compensations to be paid, the renaming of SARS and the creation of State and Local Government Police in the country;*

*Aware that in reacting to the recommendations of the panel, the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) released a statement saying that SARS has been reformed and itemized 6 new terms and conditions of the operations of SARS;*

*Worried that the recent death of this young and vibrant man, Tiyamiyu Kazeem has shown however, that even the Nigeria Police Force cannot bring its officers to abide by the rules of engagement; as their action was in clear contrast with the terms and conditions of the alleged Reform SARS, and therefore, actions more effective and lasting needs to be taken;*

*Also worried that a prolonged negligence of the issue may result into a crisis between the police and the citizens as evident after the death of Kazeem, when the protector becomes the harm, the protected will look for ways to defend and shield himself from any harm;*

*Further notes the swift and encouraging response of the IGP in disbanding all SARS satellite offices across Nigeria and the assigning Deputy Inspector-General of Police (DIG), Ogunyanwo to Ogun State from Abuja;*

*Also aware of the restiveness among the youths, which is being suppressed by the Royal fathers and elders of the community with the assurance that the matter will not be swept under the carpet and that justice will be served;*

*Resolved to:*

- (i) urge the Inspector-General of Police to regularly orientate Officers of the force and all tactical squads about their obligations and the rights of citizens as contained in the 1999 Constitution (as amended) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- (ii) also urge the Inspector-General of Police to re-examine the objectives behind the establishment of the tactical squads, return them back to their original concept, streamline their scope of operations and restrict their interference with civil and financial crimes;
- (iii) further urge the Inspector-General of Police to establish a Special Bureau Unit to monitor Officers of the force including Tactical Squads, arrest and charge erring officers for unprofessionalism;
- (iv) urge the Federal Government, through the National Human Rights Commission and alongside the Committee on Police Affairs to pay unannounced regular oversight visits to all detention facilities to affirm that no human rights are being violated;
- (v) also urge the Federal Government to look into the recommendations of the Tony Ojukwu led panel and in particular the recommendations to:
  - (a) strengthening the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) of the Nigeria Police Force,
  - (b) establishment of State and Local Government Police,
  - (c) institutionalizing a Special Investigation Panel (SIP) to annually hear and determine complaints of alleged human rights violations against the Nigeria Police Force;
- (vi) mandate the Committees on Police Affairs, Justice, and Human Rights to investigate the recent action by SARS operatives that led to the death of Tiyamiyu Kazeeem, and ensure that justice is not only done but seen to be done, and report back within six (6) weeks;
- (vii) urge the Federal Government to provide adequate compensation for the family of the deceased; and
- (viii) observe a minute silence in honour of the deceased;
- (ix) urge the Inspector-General of Police to subject the SARS officers involved in the unfortunate incidence to mental stability test, and also ensure that all SARS officers undergo same periodic test to ensure that citizens are in safe hands; and
- (x) also mandate the Committee on Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (**IF. 88/03/2020**).

*A minute silence was observed in honour of the deceased.*

**15. Need to Curb the Prevalence of Online Crime and Child Exploitation in Nigeria**

*Order read; deferred by leave of the House.*

**16. Need to Equip Federal Medical Centers with Modern Laboratories and Diagnostic Equipment:**

*Order read; deferred by leave of the House.*

17. **Need to Investigate the Alleged Extortion, Passport Racketeering and Corrupt Practices by the Nigeria Immigration Service**

*Motion made and Question proposed:*

The House:

*Notes* that the Nigeria Immigration Service is the agency responsible for the production and issuance of the Nigerian international passport;

*Also notes* that the current price for the new standard passport with 32 pages is ₦25,000 while the 64-booklet passport costs ₦35,000 and both have a five-year validity period;

*Concerned* that there have been several reports of alleged extortion of Nigerians seeking to acquire international passports by personnel of the Nigeria Immigration Service;

*Also concerned* that unsuspecting members of the public are made to pay as high as ₦50,000 to some immigration officers with a promise to fast track processing of their international passport;

*Aware* that the policy of Treasury Single Account (TSA), developed by the International Monetary Fund, was fully implemented by President Muhammad Buhari in 2015 to promote accountability and transparency in public administration, hence Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Government Owned Enterprises (GOEs) were directed to transfer all financial assets from commercial banks to a consolidated revenue fund domiciled in the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN);

*Disturbed* that in spite of the inestimable success of the policy, officers of a revenue-generating agency such as the Nigeria Immigration Service are plagued by the sinister desire to subvert the policy with the ultimate goal of fattening their pockets, thus impeding the drive for a better Nigeria;

*Also disturbed* that the collection of cash by immigration personnel, instead of payment through Remita, which is the official TSA payment channel, is in gross violation of the policy of the Federal Government;

*Worried* that as a result of the unscrupulous activities of officers of the Nigeria Immigration Service at the various passport offices nationwide, well-meaning Nigerians are being denied legitimate access to the services of the agency and the country is being bled of millions of revenue through corrupt personnel;

*Also worried* that the rising trend of passport racketeering would expose the country to foreign criminals who may take advantage of the corrupt practices to acquire Nigerian passports and commit crimes that could tarnish the country's image;

*Cognizant* of the need to discourage corruption in any form by ensuring that errant officers and their cronies are made to face the full wrath of the law;

*Resolves to:*

- (i) urge the Federal Government to investigate the alleged passport racketeering and other corrupt practices at the offices of the Nigeria Immigration Service with a view to bringing the culprits to book;
- (ii) also urge the Federal Government to ensure that all payments to the Nigeria Immigration Service are done through the appropriate TSA channel and anyone violating the terms of the policy is made to face the full wrath of the law;

- (iii) mandate the Committee on Interior, and Legislative Compliance to ensure implementation and report back within four (4) weeks (*Hon. Chinedu N. Ogah — Ikwo/Ezza South Federal Constituency*).

*Debate.*

**Amendments Proposed:**

- (i) In Prayer (i), *leave out* the words “Urge the Federal Government”, and *insert* the words “mandate the Committee on Interior” (*Hon. Shehu Koko — Koko-Besse/Marjama Federal Constituency*).

*Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.*

- (ii) In the Title immediately after the word “by”, *insert* the words “some officers of” (*Hon. Ndudi Elumelu — Aniocha/Oshimili Federal Constituency*).

*Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.*

*Question on the Motion as amended — Agreed to.*

**Need to Investigate the Alleged Extortion, Passport Racketeering and Corrupt Practices by Some Officers of the Nigeria Immigration Service:**

The House:

*Noted* that the Nigeria Immigration Service is the agency responsible for the production and issuance of the Nigerian international passport;

*Also noted* that the current price for the new standard passport with 32 pages is ₦25,000 while the 64-booklet passport costs ₦35,000 and both have a five-year validity period;

*Concerned* that there have been several reports of alleged extortion of Nigerians seeking to acquire international passports by personnel of the Nigeria Immigration Service;

*Also concerned* that unsuspecting members of the public are made to pay as high as ₦50,000 to some immigration officers with a promise to fast track processing of their international passport;

*Aware* that the policy of Treasury Single Account (TSA), developed by the International Monetary Fund, was fully implemented by President Muhammad Buhari in 2015 to promote accountability and transparency in public administration, hence Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Government Owned Enterprises (GOEs) were directed to transfer all financial assets from commercial banks to a consolidated revenue fund domiciled in the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN);

*Disturbed* that in spite of the inestimable success of the policy, officers of a revenue-generating agency such as the Nigeria Immigration Service are plagued by the sinister desire to subvert the policy with the ultimate goal of fattening their pockets, thus impeding the drive for a better Nigeria;

*Also disturbed* that the collection of cash by immigration personnel, instead of payment through Remita, which is the official TSA payment channel, is in gross violation of the policy of the Federal Government;

*Worried* that as a result of the unscrupulous activities of officers of the Nigeria Immigration Service at the various passport offices nationwide, well-meaning Nigerians are being denied legitimate access to the services of the agency and the country is being bled of millions of revenue through corrupt personnel;

*Also worried* that the rising trend of passport racketeering would expose the country to foreign criminals who may take advantage of the corrupt practices to acquire Nigerian passports and commit crimes that could tarnish the country's image;

*Cognizant* of the need to discourage corruption in any form by ensuring that errant officers and their cronies are made to face the full wrath of the law;

*Resolved to:*

- (i) urge the Federal Government to ensure that all payments to the Nigeria Immigration Service are done through the appropriate TSA channel and anyone violating the terms of the policy is made to face the full wrath of the law;
- (ii) mandate the Committee on Interior to investigate the alleged passport racketeering and other corrupt practices at the offices of the Nigeria Immigration Service with a view to bringing the culprits to book;
- (iii) also mandate the Committees on Interior, and Legislative Compliance to ensure implementation and report back within four (4) weeks (HR. 89/03/2020).

18. **Need for the Federal Government to Procure and Install Landing Facilities at the Margret Ekpo International Airport, Calabar, Cross River State**

*Motion made and Question proposed:*

The House:

*Notes* the role air transportation plays in any modern society;

*Aware* that the Margaret Ekpo International Airport, Calabar, Cross River State, does not have landing facilities, the effect of which is that Aircraft cannot land at the airport at night and can neither land nor take off in a bad weather no matter the emergency, a situation that has implications on the health of the people as well as national security;

*Concerned* that sometimes for several days, no Aircraft lands at the airport thereby forcing travelers to fly through the neighbouring Airport in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State at great expense and inconvenience;

*Also concerned* that the deplorable state of the Airport is adversely affecting the economy of Cross River State which has already suffered enough, first, through the loss of Bakassi to Cameroon and, then, the loss of 76 oils wells, and now depends on tourism, apart from its meager receipts from the Federation Account;

*Convinced* that as the first capital of Nigeria and an International Tourist Destination, Calabar (and indeed Cross River State) does not deserve the indignity of not being able to use its only airport optimally;

*Resolves to:*

- (i) call on the Minister of Aviation to urgently procure and install landing facilities at the Margaret Ekpo International Airport, Calabar;
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Aviation, and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (Hon. Daniel Effiong Asuquo — Akamkpa/Biase Federal Constituency).

*Debate.*

*Agreed to.*

The House:

*Noted* the role air transportation plays in any modern society;

*Aware* that the Margaret Ekpo International Airport, Calabar, Cross River State, does not have landing facilities, the effect of which is that Aircraft cannot land at the airport at night and can neither land nor take off in a bad weather no matter the emergency, a situation that has implications on the health of the people as well as national security;

*Concerned* that sometimes for several days, no Aircraft lands at the airport thereby forcing travelers to fly through the neighbouring Airport in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State at great expense and inconvenience;

*Also concerned* that the deplorable state of the Airport is adversely affecting the economy of Cross River State which has already suffered enough, first, through the loss of Bakassi to Cameroon and, then, the loss of 76 oils wells, and now depends on tourism, apart from its meager receipts from the Federation Account;

*Convinced* that as the first capital of Nigeria and an International Tourist Destination, Calabar (and indeed Cross River State) does not deserve the indignity of not being able to use its only airport optimally;

*Resolved to:*

- (i) call on the Minister of Aviation to urgently procure and install landing facilities at the Margaret Ekpo International Airport, Calabar;
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Aviation, and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (H.F. 90/03/2020).

**19. Orders of the Day**

*Motion made and Question proposed*, "That the House do set down items 12 - 14 on the Order Paper to another legislative day, pursuant to Order Eight, Rule 6 (3)" (*Hon. Peter Akpatason — Deputy House Leader*).

*Agreed to.*

**20. Adjournment**

*That the House do adjourn till Tuesday, 10 March, 2020 at 11.00 a.m.* (*Hon. Alhassan Ado Garba — House Leader*).

*The House adjourned accordingly at 1.19 p.m.*

**Femi Hakeem Gbajabiamila**  
*Speaker*