



SENATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 8th October, 2009

1. The Senate met at 10.25 a.m. The Deputy Senate President read prayers.
2. **Votes and Proceedings:**
The Deputy Senate President announced that he had examined the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 7th October, 2009 and approved same.

By unanimous consent, the Votes and Proceedings were approved.

3. **Announcements:**

(A) ***Demise of Mama Igimi Omagu-Ngaji:***

The Deputy Senate President read a letter from Senator Greg J. Ngaji as follows:



Senator (Dr) Greg I. Ngaji
(Cross River North)
Chairman, Science and Technology
THE SENATE
National Assembly Complex,
Three Arms Zone, P.M.B. 141, Abuja

7th October, 2009

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

Your Excellency,

RE: DEATH OF MY MOTHER: MAMA IGIMI OMAGU-NGAJI

I write to inform you of the death of my beloved mother, MAMA IGIMI OMAGU-NGAJI who departed this world on the 28th of September, 2009.

The burial is scheduled to take place on Thursday, the 15th of October, 2009 according to Catholic rites in Oba, Okpoma, Yala Local Government Area, of Cross River State.

As usual, accept the assurances of my highest regards.

Signed:

Senator (Dr) Greg I. Ngaji

(B) Invitation letter:

The Deputy Senate President read a letter from Senator Osita B. Izunaso (*Imo West*) as follows:



Senator Osita B. Izunaso
(Imo West)
Chairman, Senate Committee on Gas

7th October, 2009

The Senate President,

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Distinguished Senators are kindly invited to attend the Nigerian Summit on Liquefied Petroleum Gas, LPG (Cooking Gas) being organised by the Senate Committee on Gas on Monday, 12th and Tuesday, 13th October, 2009 at 9.00 a.m. daily at the International Conference Centre, Abuja.

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, GCFR is the Special Guest of Honour, while the President of the Senate, Senator David B. Mark GCON is the Chief Host.

You are kindly requested to attend as your esteemed presence will be highly appreciated.

Signed:

Senator Osita Izunaso

Chairman, Senate Committee on Gas

4. Matter of Urgent Public Importance:

Rising on Rule 42, Senator Bala A. Mohammed (*Bauchi South*) drew the attention of the Senate to the demise of the Emir of Dass in Bauchi State. He sought the leave of the Senate to present a Motion on the issue.

Question that the matter be debated, put and agreed to.

Matter to stand over to the next Legislative Day [Rule 42(2)].

5. Privileges:

Rising on Rules 14 and 15, Senator Nimi Barigha-Amange (*Bayelsa East*) invited the attention of the Senate to a publication in the Vanguard newspapers of Wednesday, 7th October, 2009 in which it was reported that the Senate had indicted the chieftains of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of mismanagement of the sum of Three Hundred Billion Naira (₦300b). He further acknowledged that to the best of his knowledge, the Senate has neither received nor discussed let alone, indict the PDP chieftains.

He noted that the publication had impugned his privilege as a Senator and that of the Senate. He requested that the matter be referred to the Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions for further investigation.

Matter accordingly referred to the Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions for further investigations to report within two weeks.

6. Report of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Investigation of the Transportation Sector:

Motion made: That the Senate do receive the Report of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Investigation of the Transportation Sector (*Senator Heineken Lokpobiri — Bayelsa West*).

Question put and agreed to.

Report Laid.

7. Motion:

The Impending Disaster Posed by the Lake Nyos located in the Cameroun:

Motion made: That the Senate recalls that in 2005 the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned against the imminent collapse of the Lake Nyos natural dam with devastating consequences to Nigeria and Cameroon within 5 - 10 years;

Aware that the lake is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) on a higher gradient from the Nigerian North East border and is drained by streams running into River Katsina-Ala which in turn drains into River Benue poses grave health and ecological dangers;

Further recalls that scientific warnings of the imminent collapse of Lake Nyos dates back to 1988 when Scientists disclosed that the Northern Section of the dam is fast eroding and there is a successive build-up of carbon dioxide being emitted from the magma chamber beneath the lake water thereby converting the water into carbonic acid without any attention;

Aware that on 21st August, 1986, the lake experienced a volcanic eruption resulting in over 1,700 deaths and several injuries from asphyxiation consequent upon the massive release of carbon dioxide. About 3,500 livestock equally suffered the same fate;

Notes also that the lake's natural dam's crater, filling a roughly circular mar, dates back to about 400 years when the lava flow interacted violently with ground water consists of poorly consolidated pyroclastic deposits and measures 2.0kilometers in length, width of 1.2 kilometers, surface area of 1.58 square kilometers, a depth of 208m (680ft) and an elevation of 1,091 meters and contain 55 million cubic meters of water, the surface water acting as a lid preventing the carbon dioxide from coming to the surface;

Further notes that Lake Nyos is one of the only three known lakes to be saturated with carbon dioxide, the others being Lake Mounon (Cameroon) and Kivu (Rwanda);

Aware that in the event, the dam fails or collapses or is ignited by any minor earthquake in the Oku volcanic field or erosion from another source, it will result in the release of over 5 million cubic litres of water leading to flooding which will affect millions of Nigerians and animals, submerging some areas in States such as Taraba, Benue, Cross River, Kogi and Enugu States etc. In effect some parts of Makurdi town will submerge forever, with the injurious gas covering the entire area up to Adamawa State;

Acknowledges that President Obasanjo in 2006, hosted a meeting with the host Governors/States in the risk zone and in 2007 tasked a technical committee to evaluate the flood disaster risk and make a vulnerability assessment in Katsina - Ala River Basin in the event of the collapse of Nyos Dam but the government failed to implement the committee's recommendations;

Further aware that the Federal Government later announced the sum of ₦26 billion which was budgeted to construct a buffer dam at the side of the lake to cushion the effect of a possible disaster and the need to install early warning devices, work is yet to start on the project;

Worried that:

- (a) The Federal Government's technical committee named the following states of Taraba, Adamawa, Kogi, Benue, Cross River and such other states as Nasarawa, Plateau, Enugu, etc as equally vulnerable;
- (b) Although, Benue State government in 2006 further reinforced the alarm disclosing that at least 12 out of its 23 Local Government Areas will be affected and recommended to the Federal Government the construction of some buffer dams at the foot of the hills on the Nigerian side to reduce the impact of any eruption, but nothing tangible is yet to be done;
- (c) Despite the consistent casualty reports by Federal/Benue State Governments, NEMA and United Nations Agencies that millions of people will die and over a period of six months, millions of human lives will be lost;
- (d) The vulnerable states are sitting on "gun powder" of an impending disaster; and
- (e) NEMA claims of sensitization exercises are yet to reach Benue North - East Senatorial District in the face of imminent danger.

Accordingly Resolves to:

- (i) Urge the Federal Government to hasten the timely release of the ₦26 billion meant for the Kashimbilla buffer dam project which will contain the flood waters from Lake Nyos;
- (ii) Urge the Federal Government to initiate other immediate steps such as installation of early warning devices, commencement of drills and sensitization exercises to respond to the impending natural disaster, since "a stitch in time saves nine; and
- (iii) Invite the leadership of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to brief the Senate on this impending natural calamity including the sensitization exercises (*Senator Joseph Akaagerger — Benue North-East*).

Debate:**Prayer (i):**

Question: That the Senate do urge the Federal Government to hasten the timely release of the ₦26 billion meant for the Kashimbilla buffer dam project which will contain the flood waters from Lake Nyos;

Amendment Proposed:

Leave out the provision in prayer (i) and *insert* the following instead thereof:

"That the Senate do urge Federal Government to ensure that funds are made available in 2010 budget for the completion of Kashimbilla buffer dam project" (*Senator Andrew A. Babalola — Oyo North*).

Question that amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Prayer (ii):

Question: That the Senate do urge the Federal Government to initiate other immediate steps such as installation of early warning devices, commencement of drills and sensitization exercises to respond to the impending natural disaster, since "a stitch in time saves nine";

Amendment Proposed:

Immediately after the word "disaster" in line 3, *leave out* the words "since a stitch in time saves nine" (*Senator Suleiman A. Adokwe — Nasarawa South*).

Question that amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Prayer (iii):

Question: That the Senate do invite the leadership of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to brief the Senate on this impending natural calamity including the sensitization exercises — (*Senator Joseph Akaagerger*).

Question put and negatived.

Amendment Proposed:

Insert a new prayer as follows:

“That the Senate do urge the Federal Government to urgently and at a level not below Ministerial, to approach the Government of the Federal Republic of Cameroun, and in the context of good neighbourliness, the Green Tree Agreement and Other Protocols, to discuss grave danger they face from Lake Nyos, and propose and implement with due dispatch any and all necessary action” (*Senator Jibril M. Aminu — Adamawa Central*).

Question that amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Senate do urge Federal Government to ensure that funds are made available in 2010 budget for the completion of Kashimbilla buffer dam project;
- (ii) That the Senate do urge the Federal Government to initiate other immediate steps such as installation of early warning devices, commencement of drills and sensitization exercises to respond to the impending natural disaster; and
- (iii) That the Senate do urge the Federal Government to urgently and at a level not below Ministerial to approach the Government of the Federal Republic of Cameroun and in the context of good neighbourliness, the Green Tree Agreement and Other Protocols to discuss grave danger they face from Lake Nyos, and propose and implement with due dispatch any and all necessary action (*S. Res/052/03/09*).

8. National Food Reserve Agency Bill 2008 (SB.179):

Consideration of the Bill deferred to another Legislative Day.

9. Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Tests (Establishment, etc) Bill 2009 (SB. 269) :

Consideration of the Bill deferred to another Legislative Day.

10. Adjournment:

Motion made: That the Senate do now adjourn till Tuesday, 13th October, 2009 at 10.00 a.m. (*Senate Leader*).

Adjourned accordingly at 1.25 p.m.

Ike Ekweremadu, CFR
Deputy President,
Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.