



SENATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Tuesday, 25th July, 2023

1. The Senate met at 11:28 a.m. The President of the Senate read prayers.
2. **Votes and Proceedings:**
The Senate examined the Votes and Proceedings of Thursday, 20th July, 2023.
Question was put and the Votes and Proceedings were approved.
3. **Announcements:**
 - (a) **Birthday Anniversary:**
The President of the Senate read a letter from Senator *Bamidele M. Opeyemi (Ekiti Central)* as follows:



SENATE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

July 25, 2023

*The President of the Senate,
National Assembly Complex,
Three Arms Zone,
Abuja.*

Mr. President,

60th Year Birthday Anniversary

This is to invite Distinguished Senators to my 60th Year Birthday Anniversary and Book Launch at Yar'Adua Centre, Central Business Area at 1:00 p.m. today.

Please endeavour to attend.

(Signed)

*Senator Bamidele M. Opeyemi
Senate Leader*

(b) Meeting:

The President of the Senate read a letter from Senator *Elisha C. Ishaku* (Adamawa North) as follows:



SENATE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

July 25, 2023

The President of the Senate,
National Assembly Complex,
Three Arms Zone,
Abuja.

Mr. President,

MEETING

This is to inform Distinguished Senators that a meeting of Northern Senators Forum is scheduled as follows:

Date: Tuesday, 25th July, 2023
Venue: Senate Hearing Room 1.
Time: Immediately after plenary

Please endeavor to attend.

(Signed)
Senator *Elisha C. Ishaku*
Interim Secretary

4. Executive Communication:

Confirmation of the Nomination for Appointment as Members of the Board of the North East Development Commission:

Consideration of the Request deferred to the next Legislative Day.

5. Privilege

Rising on Order 10 of the Senate Standing Orders, 2022 (as amended), Senator Solomon Adeola Olamilekan drew the attention of the Senate to an interview that was aired on Channels Television in which a Distinguished Senator asserted that members of the 9th National Assembly removed office equipment from their offices at the end of their tenure in June, 2023. Senator Olamilekan stated that it is usually the practice in the National Assembly that at the end of the tenure, the Management of the National Assembly notifies members that they had an option to purchase the equipment in their offices which would have depreciated in value in the last four years. The members, either elect to pay directly for the equipment or have the cost deducted from their severance allowance before they were allowed to remove them from the offices. He thus viewed the assertions of the Distinguished Senator in the interview as a breach of his privilege and that of the Senate. He therefore urged the Senate to mandate the Distinguished Senator concerned to apologise to the Senate over the erroneous impressions created by the assertions he made in the interview.

By the Leave of the Senate, Senator Adams A. Oshiomole (Edo North) duly apologised to the Senate in order to resolve the issue.

6. Matter of Urgent Public Importance:

Rising on Orders 41 and 51, of the Senate Standing Orders, 2022 (as amended) Senator Olalere Kamorudeen Oyewumi (*Osun West*) drew the attention of the Senate to the "Urgent Need to Intervene in the Devastating Flooding Incident in Ikire, Apomu and Gbongan Areas of Osun State". He sought and obtained the leave of the Senate to present the matter forthwith:

The Senate:

notes that, the forecast of NIMET, predicted that the level of rainfall in 2023 will be greater than that of 2022 and that over 180 local Government Areas in 32 States (including Osun state) fall within the high flood risk;

also notes that in the last 20 years, the Ikire-Apomu and Gbongan communities have never experienced these kind of erosion that ravaged the communities, due to a heavy rainfall between Friday 21st and Saturday 22nd July, 2023;

further notes that Ibadan-Ife Express road passes through Ikoyi-Apomu-Ikire and Gbongan towns. The tributaries of many streams from these towns, enters the Osun River at Asejire dam thereby making the area marshy and waterlogged always;

aware that the said Ibadan-Ife Express road reconstruction has been awarded to KOPEK Construction Company since 2019. However, the speed of work on the road is not encouraging;

concerned that, the heavy flood in these towns has destroyed properties worth several millions of Naira, many households have been displaced and motorists along the road were stranded for a whole day; and

further concerned that, if the spate of this flooding is not immediately checked, when the rainfall really starts in September to November this year, it could lead to unimaginable damages, to lives and properties. The road which is the 2nd busiest road in South West Nigeria (after Lagos-Ibadan road) may also become impassable.

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to immediately direct the contractor handling Ibadan-Ife road to, as a matter of urgency, proceed to the portion affected by the flood at Ikire to avert further damages and allow free flow of traffic;
- (ii) urge the Ecology Fund Office and Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to equally assist in the channelization of other affected areas in Ikire, Ikoyi, Apomu and Gbongan communities; and
- (iii) further urge the National emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to quickly send relief materials to the affected victims in Ikire, Apomu, Ikoyi and Gbongan, all in Osun West Senatorial District of Osun State.

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to immediately direct the contractor handling Ibadan-Ife road to, as a matter of urgency, proceed to the portion affected by the flood at Ikire to avert further damages and allow free flow of traffic — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Ecology Fund Office and Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to equally assist in the channelization of other affected areas in Ikire, Ikoyi, Apomu and Gbongan communities — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (iii):

Question: That the Senate do urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to quickly send relief materials to the affected victims in Ikire, Apomu, Ikoyi and Gbongan, all in Osun West Senatorial District of Osun State — *Agreed to.*

Resolved:

That the Senate do:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to immediately direct the contractor handling Ibadan-Ife road to, as a matter of urgency, proceed to the portion affected by the flood at Ikire to avert further damages and allow free flow of traffic;
- (ii) urge the Ecology Fund Office and Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to equally assist in the channelization of other affected areas in Ikire, Ikoyi, Apomu and Gbongan communities; and
- (iii) urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to quickly send relief materials to the affected victims in Ikire, Apomu, Ikoyi and Gbongan, all in Osun West Senatorial District of Osun State (*S/Res/032/01/23*).

7. Motions:**(a) Need to Halt the Proposed Increase in Electricity Tariff by Eleven Successor Electricity Distribution Companies (Discos):**

Motion made: That the Senate observes that the eleven (11) successor electricity distribution companies ("Discos") have filed an application for rate review with the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC). The request for rate review is premised on the need to incorporate changes in macroeconomic parameters and other factors affecting the quality of service, operations and sustainability of the companies;

also observes that the Commission in line with its mandate has requested the general public for comments on the rate review applications by the distribution licensees; while advising interested stakeholders to review and take into consideration the excerpts of the Rate Review Applications filed with the Commission by the respective licensees;

aware that as part of Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) rule-making process and in the exercise of the powers conferred by the Electricity Act 2023, the Commission is empowered to conduct a Rate Case Hearing on the applications prior to making a ruling;

also aware that Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) had through its official website published and set 20th July, 2023, deadline for comment by stakeholders;

worried that within the last 10 years, billions of naira were spent by Senators across Nigeria in the procurement and installation of transformers through various Zonal Intervention Projects (ZIPs) as a result of request in Senators' various Constituencies;

also worried that when these transformers are supplied and installed they become registered properties of the Discos (a privately owned enterprise); while sadly same Discos have consistently refused to energize such transformers on the ground that affected communities have to pay millions of naira arrears of bills for electricity never consumed while keeping the affected consumer in perpetual darkness;

concerned that the services of the 11 discos are currently bedeviled with total failure, occasioned by prolonged blackout due to lack of provision of relevant infrastructure like transformers, electricity poles, poor distribution network compounded with unjustifiable estimated billings, lack of supply of prepaid meters, rip-off etc;

also concerned that despite repeated previous increase in the multiyear tariff with assurances of improved service delivery by the Discos no commensurate improvement has been made by any of 11 Discos in their respective service deliveries to justify the previous increment; and

further concerned that the:

- proposed increase will significantly impact the affordability of electricity for the average Nigerian, further exacerbating the financial burdens being faced by households and businesses;
- less than one week timeframe window provided by Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) for comments from all relevant stakeholders is too small for any meaningful engagement;
- high electricity tariffs will impede industrial growth, job creation, and overall economic development. This will have adverse effects on the nation's drive towards sustainable development and poverty reduction; and
- it is essential to address the issues of inadequate power supply, metering, and quality of service provided by the Discos, hence Customers should not be made to bear the brunt of inefficiencies in the power sector.

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Government of Nigeria to intervene and halt the proposed increase in electricity tariff by the Distribution Companies (Discos);
- (ii) urge Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) to decentralize the proposed engagement with stakeholders scheduled for only Abuja to the Six Geopolitical Zones of the Federation for effective participation by all;
- (iii) also urge NERC to thoroughly look into the rate review applications filed by the Discos, taking into consideration the interests of citizens, affordability, and the need for improved service delivery;
- (iv) further urge NERC to explore alternative measures to address the financial challenges faced by the Discos, such as improving operational efficiency, reducing technical and commercial losses, and enhancing revenue collection mechanisms;
- (v) equally urge the Discos to henceforth discontinue estimated billing and make available to all electricity consumers prepaid meters; and
- (vi) mandate the Committee on Power (when constituted) to engage with the Federal Ministry of Power, NERC, and other stakeholders to find lasting solutions to the challenges facing the Nigerian Electricity Sector, including the need for comprehensive sector reforms (*Senator Akintunde, Yunus Abiodun — Oyo Central*).

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do the Federal Government of Nigeria to intervene and halt the proposed increase in electricity tariff by the Distribution Companies (Discos) — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do urge Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) to decentralize the proposed engagement with stakeholders scheduled for only Abuja to the Six Geopolitical Zones of the Federation for effective participation by all — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (iii):

Question: That the Senate do urge NERC to thoroughly look into the rate review applications filed by the Discos, taking into consideration the interests of citizens, affordability, and the need for improved service delivery — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (iv):

Question: That the Senate do further urge NERC to explore alternative measures to address the financial challenges faced by the Discos, such as improving operational efficiency, reducing technical and commercial losses, and enhancing revenue collection mechanisms — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (v):

Question: That the Senate do equally urge the Discos to henceforth discontinue estimated billing and make available to all electricity consumers prepaid meters; — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (vi):

Question: That the Senate do mandate the Committee on Power (when constituted) to engage with the Federal Ministry of Power, NERC, and other stakeholders to find lasting solutions to the challenges facing the Nigerian Electricity Sector, including the need for comprehensive sector reforms — *Agreed to.*

Resolved:

That the Senate do:

- (i) call on the Federal Government of Nigeria to intervene and halt the proposed increase in electricity tariff by the Distribution Companies (Discos);
- (ii) urge Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) to decentralize the proposed engagement with stakeholders scheduled for only Abuja to the Six Geopolitical Zones of the Federation for effective participation by all;
- (iii) also urge NERC to thoroughly look into the rate review applications filed by the Discos, taking into consideration the interests of citizens, affordability, and the need for improved service delivery;
- (iv) further urge NERC to explore alternative measures to address the financial challenges faced by the Discos, such as improving operational efficiency, reducing technical and commercial losses, and enhancing revenue collection mechanisms;
- (v) equally urge the Discos to henceforth discontinue estimated billing and make available to all electricity consumers prepaid meters;

- (vi) mandate the Committee on Power (when constituted) to engage with the Federal Ministry of Power, NERC, and other stakeholders to find lasting solutions to the challenges facing the Nigerian Electricity Sector, including the need for comprehensive sector reforms (S/Res/033/01/23).

(b) *Need to Investigate the Incessant and Nefarious Acts of Crude Oil Thefts in the Niger Delta and the Actors:*

Consideration of Motion deferred to another Legislative Day.

(c) *Urgent Need to Lift the Restriction Order placed on Supply of Fuel to Border Communities:*

Consideration of Motion deferred to another Legislative Day.

8. **Adjournment:**

Motion made: That the Senate do now adjourn till Wednesday, 26th July, 2023 at 10.00 a.m. (Deputy Chief Whip).

Adjourned accordingly at 1:13 p.m.

Godswill Obot Akpabio, CON
President,
Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.