

Senate Approves \$75 Million World Bank Loan for Edo

Edo Heritage

World Bank

Economics And Business, Politics And Government

The Senate on Thursday approved a 75 million World Bank loan for Edo state's Development Policy Operation (DPO) as requested by President Muhammadu Buhari. The approval followed the consideration of a single-prayer report of the ad hoc Committee on Local and Foreign Debt presented by Senate Kabiru Gaya (APC Kano South).

The committee in its report urged the Senate to approve the loan, stating that the World Bank had already considered the state ready for it. Senate Adamu Aliero (APC Kebbi Central), in his contributions, said that Edo State had qualified for this loan, because the state had met the conditions set by the World Bank.

Aliero said that the loan would help increase the internally generated revenue of the state and, therefore, urged the Senate to approve it. He also called on other states that have the capacity to borrow, to go ahead and take such loans, as long as they could utilize such judiciously. The Leader of the Senate, Ali Ndume, while supporting the motion for the approval of the loan, encouraged other states with genuine needs to take advantage of such low interest loans, rather than the patronizing commercial banks.

"The first tranche of this borrowing plan had already been approved by the senate and the World Bank has strict borrowing conditions— which the state has met.

"I therefore move that we approve this loan," he said.

However, Senate Matthew Urhoghide (PDP Edo South) while supporting the approval of the loan, expressed the misgivings of the people of the State about it.

He said that on the day the Senate received the letter from Mr President, he got over 2000 text messages and emails; "out rightly, the people have said that they do not want the loan."

Urhoghide, argued that although the loans would bring about more gains for the people of the state, there was need to accede to the yearnings of the Edo people and verify the misgivings expressed by the people of the state.

The senator said that the first tranche of the loan was used for projects that were not visible, and urged that the second tranche should be judiciously utilized to clear the doubts of the people.

“This loan was premised on certain things that the state government said it was going to do, it was meant to enhance good governance, it was not meant to be used on things that were tangible or visible.

“It was to enhance private sector development, improve facilities for increased IGR in the state and increase private investment and employment opportunities.

“I am not standing to oppose what has been granted by Mr President or the desire of the state government, I am here to look at some of the views expressed by the people on the things that have been done with first tranche.

“We need to verify some of the claims that has been made, we need to look at the report that has been given by the World Bank– if they are satisfactory,” he said.

The senate, however, approved the loan though with a tangible number of dissenting voices.

NAN reports that the 75 million dollars loan is the second tranche of a 225 million dollar Development Policy Operation loan approved for the state by the World Bank.