

Reps fume as Minister, NNPC shun hearing on alleged \$75m contract scam

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By Luka Binniyat

The House of Representatives Committee on Petroleum (downstream) was livid as Dr. Rilwan Lukman, Minister of Petroleum; Odein Ajumogobia, Minister of State for Petroleum and Mohammed Barkindo, Group Managing Director (GMD) of Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Tuesday shunned its invitation to an investigative hearing over alleged contract scam worth \$75 million at the Kaduna Refinery.

Clever Ikisikpo (PDP Delta) chairman of the committee at the Hearing attended by other subordinates of the principal officers vowed to raise a motion in plenary compelling the ministers and the GMD to appear before the House on the matter, or face the necessary sanctions.

He said that the Ministers and the GMD of the NNPC had snubbed the invitation of the committee over the issue not less than four times.

Nigeria is too big for a group or persons to be deceived, he said,

The contract agreement signed for the Kaduna Refinery on its Turn Around Maintenance (TAM) was \$23 million , he observed. But now that same TAM has taken about \$75 million, and without appropriation and due process.

This shows that there is cabal in the NNPC that does what it likes, he said.

The NNPC, according to our findings unilaterally awarded the contract to itself, against all financial regulations , he alleged.

How can NNPC award the contract for procurement for itself. We can now see how you people are scuttling the efforts of Nigerians at sustainable energy needâ€• , he told the hall.

The Committee will be compelled to raise a motion before the House tomorrow.â€• , he warned.

Ikisikpo also expressed displeasure over the state of the four refineries despite, what he said, was the colossal release of millions of dollars their TAMs

In her response, Elizabeth Emurem, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Petroleum explained that the ministers were in an urgent meeting and could not come.

She however asked the representative of the NNPC to respond to the inquiry on the state of the refineries.

On his on part, Austin Oniwon, Group Executive Director Refining and Petrochemicals in NNPC said his GMDÂ was in Britain to attend a security meeting that had something to do with oil pipelines.

[ICPC grills eight over Oyo N8.5b contract scam](#)

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The Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) has interrogated another set of aides of the immediate past governor of Oyo State, Adebayo Alao-Akala, over their alleged involvement in a N8.5 billion contract scam.

Their questioning, according to sources within the commission, was sequel to contents of the written statements made by some six commissioners earlier grilled a fortnight ago.

The new set, questioned at the commission's Abuja head office on Monday, were eight top civil servants in the state Ministries of Agriculture and Natural Resources and that of Commerce.

Six commissioners in the Alao-Akala administration - Bayo Bankole (Finance), Mukaila Aborode (Environment and Water Resources), Muslim Oyedemi (Works and Transport), Kunle Ishola (Agriculture), Nureni Adeniran (Education) and Kola Balogun (Commerce and Industry) - were guests at the anti-graft agency's head office, Abuja, a fortnight ago where they were invited to untie some riddles concerning the contract.

They reportedly made statements that implicated the new set of suspects who were questioned on Monday.

As part of their bail conditions, the former commissioners were at the Ibadan office of the ICPC, where they were mandated to report every Monday till investigations were concluded on the matter.

It was also learnt that their international passports have been seized to prevent them from travelling outside the country while the commission concludes its findings on the matter.

Armed with files and other documents as required of them, the eight former functionaries were said to have arrived the ICPC headquarters on Monday morning to relate their side of stories in the alleged scam.

Up until late evening yesterday, there were no indications that the government employees were released by the commission.

Monday's questioning was another in the series conducted by the ICPC following the petitions filed by some individuals under the name Concerned Citizens of Oyo State to raise questions on the manner of awarding the contract and its execution.

The said group reportedly forwarded five different petitions to the commission over the same issues, accusing the affected former public servants of abuse of office.

2011 General Elections: Jega in ballot box scandal

By [Ali Adoyi](#) on August 14, 2012

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Prof. Attahiru Jega

The Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, and its Chairman, Prof. Attahiru Jega are being accused of some deals during the procurement process of the ballot boxes used for the 2011 general elections which was considered free and fair.

The allegation leveled against Jega and Maurice Iwu was contained in a counter-affidavit that was presented before a Federal High Court sitting in Abuja by an indigenous company, Bedding Holdings Ltd.

In an affidavit that was presented on behalf of the company by its chairman, Chief Sylvester Odigie, explained to the court that sufficient evidence is on ground to prove that Jega is not different from Professor Iwu who was also accused of almost the same practices. The company's case was on the 150,000 transparent ballot boxes purchased for the 2011 general elections

The case file revealed that companies with little share capital were used for selective tender and bidding to obtain the transparent boxes.

The INEC boss was also accused of turning things around before the Federal Executive Council, FEC in order to convince them so as to have EMCHAI Limited handle the contract.

It was alleged that EMCHAI, which won the contract for the procurement of the ballot boxes was not qualified because it had had insufficient share capital of 10,000 even though fake documents were used for bidding.

According to the company, "INEC under the new administration of the 7th Defendant (Jega) sustained the fraudulent and criminal activities of the 1st, 2nd and 6th Defendants under the leadership of Prof. Maurice Iwu.

"Jega, on behalf and in favour of the EMCHAI applied and caused a memo – EC (2010) 219 COPY NO. 8 dated 15th November, 2010 and titled: Federal Executive Council – Contract For The Supply Of Collapsible Transparent Ballot Boxes For The Conduct Of The 2011 General Elections –Memorandum by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which inter alia stated at paragraph 5 of the said memo that:

"While noting that the company that supplied the boxes in 2006, EMCHAI Limited has the patent to its design and specifications; and in order also to maintain standardization, the Commission decided to adopt the direct Procurement method in the award of the contract for the Transparent Collapsible Ballot Boxes as provided in section 42 (1) (a) (b) and (c) of the Public Procurement Act 2007" (Underlining supplied for emphasis)

"The blatant falsehood as stated in the preceding paragraph enabled EMCHAI, INEC and Jega to successfully seek and obtain the ratification of the Federal Executive Council, using the guided tools and instrumentality of officialdom, for the award of the contract for the supply of yet a new 150,000 units of the Plaintiff's patented products at a unit cost of N13, 000.00 making the total contract sum of N1, 950,000,000.00 without

the prior consent, license and authority of the Plaintiff; which gave rise to the action leading to the judgment under reference.

“To this effect, the guided tools and instrumentality of officialdom has once again, been used to deceive the highest ruling body in this Nation-Nigeria to infringe on the Plaintiff’s patented products.”

However, because the court is currently on break, no date has so far been fixed for the case hearing.