



**SENATE OF THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
ORDER PAPER**

Wednesday, 3rd July, 2019

1. Prayers
2. Approval of the Votes and Proceedings
3. Oaths
4. Announcements (if any)
5. Petitions

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTIONS

1. Urgent need to review the Import Duty of Soap Noodles.

Sponsor: Sen. Barau I. Jibrin (*Kano North*)

Co-Sponsors: Sen. Yahaya A. Abdullahi (*Kebbi North*) Sen. Gabriel T. Suswam (*Benue North-East*)
Sen. Oloriegbe Yahaya Ibrahim (*Kwara Central*) Sen. Matthew A. Urhoghide (*Edo South*)

Aware that the Federal Government in order to boost local production of Soap Noodles increase its import duty to 35% from 10%;

Aware that the increase in import duty made it unprofitable for the manufacturers of soaps to import Soap Noodles from overseas. This made the manufacturers to resort to making huge investment in setting up manufacturing lines to produce Soap Noodles in Nigeria to the tune of about ₦420 billion while creating 250,000 jobs in the country;

Observes that recently, the Federal Government made a downward review of the import duty from 35% to 10%;

Aware that this downward review will lead to massive importation of Soap Noodles into the country thereby having negative impact on the National Economy as follows:

- reduction in governments revenue drive;
- collapse of the Soap noodles industry and its attendant unemployment;
- serves as impediments of government efforts towards developing local sourcing and self-sufficiency;
- acts as discouraging signals to investors; and
- Putting pressure on the forex reserve and hence the Stability of the Naira.

Observes that the negative impacts of the policy on our economy that has just emerged from recession and the expected huge job losses if this policy is sustained will further destroy, degrade and imperil the chances of our economy for sustainable stability,

Accordingly resolves to:

Appeal to Government to revert to 35% import duty on the importation of soap noodles to save the industry in particular and Nigeria economy in general.

2. Avastin Injection: The case of ten Kaduna patients who went blind after administration of the Injection.

Sponsor: Sen. Dahiru Aishatu Ahmed (*Adamawa Central*)

Co-Sponsor: Sen. Gabriel T. Suswam (*Benue North-East*) Sen. Abdullahi Adamu (*Nasarawa West*)

Sen. Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi (*Niger North*)

Sen. Yaroe Binos Dauda (*Adamawa South*)

Sen. Uba Sani (*Kaduna Central*)

Sen. Oloriegbe Yahaya Ibrahim (*Kwara Central*)

Sen. Ishaku Elisha Cliff (*Adamawa North*)

The Senate:

Alarmed at the use of Avastin injection meant for the treatment of Cancer at the National Eye Centre, Kaduna for eye treatment;

Notes that on 28th May, 2019 ten patients visited the National Eye Centre, Kaduna unaided for poor eye sight due to cataract and other minor ailment. But to the shock of the patients and the general public at large, they went blind after taking an eye injection at the centre. This was reported in The Nation newspaper of 20th and 29th June 2019 and the Daily Trust newspaper of 23rd June 2019;

Notes that the New York Times of 31st August 2011 had earlier reported that the same Avastin Injection, which was originally meant for cancer treatment, had caused blindness when applied for eye treatment;

Aware that investigation confirmed that the ten patients went blind after they were given Russian made Avastin injection resulting to the patients being affected in both eyes, while the remaining six victims lost one eye each;

Also aware that after the unfortunate incident, NAFDAC waded in and took the drug for a test but so far the result is still awaited;

Notes that if this can happen in a government medical facility like the National Eye Centre, Kaduna, then it should be a matter of urgent national interest to look into the supplies of drugs in this country with emphasis on what our hospitals administer, to whom, preservation and expiration;

Worried that the victims were still under the care of the hospital as at 2nd July, 2019 (thirty three days after the incident) with little or no improvement. The harrowing experience of the victims are disheartening and a cause of worry by all and sundry. Therefore, mechanisms must be put in place to checkmate the anomalies in our health sector with the aim of correcting them and avoiding future recurrence,

Accordingly resolves to:

- i. *Set up* an Ad-hoc Committee to carry out a holistic investigation on the use of the Avastin Injection for eye treatment leading to the blindness of the ten Nigerians;
- ii. *Urge* NAFDAC to make public the result of their test on the said injection and suspend the use of Avastin Injection by hospitals in Nigeria for eye treatment; and
- iii. *Mandate* the relevant authorities to compensate the victims and bring to book the practitioners found wanting.

3. Pipeline explosion in Komkom Town of Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Sponsor: Sen. Sekibo George T. (*Rivers East*)

Co-Sponsors: Sen. Mpigi Barinada (*Rivers South-East*) Sen. Apiafi Betty J. Okagua (*Rivers West*)

Sen. James E. Manager (*Delta South*)

The Senate:

Aware that there was an oil pipeline explosion at Komkom Town in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State and over fifteen (15) persons died instantly with over fifty (50) persons receiving different level of injuries while properties worth millions of Naira were consumed by the fire from the explosion;

Aware that the discovery of Oil in the Niger Delta area of the country in 1957 is a huge blessing to the Nigerian nation as it has since become a source of our major national revenue;

Aware further that the distribution of the oil from the point of production to the point of either exportation or national use is done through pipelines;

Knows that majority of the pipelines were laid over fifty years ago and of course with time and usage they may have been weak in some sections;

Understands that this and other factors could be attributed to the incessant pipeline explosions in the Niger Delta Region and other areas which has been a major source of death;

Recalls that such explosions have always brought irreparable devastating consequences on the people and the affected areas, as is often, such explosions usually change the environment and the livelihood of the people in the area;

Recalls the occurrence of similar incidents that took place in the following areas which left scars of the devastation that are still fresh in our minds, including;

- The Soku explosion about eight (8) years ago that took hundreds of life and still kept many people maimed;
- The NNPC Jetty at Okrika explosion about seven years ago claimed the lives of over seventy (70) persons and left many persons maimed;
- The complete devastation of Ogoni Land for which help for remediation is still being sought; and
- On 22nd June, 2019 over fifteen (15) persons were identified dead and over fifty (50) persons with different level of physical injuries. Several of such explosions have taken place in many parts of Rivers State with the usual attendant huge casualties;

Worried that what seems to be a blessing to the entire nation is becoming a major curse in disguise to the host communities where both the production and distribution takes place;

Understands that two of the major causes of pipeline explosion are due to age of the pipes and vandals who try to pilfer crude oil for bunkering;

Understands further that the Federal Government and indeed the NNPC is spending huge sums of money on pipeline security;

Believes that if all the agencies who are saddled with the responsibility of safety and security of the nation's oil pipelines are duly diligent in their responsibilities, pipelines explosion would have been a thing of the past;

Believes also that such incessant explosions are alien to other major oil producing countries because of advanced surveillance technology and equipment they are using;

Regrets that the nation and indeed the Federal Government which is hugely benefitting from the accrument from proceeds of the oil exploration and exploitation are not taking the appropriate actions to reduce or eliminate the occurrence of explosion,

Accordingly resolves to:

- i. *Observe* a minute silence in honour of those who lost their lives at the Komkom explosion and all other explosions that had taken place in the country in the past;
- ii. *Sympathize* with the Government and people of Rivers State and especially the Komkom people in Oyigbo Local Government Area;

- iii. *Urge* the NNPC, PPMC and all other agencies involved in the oil and Gas exploration and exploitation activities especially those involved with the laying of the pipelines to take a holistic survey of their pipelines so that very aged ones should be replaced;
- iv. *Urge* the NNPC, PPMC and other agencies in the oil and gas production sector to improve on the security of the nation's oil pipelines all over the country; and
- v. *Direct* National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to visit the scene and provide succor to those affected.

4. The urgent need to make the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) Work for Nigerians.

Sponsor: Sen. Oloriegbe Yahaya Ibrahim (*Kwara Central*)

Co-Sponsors: Sen. Chimaroke O. Nnamani (*Enugu East*)

Sen. Isah Jibrin (*Kogi East*)

Sen. Ewhrudjakpo Lawrence O. (*Bayelsa West*)

Sen. Oluremi Tinubu (*Lagos Central*)

Sen. Umar Suleiman Sadiq (*Kwara North*)

Sen. Yusuf A. Yusuf (*Taraba Central*)

Sen. Odebiyi T. Akinremi (*Ogun West*)

Sen. Kwari Suleiman Abdu (*Kaduna North*)

The Senate:

Notes that the Health of the nation is the wealth of the nation and human life begins and ends with health. A baby comes to life with the aid of a mid-wife and when a human dies he is certified dead by a health worker. In between these two, we must be healthy to function effectively;

Notes that the NHIS was established by the National Health Insurance Scheme Act No 35 of 1999, Cap N42 LFN 2004, Vol. 11 and is a beneficiary of 50% of Basic Health Care Provision Funds by virtue of Section 11 of the National Health Act 2014. To ensure that every Nigerian has access to quality and affordable health care services through the provision of affordable health insurance;

Aware that the Scheme has a Presidential mandate of achieving Universal Health Coverage by 2015, it has failed in this regard as available information shows that it currently boasts of a little above 6 million enrollees even as at the middle of 2019;

Bothered that in spite of the provision of regular budgetary allocation and release, the availability of 50% of the Basic Health Care Provision Fund, (1% OF Consolidated Revenue Fund of Federal Government) 6.1 Billion naira which was released to the Scheme in May 2019, it has fallen short of the attainment of its objectives;

Worried that despite the importance of the agency to the attainment of Universal Health Coverage for Nigerians, the NHIS has been without a substantive Chief Executive (Executive Secretary) since October 2018. A new Executive Secretary was just appointed on 1st July, 2019;

Concerned that it has been under the management of an 'Overseeing Director' appointed from the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation. This has affected many critical and important operations of the Scheme; including:

- Non-approval of the 2017/2018 Health Maintenance Organization (HMOs) reaccreditation exercise report which has allowed for those HMOs not fit for operation to still continue to provide service despite their deficiencies;
- Non-approval of the 2018 Staff promotion exercise; with the likely consequent delay in the conduct of the 2019 exercise and imperative staff dissatisfaction;
- The approach to dealing with contentious issues with the various stakeholders has been rather not pragmatic. The uncertainties surrounding a lack of substantive CEO has caused a delay in approval and release of revised guidelines, drug and professional service price lists which have been long overdue for review;

- Certain operations of the Scheme such as Quality Assurance and Improvement exercises conducted periodically on Health Care Providers and Health Maintenance Organizations have not been done as expected;

Further worried that the dysfunctionality on the organization has resulted to various complaints of dissatisfaction by the health care providers and beneficiaries of the scheme these include:

- Enrollees complaint of being frequently told to purchase drugs outside of the hospital (under the guise of either the drug being out-of-stock or not covered under the Scheme);
- Prolonged waiting time and discrimination in accessing health services by enrollees and discrimination against NHIS enrollees in the hospitals compared to fee paying patients;
- Failure to convene regular meetings with the various stakeholders (including capacity building workshops and HMO Standing Committee meetings);
- Failure to review Fees and charges paid by the NHIS to meet the current economic realities in the country;
- NHIS accredited HMOs owe debts of several months due to unpaid capitation and fee for service and have resorted to unethical means to avoid payments. The National Hospital Abuja is owned more than 500 million naira while other Teaching Hospital and federal medical centre are owned huge sum of money;
- Poor regulation and supervision of State Social Health Insurance Agencies. Several of the States that have established their own Agencies introduced Benefit Packages, capitation fees and fee for service tariffs that are not viable;

Demands that the senate should rise up and join hands to ensure proper action is taken for effective working of the scheme to attain universal health care for Nigeria,

Accordingly Resolves to:

- Urge* the NHIS to direct all Health Maintenance Organization (HMOs) to within two weeks settle all outstanding debt owned all health care providers in Nigeria; and
- Order* for an investigation into the activities of the NHIS to enable necessary actions are taken to improve the services of the scheme for the attainment of Universal Health Coverage for Nigerians.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

No.	Committee	Date	Time	Venue
1.	Ad-hoc Committee on Legislative Agenda	Wednesday, 3 rd July, 2019 (Inauguration/Maiden meeting)	2.00pm	Committee Room 224 Senate New Building