SENATE SEEKS PROBE OF $40M LOAN TO AVIATION INDUSTRY

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The Senate has mandated its committees on aviation and anti-corruption to commence investigation into alleged disbursement of 40 million dollars ($40m) loan for rehabilitation and development of infrastructure in the aviation industry.

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The mandate is part of a 15-point recommendation adopted while considering report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Aviation on the poor state of the aviation industry in Nigeria.

The report was presented by the Chairman of the Committee, Sen. Rabiu Kwankwaso (APC Kano Central).

The committees were also mandated to probe a N33.55 billion alleged to have been released by the Federal Government in 2011 for the same purpose.

PIC.23. SENATE CHAMBER DURING THE INAUGURATION OF THE 8TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN AI

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The upper chamber further called on the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) to stop the collection of navigational charges on all training aircraft in the country.

It also recommended that only qualified and properly trained personnel should be employed, in view of the delicate nature of the aviation industry, while capacity building should be given priority.

The Senate called on the aviation sector, under the Federal Ministry of Transport to collaborate with the Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) to ascertain the cause of high price of aviation fuel.
Equally, the red chamber urged NAMA and the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) to pay more attention to the provision of state of the art flying equipment to enhance safety and assist pilots to do their jobs professionally.

It noted that the provision of the equipment would further guard against a situation where planes could not take off and land because of poor visibility.

Chief executives of aviation parastatals and the Nigeria College of Aviation Technology were also urged to put in place a programme to replace aging pilots to pave the way for young pilots.

The Senate also urged officials of the aviation sector not to interfere in the running of specialised units in the industry.

FAAN was also advised to rehabilitate and complete all abandoned structures and pull down those that had lost their value.

The Senate also recommended that abandoned aircraft in custody of the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) should be resuscitated, while the Federal Government should develop a financial programme as a bailout.
The bailout, according to the upper chamber, should be tailored toward growing airlines in the

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country.

“The framework of this financial programme can take into consideration funds for acquisition of new equipment”, it said.

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