

Senate passes bill criminalizing female genital mutilation, violence

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The Nigerian Senate on Tuesday, passed Violence against Persons (Prohibition) Bill which seeks to prohibit female circumcision or genital mutilation, forceful ejection from home and harmful widowhood practices.

The bill also prohibits abandonment of spouse, children and other dependents without sustenance, battery and harmful traditional practices.

The Bill was sponsored by the Leader of the Senate, Victor Ndoma-Egba.

It is also intended to eliminate violence in private and public life and provide maximum protection and effective remedies for victims of violence, and punishment of offenders.

The bill equally prohibits economic abuse, forced isolation and separation from family and friends, substance attack, depriving persons of their liberty, incest, indecent exposure, among others.

In his remarks, Deputy President of the Senate, Ike Ekweremadu, who presided at the session, said that the passage of the bill would provide adequate protection for the vulnerable in the society and punish those who take advantage of them.

He commended the senators and other stakeholders for their efforts in ensuring that the bill was passed, adding that it was a good step in the fight against violence in the society.

“The primary responsibility of government is to protect lives and property and as a responsible arm of government, our primary responsibility is to enact laws that will not only protect our people, but also protect their property.

“Today, we have discharged one of our responsibilities to the vulnerable in terms of violence. Congratulations for this achievement,” he said.