



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Tuesday, 3 February, 2009

1. The House met at 10.58 a.m. Mr Deputy Speaker read Prayers.
2. **Votes and Proceedings:**
Mr Deputy Speaker announced that he had examined and approved the Second Votes and Proceedings of Thursday, 29 January, 2009.

By unanimous consent, the Votes and Proceedings was adopted.
3. **Visitors:**
Mr Deputy Speaker recognized the presence in the Gallery, of the Federation of Law Students of the Law Schill from Ogun State.
4. **Petition:**
The following petition was received and referred to the Committee on Public Petitions:

Hon. Leo Ogor (*Isoko Federal Constituency*), from Mr Frank O. Akwirofie, praying the House to intervene in the alleged wrongful termination of his appointment by the Power Holding Company of Nigeria with a view to ensuring that justice prevailed.
5. **Privileges:**
 - (i) Relying on Order 5, Rule 1, Hon. Henry S. Dickson drew the attention of the House to the reports in some national dailies in which some Members of the House were reported to have taken the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to Court over the Joint Constitution Review exercise without the resolution of the House. He viewed the development as a breach of privilege of the House and sought for briefing on the matter from the Leadership of the House.

Mr Deputy Speaker stated that the House had not mandated any person to institute legal action regarding the controversy between the Senate and the House over the Joint Constitution Review Committee. He however, stated that any Member who felt aggrieved on any issue had die Constitutional right to go to Court in his persona] capacity, but not on behalf of die House.
 - (ii) Also Relying on Order V, Rule I, Hon. Mohammed Ali Ndume drew the attention of the House to the Report on Power Probe which was laid before the House but yet to be circulated to Members.

The Chairman Committee on Rules and Business was ordered to produce and circulate copies of the Power Probe Report to Honourable Members.
6. **Personal Explanation:**
Pursuant to Order VIII, Rule V, Hon. Austin Nwachukwu drew the attention of the House to the fact that it was still operating under obsolete Standing Orders of the House of Representatives. He therefore advised that copies of the approved Standing Orders should be produced and made available to Honourable Members. He stated that this was a breach of his privilege and of other Members.

The Deputy Speaker ordered that copies of the new Standing Orders of the House should be made available to Members by next Legislative Week.

7. Need for the Restoration of Ferry Services between Idah in Kogi State and Agenebode in Edo State:
Motion made and Question proposed,

The House:

Notes that the operation of Ferry services by the National Inland Waterways Authorities between Idah town in Kogi State and Agenebode town in Etsako of Edo State was of great economic importance to the people of the areas and other adjoining States like Delta, Anambra, Enugu, Ondo and Lagos States;

Further notes that the ferry service then facilitated the movement of goods and services between the towns of Benue and the eastern States;

Disturbed' that the sudden withdrawal of the Ferry services from Idah since the 1980's had made the residents of the affected areas to suffer untold economic hardship as they have to resort to road transportation through the tortuous and deplorable roads;

Worried' that the youths and women who are the main beneficiaries of the economic activities across the River Niger have become mostly unemployed thereby leading to increase rate of crimes, and other social vices;

Concerned' that the National Inland Waterways Authority had not lived up to their responsibilities of providing efficient Ferry services for the residents of Idah Local Government Area (LGA) of Kogi State and Agenebode in Etsako East Local Government Area (LGA) of Edo State;

Resolves to:

- (j) Mandate the House Committee on Marine Transport to investigate the circumstance(s) surrounding the abrupt withdrawal of Ferry services between Idah and Agenebode since the 1980's and report their findings to the House within two weeks;
- (ii) Urge the Minister of Transportation to direct the National Inland Waterways Authority to resume the operation of the ferry services between Idah and Agenebode;
- (iii) Further urge the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to consider the construction of a bridge across the River Niger between Idah in Idah Local Government Area (LGA) of Kogi State and Agenebode in Etsako East Local Government Area (LGA) of Edo State as a permanent solution to this lingering problem (*Hon. J. J. Idachaba and 69 others*).

Debate:

Amendments Proposed:

- (i) Leave out all the words in Prayers (i) and (ii) and insert a new prayer as follows:
"Urge the Government to provide landing jetties at Idah town in Kogi State and Agenebode town in Edo State" (*Hon. Emmanuel Deeyah*).

Question put and negatived.

- (ii) In Prayer (ii), line 2, after the word "Services", leave out the words "between Idah and Agenebode" and insert the words "in all Inter State Water Channels", instead thereof (*Hon. Peter L. Umoh*).

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

- (iii) In Prayer (Hi), line 1, leave out the word "President" and insert the word "Government", instead thereof (*Hon. Austin Nwachukwu*).

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

Main Question as amended, put and agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the operation of Ferry services by the National Inland Waterways Authorities between Idah town in Kogi State and Agenebode town in Etsako of Edo State was of great economic importance to the people of the areas and other adjoining States like Delta, Anambra, Enugu, Ondo and Lagos States;

Further noted that the ferry service then facilitated the movement of goods and services between the towns of Benue and the eastern States;

Disturbed that the sudden withdrawal of the ferry services from Idah since the 1980's had made the residents of the affected areas to suffer untold economic hardship as they have to resort to road transportation through the tortuous and deplorable roads;

Worried that the youths and women who were the main beneficiaries of the economic activities across the River Niger have become mostly unemployed thereby leading to increase rate of crimes, and other social vices;

Concerned' that the National Inland Waterways Authority had not lived up to their responsibilities of providing efficient ferry services for the residents of Idah Local Government Area (LGA) of Kogi State and Agenebode in Etsako East Local Government Area (LGA) of Edo State;

Resolved to:

- (J) Mandate the House Committee on Marine Transport to investigate the circumstance(s) surrounding the abrupt withdrawal of ferry services between Idah and Agenebode since the 1980's and report their findings to the House within two weeks;
- (ii) Urge the Minister of Transportation to direct the National Inland Waterways Authority to resume the operation of the ferry services in all Inter State Water Channels;
- (iii) Further urge the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to consider the construction of a bridge across the River Niger between Idah in Idah Local Government Area (LGA) of Kogi State and Agenebode in Etsako East Local Government Area (LGA) of Edo State as a permanent solution to this lingering problem (HR.04/2009).

8. A Bill for an Act to Establish Senior Citizen Centres in the Country to cater for the needs of the Senior Citizens, and for Other Matters Connected Therewith, 2008 —SecondHeading:

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Bill for an Act to Establish Senior Citizen Centres in the Country to cater for the needs of the Senior Citizens, and for Other Matters Connected Therewith, 2008 be now read a Second Time" (Hon. Nkeiruka Onyejeocha).

Debate:

Question that the Bill be now read a Second Time, put and agreed to.

Bill read a Second Time and referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs and Justice.

9. A Bill for an Act to Establish the Ecological Disasters (Control) Commission and to Vest it with the Responsibility for the Control and Management of Ecological and Health Disasters; and for Related Matters, 2008 — Second Reading:

Order read, deferred.

10. Consideration of Report:

Committee on Petroleum Resources (Downstream):

"That this House do consider the Report of the House Committee on Petroleum Resources (Downstream) on a Bill for an Act to Provide for the Licensing, Regulation and Incentives for Petroleum Refineries in Nigeria and for Other Matters Connected Therewith, 2008 and approve the Recommendations therein.

Order read, deferred.

11. Adjournment:

That this House do now adjourn till Wednesday, 4 February, 2009 at 2.00 p.m. (*Hon. Baba Shehu Agaie*).

Adjourned accordingly at 1.00 p.m.

Usman Bayero Nafada
Deputy Speaker