# Kogi State House of Assembly orders immediate suspension of coal mining in Omala over pollution fears



The Kogi State House of Assembly has called for the immediate suspension of all coal mining activities in Omala Local Government Area, pending the outcome of a comprehensive investigation and potential legislative action. This decision follows a motion of urgent public importance presented on Wednesday by Yahaya Umar, the lawmaker representing Omala State Constituency, who highlighted the environmental and health concerns associated with coal mining operations in the area.

Umar moved the motion to address widespread pollution of rivers and environmental degradation caused by coal mining firms. He emphasised that the initial licensing of these firms was aligned with Nigeria’s Electricity Vision 30:30:30 and the Rural Electrification Strategy and Implementation Plan (RESIP) launched in 2015, which aimed to diversify power sources and increase renewable energy contributions. The coal sector was expected to contribute 4% of national power generation by 2020 and 10% by 2030. However, Umar stated, “that dream has not only failed to materialize, it has turned into a nightmare for our communities.”

The legislator identified several coal mining companies operating in Kogi State, including Rockbottom Mines and Power, and Mosra Enerji Ltd, which have, according to him, failed to deliver electricity to the national grid as promised. Instead, their activities—particularly around Oloku, on the outskirts of Abejukolo in Omala LGA—have caused significant pollution of rivers, destruction of farmland, and contamination of water sources used by thousands of residents for drinking, cooking, sanitation, and irrigation.

Umar specifically raised alarm about these companies discharging acidic coal waste and heavy metals into the Alugbo River. This contamination threatens the linked water systems flowing downstream through Edihi to the Omala River, which gives the local government its name. Communities affected include Oloku, Otti, Icheke Ajedibo, Ikeffi, Oliya, Ibadan, Kaduna, Efiwo, Ajaja, Ogoh, Abejukolo, among others.

He outlined the scientific risks posed by coal mining, noting, “When coal seams are exposed to air and water, they produce acid mine drainage, leaching toxic metals like arsenic, lead, and copper into surrounding water bodies. These poisons do not just pollute rivers, they accumulate in the food chain and pose serious health risks to both humans and livestock.” The contamination also threatens agriculture, land quality, aquatic life, and biodiversity in the region.

Umar further criticised the coal companies for profiting from local land and resources while host communities continue to lack access to electricity, alternative water supplies, or meaningful benefits. He highlighted similar environmental concerns in Ankpa Local Government Area, implicating companies such as Zuma 828 Ltd and Dangote in neglecting community welfare and environmental remediation.

The motion called on the State Government and relevant federal agencies, including the Federal Ministry of Mines and Mining Cadastre, to urgently intervene, mandate a full-scale investigation of mining activities, and assess the environmental and health impacts across Kogi State. An Ad-hoc Committee was proposed to investigate specifically the operations of Rockbottom Mines and Mosra Enerji Ltd, and to report findings with actionable recommendations.

Other members of the Assembly supported the motion. Jacob Olawumi, representing Mopamuro State Constituency, described the situation as “pathetic,” emphasising the need for sanctions against companies breaching agreements with the state. Abu Onoru-Oiza Jibrin, Vice Chairman of the House Standing Committee on Solid Minerals, labelled the issues "disturbing," stating, “Mining companies are taking advantage of us... We must stop them from further mining exercise until they find solutions to the problem on ground. If they failed to meet our demands, we will ban them from mining in Kogi State.”

Idrees Aliyu Maikudi, lawmaker for Kogi Koton Karfe, also criticised certain royal fathers for allegedly facilitating illegal mining activities by granting access to miners in exchange for bribes. Yusuf Zakari from Okene II Constituency suggested the need for legislation banning land sales to companies without adequate deposits.

The Deputy Speaker of the Kogi State House of Assembly, presiding over the session, described the environmental degradation resulting from mining activities as a collective problem affecting multiple local governments, including Omala, Ankpa, Ijumu, and Ajaokuta. She warned that miners have neglected their social responsibilities to host communities and stressed the importance of proactive responses. “All coal mining companies operating in Omala, Ankpa, and other parts of Kogi State should implement enforceable Community Development Agreements (CDAs) and fulfil their corporate social responsibility (CSR) obligations to host communities in line with global best practices,” she added.

The House further resolved to mandate the Kogi State Ministry of Solid Minerals to conduct immediate compliance audits of all mining operations to ensure adherence to national environmental and mining standards. It also directed that the State Government provide emergency alternative clean water sources to affected communities.

A five-member Ad-hoc Committee was established to investigate the matter thoroughly and report back to the House within two weeks.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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