



***Petroleum & Natural Gas  
Senior Staff Association of Nigeria  
(PENGASSAN)***

**...An affiliate of Trade Unions Congress of Nigeria (TUC)**

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**YAR'ADUA: PENGASSAN URGES NASS, PDP TO RESPECT CONSTITUTION.**

Just as the controversy over the ill health of President Umaru Yar'Adua continues to rage on, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) has called on the National Assembly and the ruling Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) to respect the nation's constitution on the issue.

Speaking on the absence of the President Yar'Adua, **PENGASSAN President, Comrade Babatunde Ogun**, noted the absence of the Yar'Adua has definitely created a vacuum in governance in the country.

He said there is need for the legislative arm to also impressed it on the Federal Executive Council (FEC) to respect the sanctity of the constitution.

The union leader said that the National Assembly should not exonerate itself from the problem that is created by the president's absence as it has the power to ensure that the executive arm follow the constitution provision on the issue.

He said that since the Yar'Adua government affirmed its belief in the rule of law, the government. Especially the legislative arm and the ruling PDP from which the president emerged should also respect the law of the country.



His words, “All that rule of law means is the sanctity of the law irrespective of who is affected. I am sure that there is a portion of the constitution that dealt with the absence of the president for certain number of days, in this situation, a government that pride itself in the application of rule of law should respect that aspect of the law.

“There have been many things and issues that should have been resolved but because President Yar’Adua is not around it has been lingering for long. There is need for the president to forward a letter to the National Assembly as stated in the constitution that Vice President Goodluck Jonathan should be confirmed acting president.”

Ogun said he could not see why the National Assembly that comprised of people’s representatives could not stand up to defend the right of Nigerians to know the exact situation of health of President Yar’Adua.

He berated the legislature for defending the president despite the obvious that he is very ill and incapacitated to perform his duty, adding that the assembly should know that Yar’Adua’s absence is affecting the economic and social life of the country.

“Due to Yar’Adua’s illness, Nigeria has lost a lot of time in the signing of the 2009 Budget into law. Despite the ascent, many have alleged that the signature is a hoax and that it was forged; why is it that Nigeria is trying to get the supplementary budget signed when we should be talking of the 2010 budget being implemented.

“This is why it may be difficult for the country to get it right in terms of budgeting, as the budget we neither be passed or signed on time,” he said. On the telephone interview that Yar’Adua had with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on Tuesday, Ogun said the president response to it is too late, saying that he has taking Nigerians for a ride with this action. He said, “Why is it now that Yar’Adua is talking to the BBC? Why hasn’t he talked since when people have been insinuating that he is dead? He has taking Nigerians for a ride and if he has the interest of the country at heart,



he ought to have spoken since so that people will know that he is still alive. “Even if he is alive, since he has been absent for long, the provisions of the Constitution on such issue need to be followed.”

On the Justice Minister, Mr. Mike Aondoakaa’s claim that the President Yar’Adua’s state of health is not a public issue, Ogun said that since Yar’Adua himself is a public figure because of the position he occupy as the president and commander in chief of the federation, everything about him has become public.

“Since the day Yar’Adua offered himself for Presidency, everything about him is public. His lifestyle, eating habit, and there is nothing personal about him again. So Nigerians deserve to knopw what is happening to the leader and there is need for Nigerians to be informed about every stage of his recovery,” he said.

