



SENATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 4th July, 2019

1. The Senate met at 10:22 a.m. The President of the Senate read prayers.

2. **Closed Session:**

Closed Session — 10:24 a.m.

Open Session — 11:07 a.m.

The President of the Senate reported that the Senate in a Closed Session deliberated on issues bordering on the workings of the Senate in particular and the National Assembly in general.

3. **Votes and Proceedings:**

The Senate examined the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 3rd July, 2019.

Question was put and the Votes and Proceedings were approved.

4. **Announcement:**

Acknowledgment:

The President of the Senate acknowledged the presence of the following who were at the gallery to observe Senate Proceedings:

(i) Staff and Students of Solid Fundamentals Montessori Academy, New Karu, Nasarawa State;

(ii) Staff and Students of Polymath International Academy, Bwari, Abuja; and

(iii) Staff and Students of Rahinna Model Schools, Jikwoyi, Abuja.

5. **Personal Explanation:**

Rising on Rule 43, Senator Adamu M. Bulkachuwa (*Bauchi North*) drew the attention of the Senate to demise of two (2) Distinguished Senators from Bauchi State:

(i) Senator Dr. Ibrahim Yakubu Lame, and

(ii) Senator Babayo Garba Gamawa

Senator Ibrahim Yakubu Lame who was born on the 10th February, 1953 in Bauchi, and elected to this hallowed chamber in 1992 during the Third Republic where he served in various Committees which includes, Chairman, Committee on Communications as well as Vice Chairman, Committee on Internal Affairs.

He stated that Late Senator Lame was appointed as Senior Special Assistant to former President Olusegun Obasanjo in August, 1999 and was again reappointed Hon. Minister of Police Affairs by Late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua in 2007.

Late Senator Babayo Garba Gamawa was born in Gamawa town on 2nd February, 1966, who served in the 7th Senate between 2011-2015, representing Bauchi North Senatorial District. He observed that Late Gamawa was the Speaker of Bauchi State House of Assembly and one time Deputy Governor, who died on 14th June, 2019.

Both men served honourably and will be remembered for their good deeds, exemplary leadership and their desire for good governance. They were all since buried in accordance with Islamic rites. He urged the Senate to observe a minute silence in honour of the two (2) Distinguished Senators; send delegations to condole their families, the Government and the people of Bauchi State; and urge the Federal and State Governments to immortalise the late Senators by naming monuments after them.

By the Leave of the Senate, one minute silence accordingly observed in honour of the deceased.

Senate Delegation to Bauchi State:

The President of the Senate named the following Senators to condole the families, people and Government of Bauchi State over the death of Senators Ibrahim Yakubu Lame and Babayo Garba Gamawa:

(i)	Senator Abubakar S. Kyari	—	Leader
(ii)	Senator Lawrence O. Ewruhjakpo	—	Member
(iii)	Senator Abba P. Moro	—	Member
(iv)	Senator Theodore A. Orji	—	Member
(v)	Senator Kabir A. Barkiya	—	Member
(vi)	Senator Tolulope A. Odebiyi	—	Member
(vii)	Senator Adamu M. Bulkachuwa	—	Member
(viii)	Senator Lawal Y. Gumau	—	Member
(ix)	Senator Dauda H. Jika	—	Member

6. Motions:

(a) *The Need for Increased Funding to Primary Health Care Centres:*

Motion made: That the Senate notes the Primary Health Care is a grassroots, community based initiative that provides Health Care services to Communities;

also aware that it is universally accepted that access to health care for all is only possible through prevalence and accessibility of Primary Health Care;

reminded that Primary Health Care in Nigeria was adopted in 1988 by the National Health Policy to provide promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative services;

concerned that a lot of the problems in Nigeria's Health Sector can be traced to low performance of our Primary Health Care facilities. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), Primary Health Care will meet 80-90% of a person's health needs over the course of their life;

further concerned as World Bank Service Delivery Indicators Survey shows that though available, performance of the Primary Health Care is hampered by lack of financial resources, infrastructure deficit, lack of drugs, equipment and vaccines etc;

notes that Primary Health Care has improved population health in low and middle income Countries;

saddened that According to a journal published by Frontiers in Public Health, only about 20% of the thirty thousand (30,000) Primary Health Care Centres in Nigeria are working, with most of them lacking capacity to provide essential health services;

worried that Failure of Primary Health Care and the belief that it is for lower-income earners has led to an influx of patients to Secondary and Tertiary Health Care Facilities;

further worried that our Secondary and Tertiary Health Care Facilities are burdened with treating common ailments that could have been handled at a Primary Health Care Center;

concerned that the average Nigerian is one illness/tragedy away from poverty;

distressed to see an upsurge in pleas for crowd funding via social media, to enable access to healthcare facilities;

further distressed that Nigeria was only recently, rated as one of the poorest in the world;

notes accordingly, the need for comprehensive government backed Health Insurance;

also notes that until accessible and affordable health cover is provided, emergency and non-emergency situations will remain a burden; and

reminded that Health care accessibility is a fundamental right and must be treated as such.

Accordingly Resolves to:

- (i) increase budgetary allocation for management of Primary Healthcare;
- (ii) urge the Federal Ministry of Health to create awareness on the benefits of Health and Life insurance;
- (iii) urge the Federal Ministry of Employment to put in place policies to ensure that every employer of labour has Health Insurance package for employees;
- (iv) urge the Federal Ministry of Health to ensure that government backed Health Insurance Scheme is accessible; and
- (v) urge the Ministry of Health at Federal and State levels to encourage medical technological innovation in Primary Health Facilities (*Senator Oluremi Tinubu — Lagos Central*).

Debate

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do increase budgetary allocation for management of Primary Health Care — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Federal Ministry of Health to create awareness on the benefits of Health and Life insurance — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (iii):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Federal Ministry of Employment to put in place policies to ensure that every employer of labour has Health Insurance package for employees — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (iv):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Federal Ministry of Health to ensure that government backed Health Insurance Scheme is accessible — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (v):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Ministry of Health at Federal and State levels to encourage medical technological innovation in Primary Health Facilities — *Agreed to.*

Additional Proposed Resolutions:

Insert Additional Proposed Resolutions as follows:

- (i) “That the Senate do urge the Ministry of Health at Federal and State levels to introduce the use of sanitary inspectors” (*Senator Francis A. Alimikhena — Edo North*).

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

- (ii) “That the Senate do urge the State Government to bring primary healthcare under one roof for synergy ” (*Senator Suleiman A. Kwari — Kaduna North*).

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

Resolved:

That the Senate do:

- (i) increase budgetary allocation for management of Primary Healthcare;
- (ii) urge the Federal Ministry of Health to create awareness on the benefits of Health and Life insurance;
- (iii) urge the Federal Ministry of Employment to put in place policies to ensure that every employer of labour has Health Insurance package for employees;
- (iv) urge the Federal Ministry of Health to ensure that government backed Health Insurance Scheme is accessible;
- (v) urge the Ministry of Health at Federal and State levels to encourage medical technological innovation in Primary Health Facilities;
- (vi) urge the Ministry of Health at Federal and State levels to introduce the use of sanitary inspectors; and
- (vii) urge the State Government to bring primary healthcare under one roof (*S/Res/005/01/19*).

(b) ***The Urgent Need to Make the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) Work for Nigerians:***

Motion made: That 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) re-accreditation 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 owed 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 owed more than 500 million naira while other Teaching Hospitals and Federal Medical Centres are owed 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; and

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:

- (i) urge the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to direct all Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) to within two weeks settle all outstanding debt owed all health care providers in Nigeria; and
- (ii) order for an investigation into the activities of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to enable necessary actions are taken to improve the services of the scheme for the attainment of Universal Health Coverage for Nigerians (*Senator Yahaya I. Oloriegbe — Kwara Central*).

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do urge the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to direct all Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) to within two weeks settle all outstanding debt owed all health care providers in Nigeria.

Amendment Proposed

Leave out the Proposed Resolution (i) and *insert* the following instead thereof:

“That the Senate do urge the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to direct all Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) to pay within three (3) months all outstanding debt owed all healthcare providers in Nigeria” (*Senator Lawrence O. Ewruhjudjakpo — Bayelsa West*).

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

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do order for an investigation into the activities of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to enable necessary actions are taken to improve the services of the scheme for the attainment of Universal Health Coverage for Nigerians.

Amendment Proposed

Leave out Proposed Resolution (ii) and *insert* the following instead thereof:

- (i) “That the Senate do mandate the Committee on Health when constituted to carry out investigation into the activities of Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) as ways to improve the services of the scheme for the attainment of Universal Health coverage for Nigerians and report to the Senate” (*Senator Rose O. Oko — Cross River North*).

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

Additional Proposed Resolutions:

Insert Additional Proposed Resolutions as follows:

- (i) "That the Senate do mandate the Committee on Health when constituted to carry out holistic review of Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to encourage more participation by Nigerians" (*Senator Adedayo Adeyeye — Ekiti South*).

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

- (ii) "That the Senate do urge the Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) to ensure that all private Medical Practitioners in Nigeria should as a matter of urgency register their clinics under Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) as accredited health providers of medical services." (*Senator Patrick A. Akinyelure — Ondo Central*).

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

Resolved:

That Senate do:

- (i) urge the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to direct all Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) to pay within three (3) months all outstanding debt owed all healthcare providers in Nigeria;
- (ii) mandate the Committee on Health to when constituted carry out investigation into the activities of Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) as ways to improve the services of the scheme for the attainment of Universal Health coverage for Nigerians and report to the Senate;
- (iii) mandate to Committee on Health when constituted to carry out holistic review of Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to encourage more participation by Nigerians; and
- (iv) urge the Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) to ensure that all Private Medical Practitioners in Nigeria should as a matter of urgency register their clinics under Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) as accredited health providers of medical services (*S/Res/006/01/19*).
- (c) ***Benue Tanker Explosion: Urgent Need to Curb Incessant Explosions of Petroleum Tankers in Nigeria:***

Motion made: That the Senate notes the unfortunate explosion of a petroleum tanker in Ahumbe village, along Makurdi-Aliade-Otukpo Federal Highway in Gwer East Local Government Area of Benue State on Monday, 1st July, 2019;

further notes that the driver of the tanker had lost control of the vehicle after trying to dodge a pothole at a very dilapidated portion of the Federal Highway around Ahumbe village and crashed by the roadside;

regrets that people from the nearby villages defied warning from security personnel and were scooping fuel from the fallen tanker, then a passenger bus maneuvering its way suddenly scratched its exhaust on the road which sparked the fire killing over 50 people and over 100 others secured various degrees of burns and injuries;

worried that several cases of similar incidents are relatively common in Nigeria as fire and explosions often occur due to badly maintained roads or because people attempt to siphon off fuel from tankers and pipelines;

disturbed that the death toll could rise as many of the injured were in a critical state at the Benue State University Teaching Hospital (BSUTH) as most victims were severely burnt, while the least of them secured 75 percent lower degree burns and that more critical cases were being referred to other hospitals;

concerned that nearby houses, shops, cars and other valuable properties were also burnt down in the explosion worth millions of naira;

aware that the Federal Government has awarded contracts for the dualization of the Keffi-Lafia-Makurdi-Enugu Road covering the Makurdi-Aliade-Otukpo Federal Highway where the incident occurred; and

cognizance of the urgent need to end the unfortunate incessant incidents of petroleum tanker explosions in Nigeria by proffering sustainable solutions;

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) commiserate with the people and Government of Benue State for the ugly incident and the painful death of over 50 people in the inferno;
- (ii) urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the Federal Ministry of Health to quickly intervene and assist the families affected and victims undergoing medical attention in different hospitals; and
- (iii) constitute an *Ad hoc* Committee to liaise with relevant agencies, organizations and stakeholders to identify the remote and immediate cause of incessant petroleum tanker explosions in Nigeria and recommend appropriate and sustainable solutions to the Senate within eight (8) weeks (*Senator Emmanuel Y. Orker-Jev — Benue North West*).

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 (Rule 13) (*Senate Leader*).

Question put and agreed to.

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do commiserate with the people and Government of Benue State for the ugly incident and the painful death of over 50 people in the inferno — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the Federal Ministry of Health to quickly intervene and assist the families affected and victims undergoing medical attention in different hospitals — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (iii):

Question: That the Senate do constitute an *Ad hoc* Committee to liaise with relevant agencies, organizations and stakeholders to identify the remote and immediate cause of incessant petroleum tanker explosions in Nigeria and recommend appropriate and sustainable solutions to the Senate within eight (8) weeks.

Amendment Proposed

Leave out Proposed Resolution (iii) and *insert* the following instead thereof:

"That the Senate do mandate the appropriate Committee or Committees when constituted to liaise with relevant agencies, organisations and stakeholders to identify the remote and immediate causes of the incessant petroleum tanker explosions in Nigeria and recommend appropriate and sustainable solutions to the Senate within eight (8) weeks" (*Senator Ovie A. Omo-Agege — Delta Central*).

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

Additional Proposed Resolutions:

Insert Additional Proposed Resolutions as follows:

- (i) "That the Senate do observe a minute silence in honour of the victims and forward a condolence letter to the people and Government of Benue State" (*Senator Gabriel T. Suswam — Benue North East*).

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

- (ii) "That the Senate do urge the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), the Vehicle Inspection Officers (VIOs) and other relevant government agencies to intensify vehicle inspection and road worthiness certification as most tankers hardly pass road worthiness test" (*Senator Abba P. Moro — Benue South*).

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

Resolved:

That the Senate do:

- (i) commiserate with the people and Government of Benue State for the ugly incident and the painful death of over 50 people in the inferno;
- (ii) urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the Federal Ministry of Health to quickly intervene and assist the families affected and victims undergoing medical attention in different hospitals;
- (iii) mandate the appropriate Committee or Committees when constituted to liaise with relevant agencies, organisations and stakeholders to identify the remote and immediate causes of the incessant petroleum tanker explosions in Nigeria and recommend appropriate and sustainable solutions to the Senate within eight (8) weeks;
- (iv) observe a minute silence in honour of the victims and forward a condolence letter to the people and Government of Benue State; and
- (v) urge the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), the Vehicle Inspection Officers (VIOs) and other relevant government agencies to intensify vehicle inspection and road worthiness certification as most tankers hardly pass road worthiness test (*S/Res/007/01/19*).

One minute silence accordingly observed in honour of the deceased.

7. **Adjournment:**

And it being 2.30 p.m. the President of the Senate adjourned the Senate till Tuesday, 9th July, 2019 at 10.00 a.m.

Adjourned accordingly at 2:30 p.m.

Ahmad Ibrahim Lawan, CON

President,

Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.