

Reps Empower INEC To Extend Registration Period

The House of Representatives on Tuesday amended section 9 (5) of the Electoral Act of 2010 to give INEC four weeks to conclude the ongoing voter registration.

The amendment now allows for 60 days within which INEC shall conclude the voter registration before the general elections.

The section provides that registration of voters, updating and revision of the voters' register shall stop not later than 60 days before any election covered by the Act.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), reports that following the anomalies that characterised the exercise since it began on Jan. 15, many people had called for the extension of time to allow for the registration of eligible

Nigerians.

Tuesday's amendment followed a motion by Ita Enang (PDP-Akwa Ibom), which was unanimously adopted by members when put to vote by Speaker Dimeji Bankole.

Leading the debate, Enang said the amendment was necessary following the challenges that had confronted the exercise.

According to him, the amendment, which alters the word "60 days", will enable INEC, which had no power to extend the date, to do so now.

Bankole said the Act, as amended, would be forwarded to the Senate for concurrence.

He added that relevant committees would continue work on the 2011 budget, as the House suspended its plenary session for two weeks.

Mushin Gang War Lawmaker Calls For State Police

PAUL SANUSI & ABOSEDE AGBOOLA

A member of the Lagos State House of Assembly, Mr. Bolaji Yussuf Ayinla, representing Mushin Constituency II, has blamed the incessant clashes among hoodlums in Mushin on the non creation of state police.

Ayinla, who is the Chairman, House Services Committee said gang wars and other youth restiveness in the area would not have happened if there is state police.

"The crises rocking Mushin and other parts of the country is that of insecurity. This is why we are advocating for

state police. A situation where the federal police have to be dragged to Mushin to quell fighting is not the best, but if there is state police, they will know every inhabitants of the community and if there is breakdown of law and order, offenders can be easily traced and arrested.

"If there is state police, they will be close to the grassroots and tackle the problem," he stated.

Ayinla called on the Inspector-General of Police, Afiz Ringim and the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Marvel Akpoyibo, to do more in protecting the people and their property.

18 Die In Fire Incident

The Oyo State Fire Service says 18 lives were lost to fire in 2010 while property worth N418 million were saved from fire outbreaks in some parts of the state.

The state Director of Fire Service, Mr. Ismail Oladipo, made this known in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Ibadan on Tuesday.

He said that 49 persons were rescued from fire while property worth N59.6 million were lost to fire during the period under review.

Oladipo said that the department received a total of 531 distress calls between January and December 2010, comprising of 407 fire calls and 124 special service calls.

"The activities of service from January, 2010 to December, 2010 are: fire calls 407, special service 124.

"What I mean by Special Service are people who fell into well, people that drown in river, motor accident, including false alarms that was put at 48 in 2010.

"The estimated loss was N59, 617,700 while the property saved was N418, 221,000. Lives lost were 18 and those saved were 49," he said.

He said that the special services included distress calls for people who fell into wells, those drowned in rivers and

those involved in motor accidents.

The director further said that 48 out of the calls received were false alarm and malicious calls as the fire tenders could not locate such places.

On the challenges facing the service, Oladipo identified road congestion and wilful blockade of access road to scenes of fire incident.

Oladipo said that poor information on location of fire accident scenes by callers was the major challenge militating against the operation of the service.

He said that the lack of adequate water supply in most parts of the state in 2010 had been solved as the state government had provided the department with five water tankers.

Oladipo also stressed the need to expand its operations to all parts of the state, adding that there existed only 15 fire service outlets.

He, therefore, pleaded with the state government to assist the department to expand its services by establishing more fire service stations in local

government areas.

Oladipo said that the service also provided fire preventive services to both private and public establishments.

He advised residents to adhere to such safety measures to avoid more fire outbreaks in 2011.

Oladipo listed wrong connection of electric cables, using substandard materials, storage of inflammable liquid in the vehicles, indiscriminate dumping of cigarette stumps and uncontrolled burning as the causes of fire outbreaks.

He warned against indiscriminate setting up of fire, saying that "people should not try to set any unusable material on fire if you know you cannot control the burning."

"If we can try to avoid these problems, I think the fire outbreaks will be drastically reduced in 2011," he said.



Attempted Murder Court Remands Village

Police Arraign 2 Okada Thieves

ABIOSE LUKMAN

Two men, Comrade John, 35 and Pascal Guci, 30, have been arraigned before the Ojokoro Magistrate's

punishable under sections 516 and 390 (9) of the Criminal Code, Cap.17, Vol. 11, Laws of Lagos State of Nigeria, 2003.

When the charge was read