



SENATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday, 12th July, 2023

1. The Senate met at 11:15 a.m. The President of the Senate read prayers.
2. **Votes and Proceedings:**
The Senate examined the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday, 11th July, 2023.
Question was put and the Votes and Proceedings were approved.
3. **Announcement:**
Notice of meeting:
The President of the Senate read a letter from Senator Simon Davou Mwadkwon (*Plateau North*) as follows:



MINORITY CAUCUS

July 12, 2023

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

MEETING

This is to inform all members of the Minority Caucus that its meeting holds as follows:

Date: 12th July, 2023
Venue: Room 231
Time: Immediately After Plenary

(Signed)
Senator Simon Davou Mwadkwon

4. Duties of the Chief Whip:

Rising on Order 24(2), the Chief Whip of the Senate, Senator Mohammed Ali Ndume (*Borno North*), drew the attention of the Senate to his duties as stated in the above Order and observed that some Senators do enter the Chamber with their Aides which is not in compliance with the Rules of the Senate. He urged the Senators concerned to take note.

By the leave of the Senate, distinguished Senators were advised to adhere to the above Order.

5. Matter of Urgent Public Importance:

Rising on Orders 41 and 51, Senator Ishaku Elisha Cliff (*Adamawa North*) drew the attention of the Senate to the Urgent Need to Investigate Report of Relocation of Federal University of Agriculture Mubi, Adamawa State, by compromised Ministry Officials. He sought and obtained the leave of the Senate to present the matter forthwith:

The Senate:

Notes that the Federal Government of Nigeria through a Presidential approval established new tertiary institutions via memo number SH/COS/02/A/3342 dated 16th April 2023, addressed to the Honourable Minister of Education, as follows:

- (a) Federal University of Medical and Health Sciences Kwale Delta State, (South-South, Nigeria);
- (b) Federal University of Medical and Health Sciences Katsina, Katsina State, (North-West, Nigeria);
- (c) Federal University of Agriculture Mubi, Adamawa State, (North, East- Nigeria); and
- (d) Federal University of Agriculture Bassam Biri, Bayelsa State, (South, South, Nigeria).

also note that the President approved Federal Colleges of Education as follows:

- (a) Federal College of Education, Gwoza, Borno State, (North, East -Nigeria);
- (b) Federal College of Education Ofeme-Ohuhu, Abia State, (South, East - Nigeria); and
- (c) Federal College of Education Ilewe, Ekiti State, (South, West -Nigeria).

Aware that these approvals were in line with Senate practices and section 5 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 which provides that the power of the executive (a) vested in the President shall be exercised by him either directly or through the Vice-President or Ministers of the Government of the Federation or officers in the public service of the Federation;

Concerned that neither the National Assembly nor the President reversed those approvals or ordered the relocation;

Disturbed that the Permanent Secretary unilaterally and arbitrarily overrode the approvals of the President in relocating those tertiary institutions from the approved states and local government areas to places he deemed fit after a gap was created in the office of the Honorable Minister of Education due to the dissolution of the Federal Executive Council as a result of tenure expiration of the past government which led to Permanent Secretaries holding forth in the absence of Honourable Ministers;

Also disturbed that the National Assembly passed a bill which was assented to by the President in exercise of his constitutional powers; and

Recognizes that the National Assembly has powers under section 88 of the 1999 Constitution to direct or cause to be directed investigation into:

- (a) any matter or anything with respect to which it has powers to make laws; and
- (b) investigation into the conduct of affairs of any person, authority, Ministry, or Government Department charged or intended to be charged with the duty or responsibility for executing or administering laws enacted by the National Assembly.

The Senate accordingly resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Education, the National Universities Commission, Tertiary Education Trust Fund and other agencies involved in the relocation of the tertiary institution to stop forthwith and maintain status quo pending the investigation by the Senate; and
- (ii) constitute an Ad-hoc Committee to invite the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education, former Minister of Education, Directors and relevant persons and investigate the illegal relocation and if found to be true, recommend to the Senate measures to be taken against all those found to have compromised Civil Service Rules and undermine the powers of the National Assembly and that of the office of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Federal Ministry of Education, the National Universities Commission, Tertiary Education Trust Fund and other agencies involved in the relocation of the tertiary institution to stop forthwith and maintain status quo pending the investigation by the Senate — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do constitute an Ad-hoc Committee to invite the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education, former Minister of Education, Directors and relevant persons and investigate the illegal relocation and if found to be true, recommend to the Senate measures to be taken against all those found to have compromised Civil Service Rules and undermine the powers of the National Assembly and that of the office of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Amendment Proposed:

Leave out the Proposed Resolution (ii) and *insert* the following instead thereof:
 "That pursuant to Proposed Resolution (i), the matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Tertiary Institutions and TETFUND (when constituted) for further investigation" (*Senator Mohammed D. Goje — Gombe Central*).

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Resolved:

That the Senate do:

- (i) Urge the Federal Ministry of Education, the National Universities Commission, Tertiary Education Trust Fund and other agencies involved in the relocation of the tertiary institution to stop forthwith and maintain status quo pending the investigation by the Senate; and
- (ii) That pursuant to Resolution (i), the matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Tertiary Institutions and TETFUND (when constituted) for further investigation (*S/Res/014/01/23*).

6. Motions:

- (a) *Congratulating President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR on his recent emergence as the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS):*

Motion made: That the Senate notes with great felicitation, the emergence of the President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Bola Tinubu, GCFR as the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) at the recently concluded 63rd Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of States and Governments of ECOWAS held in Bissau, capital of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau;

observes that by clinching this influential and strategic position on his very first participation at such high level meeting of ECOWAS barely 2 months after his inauguration as President, the sub-regional body has reposed great confidence in the leadership qualities of President Bola Tinubu, GCFR and reaffirms Nigeria's leadership role on the African continent generally and the sub-region in particular;

delighted that as the Chairman of ECOWAS, President Bola Tinubu, GCFR is in a strategic and vantage position to uphold the charter of ECOWAS which is to promote peace and conflict resolution within the West African Sub-region, promote democracy and good governance, strengthen collective response to security threats within the sub-region, and generally foster economic cooperation amongst ECOWAS Member States;

observes that as a master strategist, mobilizer and globally respected politician, ECOWAS is blessed to have him in the position of Chairman and his wealth of experience will be brought to bear on the implementation of policies of ECOWAS to bring lasting peace and economic prosperity within the West African sub-region;

notes that the emergence of President Bola Tinubu as the Chairman of ECOWAS is a testimony of his avowed commitment to good governance promised Nigeria which the policies and decisions taken so far are yielding results and beginning to reposition our economy; and

also notes also that since the establishment of ECOWAS in 1975, Nigeria has played key leadership roles particularly in the promotion of sub-regional security, defence to democracy and human rights, economic integration and collective response to security within the sub-region and ECOWAS is even better placed under the chairmanship of President Bola Tinubu, GCFR in the discharge of the above mandates amongst others.

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) join other Heads of Governments of ECOWAS member states and in particular parliaments of member states of ECOWAS to congratulate President Bola Tinubu on his emergence as the Chairman of ECOWAS at the recently concluded 63rd Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of States and Governments of ECOWAS held in Bissau, capital of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau; and
- (ii) felicitate with all Nigerians, friends and allies of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on this great honour and privileged position of Chairman of ECOWAS recently clinched by President Bola Tinubu (*Senator Barau I. Jibrin — Kano North*).

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do join other Heads of Governments of ECOWAS Member States and in particular parliaments of Member States of ECOWAS to congratulate President Bola Tinubu on his emergence as the Chairman of ECOWAS at the recently concluded 63rd Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of States and Governments of ECOWAS held in Bissau, capital of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do felicitate with all Nigerians, friends and allies of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on this great honour and privileged position of Chairman of ECOWAS recently clinched by President Bola Tinubu — *Agreed to.*

Additional Proposed Resolution:

Insert Additional Proposed Resolution as follows:

“That the Senate do constitute a delegation of its leadership to visit and felicitate with Mr. President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation on behalf of the 10th Senate, on his appointment as Chairman of ECOWAS” (*Senator Mohammed T. Monguno — Borno North*).

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Resolved:

That the Senate do:

- (i) join other Heads of Governments of ECOWAS Member States and in particular Parliaments of Member States of ECOWAS to congratulate President Bola Tinubu on his emergence as the Chairman of ECOWAS at the recently concluded 63rd Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of States and Governments of ECOWAS held in Bissau, capital of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau;
 - (ii) felicitate with all Nigerians, friends and allies of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on this great honour and privileged position of Chairman of ECOWAS recently clinched by President Bola Tinubu; and
 - (iii) constitute a delegation of its leadership to visit and felicitate with Mr. President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation on behalf of the 10th Senate, on his appointment as Chairman of ECOWAS (*S/Res/015/01/23*).
- (b) ***Need to Holistically Investigate the Disbursement of Loans by Development Bank of Nigeria, NIRSAL and related Banks to Micro, Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria from 2015 to date:***

Motion made: That the Senate notes the huge disparity and un-even disbursement of half a trillion Naira loan to states in the Six Geo-Political Zones of Nigeria and the States in the country in 2021 by the Development Bank of Nigeria;

aware that the Bank's Annual Integrated Statutory Report, 2021 obtained on 13th July, 2022 from the organization's website showed that the bank disbursed a loan worth Four Hundred and Eighty Three Billion Naira (₦483,000,000,000) only out of which only 11% went to the 19 states of Northern Nigeria, while 47% went to Lagos State alone;

also aware that the 11% of the loan that went to the north totals about Fifty Three Billion, One Hundred and Thirty Million Naira (₦53,130,000,000) while the 47 percent that went to Lagos State alone totals Two Hundred and Twenty Seven Billion and Ten Million Naira (₦227,010,000,000) only;

observes that the loans were given out to the Six Geopolitical Zones as follows:

No.	Geo-Political Zone	Percentage	Amount
1.	South-West	57%	(₦274,740,000,000)
2.	South-South	17%	(₦81,940,000,000)
3.	North-Central	11%	(₦53,020,000,000)
4.	South-East	9%	(₦43,380,000,000)

5.	North-West	5%	(₦24,100,000,000)
6.	North-East	1%	(₦4,820,000,000)
		100%	(₦483,000,000,000)

recalls that the Development Bank of Nigeria exists to alleviate financial constraints being faced by Micro, Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria through providing finance, partial credit guarantees, and technical assistance to eligible financial intermediaries on a market-conforming and fully financially sustainable basis; and

also notes that the top five sectors considered for the loan were oil and gas (42.0%), manufacturing (16.0%), agriculture, forestry and fishery (7.2%), trade and commerce (6.3%), and transportation and storage (3.5%).

Accordingly resolves to:

constitute an Ad-hoc Committee to carry out a holistic investigation into the matter and report to the Senate within four (4) weeks (*Senator Mohammed Ali Ndume — Borno South*)

Debate:

Proposed Resolution:

Question: That the Senate do constitute an Ad-hoc Committee to carry out a holistic investigation into the matter and report to the Senate within four (4) weeks — *Agreed to.*

Resolved:

That the Senate do constitute an Ad-hoc Committee to carry out a holistic investigation into the matter and report to the Senate within four (4) weeks (*S/Res/016/01/23*).

Composition of the Ad-hoc Committee:

The President of the Senate announced the following Senators as members of the Ad-hoc Committee to Investigate the Disbursement of Loans by Development Bank of Nigeria:

1)	Senator Nweze D. Umahi	Chairman
2)	Senator Babangida U. Hussaini	Member
3)	Senator Mohammed A. Ndume	Member
4)	Senator Ipalibo H. Banigo	Member
5)	Senator Mohammed S. Musa	Member
6)	Senator Chizoba K. Chukwu	Member
7)	Senator Abiru Adetokunbo	Member

(c) *Call to Address the Low Level of Awareness and Preparedness to Prevent the Outbreak of Anthrax in Nigeria:*

Motion made: That the Senate notes that there is an outbreak of anthrax disease, a deadly zoonotic bacterium, in countries across the ECOWAS region, including Ghana and Togo;

also notes that on the 12th of June 2023, the Federal Government, amidst the democracy day celebration, raised an alarm over the outbreak of the deadly anthrax disease;

further notes that in a public health advisory jointly signed by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, Nigeria was said to be at high risk of importing the deadly anthrax disease from Ghana, where it was confirmed both in humans and animals;

aware of a report by Citi Newsroom that 30 animals have died, three human deaths have been recorded, and 13 cases have tested positive for the anthrax disease in Ghana as at June 2023;

cognizant of the fact that though anthrax is primarily a disease of animals, non-vaccinated animals with anthrax can easily transmit it to man through the inhalation of anthrax spores or consumption of contaminated/infected animal products such as hides and skin, meat or milk;

worried that although Nigeria is yet to record any suspected or confirmed case, the outbreak in Ghana poses a great public health risk to Nigeria due to the highly transmissible nature of the disease;

also worried by Nigeria's low level of preparedness and awareness as a good number of Nigerians are ignorant of the outbreak of the anthrax disease, how it is transmitted, or the risk it portends; and

further worried that no nationwide livestock vaccination exercise against anthrax disease, as a means to prevent this disease from infiltrating the country, has been announced by the federal government.

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) urge the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Federal Ministry of Health to embark on nationwide vaccination of livestock with the anthrax spore vaccine, most especially, in the border states of the country;
- (ii) urge the Federal Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism to begin intensive awareness campaigns to sensitize Nigerians on the outbreak of anthrax disease, symptoms for early detection, and prevention guidelines; and
- (iii) mandate the Committee on Legislative Compliance (when constituted) to ensure compliance (*Senator Onyewuchi, Ezenwa Francis — Imo East*)

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Federal Ministry of Health to embark on nationwide vaccination of livestock with the anthrax spore vaccine, most especially, in the border states of the country — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Federal Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism to begin intensive awareness campaigns to sensitize Nigerians on the outbreak of anthrax disease, symptoms for early detection, and prevention guidelines — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (iii):

Question: That the Senate do mandate the Committee on Legislative Compliance (when constituted) to ensure compliance — *Agreed to.*

Resolved:

That the Senate do:

- (i) urge the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Federal Ministry of Health to embark on nationwide vaccination of livestock with the anthrax spore vaccine,

most especially, in the border states of the country;

- (ii) urge the Federal Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism to begin intensive awareness campaigns to sensitize Nigerians on the outbreak of anthrax disease, symptoms for early detection, and prevention guidelines; and
- (iii) mandate the Committee on Legislative Compliance (when constituted) to ensure compliance (S/Res/017/01/23).

(d) ***Urgent Need for the Federal Government to Mobilise Contractors to Site to Stem further Deterioration of Benin-Auchi- Lokoja Road:***

Motion made: That the Senate notes the deplorable and dangerous state of the Benin-Auchi-Lokoja Road that links the South East and South South States to the Northern parts of the country. The contract for the reconstruction of the road was awarded to Dantata and Sawoe, Reynold Construction Company, Mother Cat and GIG company in 2012 by the President Goodluck Jonathan Administration, following cries and complaints by commuters about the hardship they were encountering daily on the road;

Also notes that certain portions of the road have failed completely, especially around Ekpoma to Agbede axis, and this development is causing sufferings to the many Nigerians who rely on this route for their socio-economic activities, despite the over 200 billion Naira that had been budgeted since the award of the contract for the reconstruction of the road;

aware that the Federal Government, in January 2023, as part of the Infrastructure Development and Refurbishment Investment Tax Credit Scheme Phase, further approved the sum of N75 Billion to hasten the reconstruction of the road, specifically extending from Obajana Junction in Kogi State to Benin City in Edo State;

disturbed that work on the road has stopped and certain portions of the road have failed completely. This has become a nightmare to motorists, especially because heavy duty trucks spend days on the same spot without movement, thereby preventing smaller vehicles from navigating their way through the road. This situation, now sadly compels smaller vehicles to opt for longer alternative routes through Ondo State, totally out of their normal direction, in order to avoid the many kilometers of gridlocks and sometimes inability to maneuver through the failed portions.

also disturbed that transporters now hike their fares due to increased hours of time it takes for them to arrive at a journey that they would otherwise spend less time to arrive at, thereby passing the buck to the passengers and travelers who now pay astronomically high fares to their destinations. This situation is disheartening, considering the current high cost of living that Nigerians are already grappling with;

worried that the deplorable state of the road has caused damage to properties and led to the death of numerous innocent commuters through accidents; and

also worried that the road passes through the sites of two major cement factories in Okpella, Edo State which attracts heavy duty vehicular movement 24 hours of the day, throughout the year, making it a very strategic route for the country's development.

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) urge the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to grant approval for the augmentation of costs on the road through the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, pending the constitution of the Federal Executive Council for ratification and;

- (ii) urge the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to, as a matter of urgency:-
- Commence repairs on the failed portions of the Road;
 - Provide adequate funding to complete the reconstruction of the road; and
 - Come up with a plan to settle all lingering issues bordering on the dualisation of the road with contractors and also review the terms and conditions of the contract to meet current realities of inflation (*Senator Oshiomole, Adams Aliyu — Edo North*)

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do urge the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to grant approval for the augmentation of costs on the road through the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, pending the constitution of the Federal Executive Council for ratification — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to, as a matter of urgency:-

- Commence repairs on the failed portions of the Road;
- Provide adequate funding to complete the reconstruction of the road; and
- Come up with a plan to settle all lingering issues bordering on the dualisation of the road with contractors and also review the terms and conditions of the contract to meet current realities of inflation — *Agreed to.*

Resolved:

That the Senate do:

- (i) urge the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to grant approval for the augmentation of costs on the road through the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, pending the constitution of the Federal Executive Council for ratification and;
- (ii) urge the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to, as a matter of urgency:-
- Commence repairs on the failed portions of the Road;
 - Provide adequate funding to complete the reconstruction of the road; and
 - Come up with a plan to settle all lingering issues bordering on the dualisation of the road with contractors and also review the terms and conditions of the contract to meet current realities of inflation (*S/Res/018/01/23*).

Extension of Time:

Motion made: That the Senate do sit this day beyond the time appointed for the termination of the Sitting of the Senate (Order 8) (*Senate Leader*).

Question put and agreed to.

(e) **Urgent Need to Rescue Nigeria's Rail Project from Collapse:**

Motion made: That the Senate notes that the Railways infrastructure in Nigeria dates back to the 19th century when the first railroad was constructed in 1898 under British colonial rule before the Amalgamation of 1914. The Nigeria Railway Modernisation Project is meant to deliver the dividends of democracy to millions of Nigerians and the management of Nigeria rail projects is duty bound to deliver value for money;

also notes that Nigeria possesses a well-established rail infrastructure, including a rail line from Abuja to Kaduna, Lagos to Ibadan and a light rail system connecting Abuja city center to Abuja airport; yet alarming information in the public domain reveals that Railway-related debt service cost the Federal Government \$62.66 million in the first quarter of year 2023;

further notes that in 2021, the former Minister of Transportation claimed that the Abuja-Kaduna train service was generating at least ₦300 million naira for the country every month. While in another report the Nigeria Railway Corporation claimed that it had lost over ₦531 million in estimated ticket revenue on the Abuja-Kaduna Standard Gauge Train service in five months;

observes that recently, the Nigeria Railway Corporation claimed that it lost ₦113 million to the shutdown of the Abuja-Kaduna route which started operations again after the bandits attack on the route and that is not the only rail route that is currently under attacks by criminals. They have different figures which need to be investigated;

aware that attacks on trains conveying passengers and rail infrastructure are taking tolls on Nigeria's rail sector, which has recorded a decline of 125.6 percent in passenger movement in the second quarter of 2022, which the National Bureau of Statistics' Rail Transportation data has shown;

also aware that huge sums of funds were deployed for the Nigerian rail projects, including loans, and alarming statistics confirm that ₦768.44 million was received from passengers over the period, lower by 63.02% relative to ₦2.08 billion in the same quarter of the previous year, 2021;

further aware that the 156-kilometer Lagos-Ibadan rail line is costing the Federal Government about \$2.5 billion to be built by the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) whilst the 186-kilometer Abuja-Kaduna project cost \$874 million (₦317.3 billion). The 45-kilometer Abuja Light Rail (Phase I) linking the International Airport was awarded at the cost of US\$824 million with 60 percent to be funded with loans from the Exim Bank of China. The Abuja Light Rail (Phase I) has been totally neglected by passengers and this has made it impossible to generate the revenue and pay for the maintenance, operational costs and the loan.

It is good to note that the 326-kilometer Warri-Itakpe rail resumed operations after a three-month hiatus due to derailment;

equally aware that the total debt service on the railway projects rose by 1.50 percent or \$930,000 year-on-year as the \$62.66 million reported in Q1 2023 surpassed the \$61.73 million spent on debt service during the same period in 2022; and

believes that effective utilization of these rail systems can contribute significantly to the reduction of traffic congestion, environmental pollution, and travel time.

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) mandate the Committee on Land Transport (when constituted) to carry out an oversight to determine the viability of the nation's rail projects and ensure that the revenue generation structure is fit for purpose; and
- (ii) urge the Federal Ministry of Transportation to review the Nigeria Railway Modernization Project to enhance passenger's safety and security, increase revenue generation and boost passengers' patronage (*Senator Olubiyi Fadeyi Oluwole — Osun Central*).

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do mandate the Committee on Land Transport (when constituted) to carry out an oversight to determine the viability of the nation's rail projects and ensure that the revenue generation structure is fit for purpose — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Federal Ministry of Transportation to review the Nigeria Railway Modernization Project to enhance passenger's safety and security, increase revenue generation and boost passengers' patronage — *Agreed to.*

Additional Proposed Resolution:

Insert Additional Proposed Resolution as follows:

"That the Senate do urge the Federal Government of Nigeria to include the Eastern Rail line in the Nigerian Railway Modernization Project" (*Senator Victor C. Umeh — Anambra Central*).

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Resolved:

That the Senate do:

- (i) mandate the Committee on Land Transport (when constituted) to carry out an oversight to determine the viability of the nation's rail projects and ensure that the revenue generation structure is fit for purpose;
 - (ii) urge the Federal Ministry of Transportation to review the Nigeria Railway Modernization Project to enhance passenger's safety and security, increase revenue generation and boost passengers' patronage; and
 - (iii) urge the Federal Government of Nigeria to include the Eastern Rail line in the Nigerian Railway Modernization Project (*S/Res/019/01/23*).
- (f) ***Urgent Need to Investigate the Alarming Cases of Delays in Payment and Allegations of Corruption associated with the Capturing and Payment of newly recruited University Staff under the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS):***

Motion made: That the Senate notes that the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) was introduced by the Federal Government sometime in 2007 as a reform measure aimed at improving efficiency and effectiveness in the storage of federal government employee records and administration of their monthly payroll in such a manner as to guarantee confidence in staff emolument costs and budgeting;

also notes that the primary motive for the introduction of IPPIS was to take advantage of existing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on personnel and payroll management in other parts of the world to ensure that ghost workers are eliminated while bonafide Federal Government employees are paid accurately and timely;

observes that since its introduction in 2007, over two million Federal Government employees across 696 Ministries, Departments and Agencies, including some staff of Federal Government-owned universities and other tertiary institutions, have been reportedly captured on the IPPIS platform;

recalls that the use of IPPIS for storage of personnel records and management of staff payroll in Federal Government-owned universities was a thorny issue between the Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) during the recently suspended strike embarked upon by ASUU;

further notes that while the Federal Government insisted that IPPIS remains the best personnel records and payroll management system to be used for storage of records and management of payroll of university staff, ASUU took a different position, recommending the University Transparency and Accountability Solution (UTAS) as

an alternative that is most suitable for universities particularly;

concerned that while the Federal Government and ASUU were unable to reach an agreement regarding which of the two payment platforms to be adopted for management of university staff payroll, recent allegations of bribery, corruption and delayed capturing and payment of some university staff recruited as far back as 2020 through the IPPIS has called for urgent investigation of those irregularities because of untold hardship caused to affected university staff and their families;

informed that in many Federal Government Universities, staff employed as far back as 2020 are yet to be captured on the IPPIS platform and therefore are not being paid their salaries since they were recruited about three years ago;

also informed that some of the affected staff cutting across many universities have been alleged to have been involved in bribing IPPIS officials for the purpose of getting captured on the platform; and

concerned that the allegations of bribery, corruption, delayed capturing and payment of salaries of newly recruited staff of Federal Government-owned universities have cast serious doubt on the credibility and suitability of IPPIS as a platform for managing the payroll of university staff as institutions clothed with autonomy for the purposes of teaching, learning and research.

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) constitute an Ad-hoc Committee to investigate allegations of bribery and corruption of IPPIS officials at various Universities across the Federation, delayed capturing and payment of staff of Federal Government-owned Universities who were recruited as far back as 2020 and to make a report on the status of the disagreement between the Federal Government and ASUU on the use of either IPPIS or UTAS as the preferred payment platform for Nigerian university staff; and
- (ii) mandate the Ad-hoc Committee to interact with the Head of Service, National President of ASUU, the Chairman of Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities and other relevant stakeholders in carrying out its mandate, and to report within two (2) weeks (*Senator Ubah Patrick Ifeanyi — Anambra South*).

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do constitute an Ad-hoc Committee to investigate allegations of bribery and corruption of IPPIS officials at various Universities across the Federation, delayed capturing and payment of staff of Federal Government-owned Universities who were recruited as far back as 2020 and to make a report on the status of the disagreement between the Federal Government and ASUU on the use of either IPPIS or UTAS as the preferred payment platform for Nigerian university staff;

Amendment Proposed:

Leave out the words "constitute an Ad-hoc Committee" in line 1 and *insert* the words "mandate the Committee on Tertiary Institutions and TETFUND (when constituted)" instead thereof (*Senator Barau I. Jibrin — Kano North*)

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do mandate the Ad-hoc Committee to interact with the Head

of Service, National President of ASUU, the Chairman of Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities and other relevant stakeholders in carrying out its mandate, and to report within two (2) weeks.

Amendment Proposed:

Leave out the words "Ad-hoc Committee" in line 1 and insert the words "Committee on Tertiary Institutions and TETFUND (when constituted)" (Senator Barau I. Jibrin — Kano North)

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Resolved:

That the Senate do:

- (i) mandate the Committee on Tertiary Institutions and TETFUND (when constituted) to investigate allegations of bribery and corruption of IPPIS officials at various Universities across the Federation, delayed capturing and payment of staff of Federal Government-owned Universities who were recruited as far back as 2020 and to make a report on the status of the disagreement between the Federal Government and ASUU on the use of either IPPIS or UTAS as the preferred payment platform for Nigerian university staff; and
- (ii) mandate the Committee on Tertiary Institutions and TETFUND (when constituted) to interact with the Head of Service, National President of ASUU, the Chairman of Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities and other relevant stakeholders in carrying out its mandate, and to report within two (2) weeks (S/Res/020/01/23).

6. Adjournment:

And it being 2:47 p.m. the President of the Senate adjourned the Senate till Thursday, 13th July, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

Senate adjourned accordingly at 2:47 p.m.

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