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**Tuesday
17th February, 2009**

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES

FOURTH REPUBLIC

THIRD ASSEMBLY (SIXTH SENATE)

SECOND SESSION

THE SENATE OFFICIAL REPORT

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**SENATE OF THE FEDERAL
REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

Tuesday, 17th February, 2009

The Senate met at 10.25 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy President in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

The Deputy President: Distinguished Senators, the Senate is called to order. Let us consider the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 11th February, 2009. Pages: 469, 470.

Senator Anyim Ude (Ebonyi South): Mr. President, on page 470, No. 4(b), line 2 after the word *noted*, add the word *workforce*.

The Deputy President: It is all right. Secretariat, please, take note. Pages: 471, 472, 473, 474, 475.

Senator Joel Danlami Ikenya (Taraba South): Mr. President, I rise to move that the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 11th February, 2009 be approved as amended.

Senator Heineken Lokpobiri (Bayelsa West): Mr. President, I rise to second the Motion that the Votes and Proceedings of 11th February, 2009 be approved as amended.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 11th February, 2009 be approved as amended.

**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

The Deputy President: I have before me a letter from the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria addressed to the President of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The letter reads:

*Distinguished Senator David Mark,
Senate President,
Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,
National Assembly Complex,
Abuja*

Dear Brother,

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***Request for Confirmation of Appointment of
Chairman and Members of the Federal Roads
Maintenance Agency***

Section 2 of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (Amendment) Act, 2007 provides that the Governing Board of the Agency shall consist of:

- a) Chairman who shall be drawn from the Private Sector;
- b) Representative of the:
 - i. Director in-charge of Federal Highways Development;
 - ii. Federal Ministry of Finance;
 - iii. National Association of Road Transport Owners (NARTO);
 - iv. Petroleum Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPRA);
 - v. Nigerian Association of Public Highways and Transportation Officials (NAPHTO);
 - vi. Federal Road Safety Corps;
 - vii. One Member each from the Six Geopolitical Zones, and
- c) Managing Director of the Agency.

Section 3 of the Agency's enabling Act also provides that the Board shall be appointed by the President subject to confirmation by the Senate.

I have, therefore, in the exercise of the powers conferred on me by Section 3 of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (Amendment) Act, 2007 decided to appoint the under-listed as Chairman and Members in the Governing Board of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency.

S/NO	NAMES	DESIGNATION	ZONE
1.	Engr. Abdulkadir Abdullahi Kure	Chairman	
2.	Engr. Abdul-Azeez Alhaji Umaru	Member	North West
3.	Mallam Yakubu W. Bello	Member	North East
4.	Musa Hussein Esq.	Member	North Central
5.	Mr. Arikawe Akinlose Sylvester	Member	South West
6.	Chief Fidelis Ike Ndeokwelu	Member	South East
7.	Barrister Bolatsi Omatseye Dudu	Member	South South

Accordingly, in line with Section 3 of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (Amendment) Act, 2007 which states that the appointment shall be subject to the confirmation by the Senate, I hereby, forward the names

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of the nominees whose Curriculum Vitae are attached herewith for confirmation by the Senate.

Please accept, Senate President, the assurances of my highest regards.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)
UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Letter from the Senate President

Distinguished Colleagues, I have before me a letter from the Senate President addressed to Senator Ike Ekweremadu, (CFR), the Deputy Senate President. The letter reads:

*Deputy Senate President,
National Assembly,
Three Arms Zones,
Abuja.*

I will not attend sitting today, Tuesday, 17th February, 2009. This is to enable me go for my eye examination and medication. I will appreciate if you will kindly convey the same information to our distinguished Colleagues and bosses.

May God guide and bless all your proceedings.

Thank you.

(Signed)
SENATOR (DR.) A. B. MARK, (GCON)
President of the Senate

Meeting of the Ad-hoc Committee on Jos Crisis

There will be a meeting of the Ad-hoc Committee on Jos Crisis today at 3.00 p.m. The venue is the Office of the Chairman and Deputy Senate Leader.

(Signed)
Senator Victor Ndoma-Egba (SAN)
Chairman

Invitation Reminder from Senator Bode Olajumoke

This is from Senator Bode Olajumoke, Law Faculty Complex, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akumgba Akoko, Ondo State. It reads:

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Reception in my Honour

This is to remind all distinguished Senators invited to the reception in my honour by the Law Faculty of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akumgba Akoko that the ceremony will hold at follows:

Venue: Kano Hall, Transcorp Hilton, Abuja.

Time: 5.00 p.m.

Date: Today, 17th February, 2009.

I will feel highly honoured by your presence. Please endeavour to be punctual.

(Signed)
SENATOR BODE OLAJUMOKE

Visit of Staff and Students of Gudmerc Kiddies Institute, Kuduru Abuja

I wish to acknowledge the presence of the Staff and Students of Gudmerc Kiddies Institute, Kuduru, Abuja who are in the Gallery to observe Senate proceedings. Could you stand up for recognition? (*Staff and Students of Gudmerc Kiddies Institute stood up for recognition*)

I wish all of you fruitful observation of Senate proceedings.

Birthday Wishes to Senators Etok Aloysious Akpan, Adeleke Olorunnimbe Mamora and Maeba Lee Ledogo

Dear Colleagues, during the weekend some of our Colleagues had their birthdays. So, it is my honour, on behalf of this Senate, to wish them many more years. They are as follows:

Senator Etok Aloysious Akpan, born 15th February;

Senator Adeleke Olorunnimbe Mamora, born 16th February, and

Senator Maeba Lee Ledogo, born 16th February.

We wish them many more years.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTION

Dismal Performance of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)

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Senator Teslim Kolawole Folarin (Oyo Central): Mr. President, the first Order of the Day is a Motion standing in the name of Senator Zaynab Kure, and 16 others on the Dismal Performance of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP).

You may wish to invite Senator Kure to move the Motion.

Senator Zaynab Kure (Niger South): Mr. President, I rise to seek the leave of this respected and hallowed Chamber to move a Motion on Dismal Performance of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP).

The Deputy President: You can proceed.

Senator Zaynab Kure: With me as co-sponsors are all the Members of the Committee on National Planning, Economic Affairs and Poverty Eradication as well as some distinguished Colleagues of ours. I have Senators Dahiru A. Kuta; Smart Adeyemi; Grace Bent; Mohammed I. Ahmed; Joel Danlami; Bala Adamu; Eme Ekaette; Julius A. Ucha; Anthony George Manzo and so many others that have not been captured on the list. The Motion reads:

The Senate:

Acknowledges that about 70 *per cent* Nigerians live below the poverty line;

Further acknowledges that the zeal to fight poverty in this country has been in the agenda of the past and present administrations. Let us be reminded that in the Seven Point Agenda of Mr. President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, the zeal to fight poverty has been captured by one of the points under the agenda;

Observes that the real commitment to eradicate the scourge of poverty by the present administration was manifested by its Seven Point Agenda;

Notes that the National Poverty Eradication Programme was established by the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo vide Federal Executive's Conclusion dated 17th January, 2001.

Further observes that the nine years after the establishment of the Agency, it could not effectively impact on the lives of the less privileged Nigerians despite the huge resources committed through appropriation and MDG funds.

Regrets that all that was heard of the Agency and the activities was just on the pages of our National

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Dailies and that each of its numerous mouth watering schemes ends with the grandeur of its official launching ceremony;

Aware of the serious debacle surrounding the non-completion of the *KEKE NAPEP* Contracts for the supply of 5,000 units of *KEKE* awarded since 2007 for the sum of N2.4 billion;

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) **Mandate** its Committee on National Planning, Economic Affairs and Poverty Alleviation to conduct Public Hearing into the activities of NAPEP.

I so move.

The Deputy President: Senator Turaki Saminu, is a co-sponsor of this Motion; but I have not seen him lately.

Senator Zaynab Kure: Mr. President, as I said earlier on, he is also a Member of the Committee on National Planning, Economic Matters and Poverty Eradication.

Senator Ayogu Eze (Enugu North): Mr. President, as a Member of the Committee on National Planning, I rise to second this Motion believing that it is a Motion whose time has, indeed, come. We have tried at the level of the Committee to make sure that we sanitise that organisation and bring the programme to a level where it can serve our people, but we have found out that what needs to be done to reposition NAPEP goes beyond just the over-sight responsibility of visiting their sites and all that. We need to be armed from the Chamber here to conduct an in-depth enquiry including enlisting the opinions and contributions of Members of the public for whom this programme is intended so that we can make it more functional and beneficial to our people.

I would give you a single instance, the distribution of the *KEKE NAPEP* as aptly captured in this Motion; a common distribution, has become a problem even for the Agency to the extent that some states would get certain number and some states would not even get at all. We have also asked the Chief Executive of the Programme that in spite of all the huge capital outlay, the last contract was over N2 billion, these tricycles are not sighted anywhere on the streets. We also found out that there was some form of racketeering facilitated by the operators. I think that an issue as crucial as poverty eradication which is one of the cardinal objectives of the Seven Points Agenda of Mr. President cannot be given

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such a convenient treatment. It must be treated with the seriousness it deserves. It is on that note that I support this Motion totally and enjoin my Colleagues to also support it so that we conduct a Public Hearing and ensure that the taxpayers' money that is used in funding this Agency is properly utilised.

On that note, I second this Motion.

The Deputy President: A lot of our Colleagues are interested to speak on this. I suggest that we try as much as possible to keep out contributions short. If somebody has said what you intend to say, you can as well decline. We are going to take those who would speak in favour of the Motion first after which those who will speak against will have their turn.

Senator Kanti Bello (Katsina North): First of all, I want to show my appreciation for the Committee under distinguished Zaynab Kure. They have done their best to do a lot of oversight functions. What we do in the MDG Committee normally is that when money is appropriated, I ask the main Committee to help us do the oversight function and they have been doing very well.

It is not only KEKE NAPEP. If we have the opportunity to do the Public Hearing we will find out that there are other areas like the continuous cash grants they normally grant to states which they claim they give through cooperative societies and other companies; from our initial investigation in the MDG we realised that some of the projects have not actually taken off yet money had been spent.

There is also the case of Poverty Alleviation whereby a state is regarded as being very poor and they go round to dole out money in order to help the ordinary people there. Unfortunately, from our preliminary investigation that money has not been distributed the way it should be. In fact, one of the programmes was done in Kebbi State and, perhaps, the Senators from Kebbi State can testify to that.

As Mr. President has said, we do not need to go too far into details, but on behalf of the Committee on MDG and myself, we give total support for this particular request for the conduct of Public Hearing in the interest of the generality of the ordinary people of this country.

Senator Ahmed Ibrahim Lawan (Yobe North): Mr. President, I happen to be a Member of the National Planning Committee which oversees National Poverty Eradication Programme. This Committee has done everything possible to ensure that the programme is ran efficiently, effectively and transparently but, alas, the

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Programme has failed woefully to live up to expectation. Even to the Committee on Public Accounts, NAPEP appeared about three times there and there was hardly any strong and convincing explanation for their failure. Most of their programmes have failed. We insist on getting the facts which we are struggling to get.

I see NAPEP as a rudderless organization; a ship with a blind and deaf captain. Poverty has transformed in Nigeria from what was manageable just when NAPEP started to what is outrageous and destructive. I have facts here. In 2001 when this programme was started by President Olusegun Obasanjo, poverty in Nigeria was 45 *per cent* and this is world's fact book on Nigeria.

Senator Lee Ledogo Maeba (Rivers South-East): Point of Order, Mr. President.

The Deputy President: Point of Order, Lee Maeba.

Senator Lee Ledogo Maeba: Yes, Mr. President, my Point of Order is under Order 53(7) which says: *It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language.* Senator Ahmed Lawan has just used offensive and insulting language against the Chief Executive of NAPEP; comparing him to a blind captain and rudderless which I believe, is completely way out from what this Motion is seeking to achieve. This Motion is seeking to achieve an investigation. It is a very unpaliamentary language (*Interruptions*)

The Deputy President: Please, could we hear him out and then I will rule on it.

Senator Lee Ledogo Maeba: Mr. President, I believe we shall have decorum in this Senate. Our Retreats possible, have not achieved its aim. New Senators should know that it is out of order to ask a Colleague to sit down. It is completely unpaliamentary and I will leave the judgment on that to you.

Everybody knows that the Captain of a Naval Ship is a Chief Executive and when you refer to NAPEP as a ship with a blind Captain it is not a good language. We should be decorum. That is my Point of Order.

The Deputy President: All right, Senator Lee Maeba. I have listened to you carefully and it does not appear to me that the words used by our distinguished Colleague were either offensive or insulting. So, I will, very reluctantly rule you out of order.

Senator Kanti Bello: Point of Order, Mr. President.

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The Deputy President: There is another Point of Order from Senator Kanti Bello.

Senator Kanti Bello: Sir, I am duty bound as the Chief Whip to bring Senator Lee Maeba to order. Order 53(8) says: *No Senator shall impute improper motive to any other Senator.* The gentleman has spoken very well. He is just putting his points of view across, unfortunately, Senator Lee Maeba imputed improper meaning from his own thinking. So, as a result of that he should be called to order.

The Deputy President: All right. The Chief Whip is completely in order. You may proceed, Senator Ahmed Lawan.

Senator Ahmed Lawan: Let me remind this Chamber that we are representing Nigerians and at all times, we must appear to be doing that in a very patriotic and nationalistic manner.

Before the Point of Order I was giving a statistics. In 2001 when NAPEP came into effect, poverty level in Nigeria was said to be 45 *per cent*. Even at that it was bad enough. But if you go to the Internet and click to World Facts Book on Nigeria you would get everything you want.

By 2004, NAPEP still fighting poverty, poverty jumped to 60 *per cent*. By 2007 to 2008 it went up to 70 *per cent* and above. It is clear that NAPEP has failed to fight and combat poverty in Nigeria. When an organization is mandated and charged to discharge responsibilities and produce results, we have the enormous responsibility to always monitor the outcome of the performance and this is the essence and the focus of this Motion. NAPEP has failed. NAPEP does not appear to be focused. They have numerous programmes with all manners of nomenclatures but none of these programmes have been effective.

Finally, let me come back to KEKE NAPEP. The KEKE NAPEP programme consumed over N5 billion for 5,000 units of KEKE; that very basic and rudimentary technology. After the programme has been run for first and second times, we still import KEKE from India. I once asked the Director General of NAPEP, were you really prepared to alleviate poverty and create wealth in Nigeria? How on earth would you take our money to create employment in India while there are so many intelligent young people who can produce this KEKE and we could have, instead of 5,000 units, maybe, we can have 10,000 units at the same cost because the cost of production would be significantly lower.

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So, I believe that that programme has failed. It has no direction. It has no focus, therefore, we required a Public Hearing to give every Nigerian the opportunity to come and tell us how we can make it effective.

The Deputy President: Distinguished Colleagues, I will give you the list I have here, if we are through with the list and there is need for us to take another list, we will go ahead. I have Senator A. D Sodangi, Senator Chris Anyanwu, Senator Paulker Emmanuel, Senator Grace F Bent, Senator Bob Effiong, Senator Olorunnimbe Mamora, and Senator Manzo Anthony. Others are; Senator Felix Bajomo, Senator Ibrahim Ida, Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe, Senator Nkechi Nwaogu, Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim, Senator Julius Ucha, Senator Smart Adeyemi and Senator James Manager. If we exhaust this list, then we can take another one.

Senator George Thompson Sekibo (River East): Point of Order, Mr. President.

The President: What is your Point of Order, Senator George Sekibo?

Senator George Thompson: I am a Justice of Peace and that is one of the reasons I am raising this Point of Order. It is Orders 56(12) and 53(8) and if you permit me, I will start with Order 56(12).

The President: Yes, read.

Senator George Thompson Sekibo: Order 56(12) reads: *No Senator may interrupt another Senator while speaking unless:*

- (a) *To call attention to a point of order or privilege suddenly arising.*
- (b) *To call attention to the want of a quorum;*
- (c) *To call attention to the presence of stranger;*
- (d) *To move a closure motion; or*
- (e) *To move "That the business of the day be called on".*

Order 53(8) says: *No Senator shall impute improper motive to another Senator.* If you permit me, I will, in two sentences, make a point. The level of interruptions on the Floor of this Chamber is very high and it should be checked.

Secondly, when a Senator is speaking on the Floor of the Chamber to the glare of those in the Gallery and a Colleague Senator, moreso a ranking Senator as Senator

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Lee Ledogo Maeba, will shout to another Senator to sit down that is a condemnation. We should completely avoid such manner. I bring this Point of Order because if it is not checked today, it may continue. So, let us put a stop to that kind of attitude.

The Deputy President: Senator Sekibo, you are quite correct. I am sure we have noted the points raised by our distinguished Colleagues. As they saying goes; a word is enough for the wise.

Senator Abubakar Danso Sodangi (Nasarawa West): Mr. President, this is a very important Motion brought by our Sister and Colleague, Senator Zaynab Kure. This Motion is timely. This is the time we should talk facts and we must be very sincere. What is the essence of NAPEP? Its essence is to eradicate poverty and that is what our PDP programme is all about. It is to alleviate poverty and create job opportunities to Nigerians. But I must say, unfortunately, that NAPEP has failed as the previous speakers have said, Talking about Keke NAPEP I will give you a practical example. I purchased one or two of them for my Constituents and they failed.

Senator Grace Folashade Bent (Adamawa South): Point of Order, Mr. President.

The Deputy President: What is your Point of Order?

Senator Grace Folashade Bent: My Point of Order is Order 41(2) which is on the fact that when a Senator is speaking (*Interruptions*)

The Deputy President: On what Order are you speaking?

Senator Grace Folashade Bent: Let me get it. .

The Deputy President: Sit down and look for it while Senator Sodangi continues.

Senator Abubakar Sodangi: The point I was trying to make is that the KEKE NAPEP programme has failed woefully. I purchased two KEKE NAPEP and I discovered that they are expensive. Each costs about \$4,000. As one of the previous speakers had asked, can we not manufacture this common KEKE? Worse of it all is that you cannot even get the spare parts. Once any of the parts get spoiled, you have to abandon the KEKE and the operator will return to joblessness.

This is the time we should call the Managers of NAPEP to explain to Nigerians. We are the

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Representatives of Nigerians and if the project has failed, Nigerians would ask us why. It is very good that the Committee is taking the bull by the horns to unravel all the happenings there. I do not want to say if there are illegalities happening there but definitely, I want to submit with all sense of humility that the project has failed Nigerians and the PDP Government. We came with the best intentions to help Nigerians.

One other thing they have not mentioned is that NAPEP is supposed to be helping organisations such as Community Associations and Youth Organisations in terms of giving soft loans, but they have also failed on that aspect. If you have a community project and you go to them for assistance, they will never finance it. They are just doing lip service there. They talk much but nothing to show for this project.

I want to say that we should give our Colleagues on the Committee on Poverty Alleviation to do this job on behalf of us and Nigerians. I commend them for bringing this Motion.

Senator Chris N. D. Anyanwu (Imo East): Mr. President, I want to thank the Committee for raising this issue. I know that the Ad-Hoc Committee on MDG had had occasion to raise issues about how NAPEP has been operating. In fact, the Committee's Chairman had occasion to trace some of these activities and found them to be grossly wanting. The Chairman went as far as pursuing some of their so-called allocations as far as Corporate Affairs Commission and found things that were very questionable in the way they did them. Nigeria has not had a proper poverty alleviation programme for sometime. If it has, it has been on paper.

NAPEP has been a big failure. If NAPEP has been working, my Constituency, for instance, would not be reddening with abject poverty. My Constituency has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country and if NAPEP was on ground some of that could have been taken care of. I have had occasion to talk to the head of NAPEP. I had sat in some kind of meetings with NAPEP operators. We found that they had allowed some of their foreign Coordinates to have the programme on stranglehold.

Alleviating poverty is not all about giving people motorcycles or whatever it is they call them; it is about creatively fashioning out programmes; ways of getting people working. Nigerians are great people full of energy. What many of them need is a little bit of help and they would be on their way. Here we have an institution and all we get is big grammar from them. They would never say *I have been wrong in anything* and I do not know why this administration has

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continued to have those people despite their failure and their failure is clear an evident.

Let me give you some of the international implications of the failure of NAPEP. The failure of NAPEP has not just been in its fuelling of poverty; its failure has helped fuel crime within the country and it has led to mass emigration of our young people. Today, Nigeria is listed to have one of the highest emigration rates. All over the world young Nigerians are going through all kinds of things to get themselves out of this place because there is no hope. NAPEP was set up to give them that ray of hope. If there was something for them at home they would not be doing all sorts of things abroad; destroying our image and making a total mess of all the things that we are trying to do here.

It is time and this is the opportunity for us to grab hold of this institution. It does not matter how eloquent; brilliant or well educated; what works is what works. If the programme they have is working and they are working well, we will feel the impact. If the impact is not there, then something is not just working.

So, I want to congratulate them and I want to urge our Colleagues who would conduct this public enquiry to go to any length to see what has happened. They should not to stop there. They should find a way to transform it and make it work. This is one of the institutions that could have very far reaching impact on the society.

Senator Paulker Emmanuel (Bayelsa Central): Mr. President, I rise to support this very important Motion brought by my Colleagues. When you talk about poverty in this country, at times it is very sad for a whooping population of 140 million people or there about and we are certain that 70 *per cent* of this population are leaving below poverty line. It is criminal. If there is anybody vested with the power of alleviating poverty and over these years, poverty has not been alleviated, you and I stand to suffer it. This is because it is not only the 70 *per cent* population that is suffering from this fix, the criminal activities that cut across the length and breadth of this country is as a result of poverty. Go to any nook and cranny of this country, you would see poverty written on the faces of people and one is disturbed especially when you view it under the situation that this country is blessed with lots of resources both human and natural and we have not been able to harness them for the betterment of our people, it is so sad.

The basic needs of Nigerians today are water and, maybe, electricity and even at our Apo Legislative quarters you can count the number of hours that you

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have electricity not from generating sets. Water goes off and on. Those are indices outside NAPEP. If we are to address poverty we should go to the fundamentals and make Nigerians realise the dreams of our fatherland with these rich resources that we are endowed with.

I want to deviate a bit from NAPEP to say that we should face the fundamental issues which are the basic needs of Nigerians. If you are in any community in Bayelsa or in Sokoto States and open your tap to get water flows out and if you can access electricity, these would go a long way to even inducing our industries to come on line. In so doing we can even generate employment.

So, I join my Colleagues to say that we should give this Motion the desired support it deserves so that NAPEP and the other organs empowered to alleviating poverty in this country would be given a direct push so that our citizenry would enjoy our natural resources.

The Deputy President: Senator Bent, you can now combine your contribution with your Point of Order? It is now your turn.

Senator Grace Folashade J. Bent (Adamawa South): Mr. President, my Point of Order has been overtaken by event actually. I had wanted to raise a Point of Order on Order 59(8) but my Colleagues seemed to have got wind of that Order and they have behaved.

I rise to support this very important Motion. There is no doubt about it that the issue of poverty has become a canker worm that has eaten deep into the fabric of our very society in this country. The rate at which we are going; if we continue to play lip service to the issue of alleviating poverty among Nigerians, then there is a fundamental problem somewhere.

NAPEP by its name, which is the National Poverty Eradication Programme, to my mind, is the other way round; it is a *Poverty Imposition Programme* because it has succeeded in making more Nigerians poorer than the way they met them.

The issue of poverty alleviation should be a developmental issue. It is not just distributing items to people as my Colleagues have just said, it is a more serious issue than we are taking about. In other words, there is a fundamental problem about the very foundation of this Programme in the first instance and if the foundation is faulty what can the righteous do. NAPEP was established on a faulty foundation and as such nothing meaningful will come out of it. Poverty is a curse and no well-meaning nation or government would

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want to have it. As I am talking to you, Nigerians are living below one dollar per day in this country. It is as pathetic as it is demoralizing. We are talking about 70 *per cent* of our population, which is a big deal.

If NAPEP cannot succeed in its reasons for being established, I want to suggest that it is either the Programme is totally scrapped, or be completely restructured. The way it is presently being operated, cannot take Nigerians nowhere. Therefore, I want to commend my distinguished Sister and urge this Senate to give her Committee the go ahead to conduct the Public Hearing and let Nigerians proffer better solutions on how we can go about it.

The National Poverty Eradication Programme is a colossal failure as it stands today. You cannot just be distributing items to the people. You do not give people fish rather you teach them how to fish. How far has NAPEP succeeded in doing that? This government seems not to have really seen the loopholes in this programme. I am using this medium to call on the government, to look deeply into this programme and restructure it otherwise, it should be scrapped completely so that Nigerians can have opportunity to look for other better ways at alleviating poverty in this country.

Senator Bob Effiong (Akwa Ibom North East): Mr. President, I want to commend the mover of this Motion. It is very important. It does not matter how long we debate this Motion because we are addressing the state of the nation as far I am concerned. Poverty has no limit; it does not know whether you are a Senator, a member of the Executive or unelected person, poverty is poverty.

To my mind, the intention of government in setting up NAPEP was not wrong rather it is the operation of it. My position is that NAPEP is a ceremonial organisation for seminars. It has been busy with seminars and advertisements from one section of the country to another without anything on ground. KEKE NAPEP tricycle is available only in Abuja. It has never reached any other place. You cannot alleviate poverty in Nigeria in Abuja alone. Poverty alleviation must touch all the sections of the country including my village. There is no evidence that KEKE NAPEP or any other thing that was done or is being done if at all by this Organisation has reached my Constituency. There is no evidence.

The poverty rate in the country is beyond 70 *per cent* the mover of the Motion is talking about. Percentage is relative. If 70 *per cent* is for Abuja, then some other communities may be zero or 100 or 150 *per cent*.

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Since the establishment of NAPEP is of no use to Nigerians, I want to urge that the Committee, while conducting the Public Hearing if it is approved for them, should go deeply to find out how much has been allocated to NAPEP since its inception and how much has been spent, state by state and constituency by constituency including my own Constituency because I am interested in knowing what NAPEP has done in my Constituency which I submit, there is nothing to show that NAPEP ever has any effect in my Constituency.

What NAPEP is doing apart from seminars is to invite people indiscriminately to the Organisation and spending money without recourse to the intentions of government that set it up to eradicate poverty. As submitted earlier by my Colleague, instead of eradicating poverty it encourages poverty. So I will submit at this stage pending the final Report by the Committee, that NAPEP should be scrapped because it is of no use. Let it be; *to your tents oh Israel*. Let everybody helps himself on how to eradicate poverty in his family, his community, Constituency and his state. After that we come back to Abuja instead of coming from Abuja for which we do not see any effect. I wish to submit that this Motion is well thought out and I hereby support it.

Senator Olorunnimbe Mamora (Lagos East): Mr. President, I will start by saying that if we say there is no poverty in this country we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. I want to thank my sister and Colleague Senator Zaynab Kure and others Colleagues who have brought this before this Senate. I am particularly happy because it is coming from that side. I would have imagined it, if it were to come from here some of our Colleagues would have said, it is Opposition. I am happy that we are rising above politics to condemn a programme of government that is not in tandem with realities, projections and reasons for setting up such a body.

It started as a Poverty Alleviation Programme and later changed to NAPEP forgetting that it does not matter because Amoeba will always be Amoeba whether it changes its structure or configuration. Nothing has changed rather it has remained a drain pipe on the economy of this country.

Let me also bring to the attention of our Colleagues the biblical saying in the Book of Proverbs that: *He whose appetite is satisfied disdains horny but he that is hungry everything bitter is sweet*.

Senator Anyogu Eze (Enugu North): Point of Order, Mr. President.

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The Deputy President: What Order, Senator Ayogu Eze?

Senator Anyogu Eze: It is Order 53(4) which says: *A Senator must confine his observation to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matters to irrelevant thereto.* I wish to say that in contributing to this very crucial and important discuss the speaker who is still on the Floor tried to divert attention by bringing politics and imputing improper attributions to the greatest Party in Africa rather than addressing the failure of a system that was put in place in governance. He attributes the failure to the Peoples Democratic Party and I think he should be called to order.

The Deputy President: I look at it from a different perspective. It appears to me that he is appreciating the PDP for the soul-searching and introspection. So, I do not think he has any bad motive. So, I rule you out of order. Go ahead, Senator Mamora.

Senator Adeleke Olorunnimbe Mamora: Thank you, Mr. President and I do hope that some of our Colleagues would not distract us when we have serious business on the Floor of this Senate. As I was saying *(Interruptions)*

The Deputy President: Senator Mamora, what he said is completely within his privilege and it is within my power to decide the way I did. Please, do not go back to it.

Senator Adeleke O. Mamora: Mr. President, let me also call the attention of your good self and my Colleagues to Section 16(2)(c) of the Constitution under the Fundamental Objective and Directive Principles of State Policy. Section 16(2)(c) says:

16(2):The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring –

(c): that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group.

If you move on to Section 17(3)(a), it says:

17(3): The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that –

a) all citizens, without discrimination on any group whatsoever, have the opportunity for securing adequate mans of livelihood as well as adequate opportunity to secure suitable employment.

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I am saying in essence that this Motion, as brought by Senator Zaynab Kure and others, is long overdue but it is better late than never. I do hope that this Senate would grant the Prayer in that Motion so that they will look into the activities of that Agency. In fact, I do know; I may not have the figures right now that billions of Naira have been put into this programme yet we cannot see the result. I hope that at the end of the day, we would be better for it and this would let us know that certain organisations and agencies are not worth the names they are called, therefore, we need to restructure them or scrap them completely.

Senator Anthony G. Manzo (Taraba North): Mr. President, I commend Senator Zaynab Kure for bringing up this Motion. This Motion must not be seen in terms of the person that is heading this Agency.

In any organisation or in any system, periodic review is a necessary process and in all professions you will see that from time to time it is important to do what is called an audit and this Motion seeks to look at what we have done with the Agency that we charged with controlling poverty in this country.

There is no doubt that the person heading the Agency is a very smart man of enormous knowledge but, perhaps, the system that he operates in order to fight poverty in this country is not working. After five years or so of the establishment of this Agency, we have not seen any appreciable decrease in the level of poverty of our people. When you add to that the present predicament of the world economy and the tumbling prices of oil in the market, it becomes very clear that we need to look at how we use these recourses properly.

It may well be that we look at other ways of fighting poverty apart from setting an agency. There are many ways we can fight poverty. We can fight poverty through NGOs or other existing government agencies that have been tested and have stood the test of time. For instance, so many things are being done to tackle the Millennium Development Goals whether at individual, community or MDA level. Perhaps, we need to channel these resources into more useful ways of doing it. The money that we put into poverty eradication can easily be monitored to ensure that it is giving good effect.

You will agree with me that in most of our Constituencies this programme is not present at all. I do not know about my Colleagues in centres of excellence like Lagos but I know that in Taraba State and in most states in this country, this project is not there at all. Therefore, it is important that we support this Motion so that as a Legislature, we will look at it again and

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through the collective wisdom of a hundred and nine of us help Mr. President to use these resources very well. If at the end of the day, we find that we cannot guarantee the effective use of this poverty programme, we may either scrap the Agency or create another one to look at ways of using these resources properly for the good of our people. At the end of the day, we shall be judged by the extent to which we are able to bring food on the table of Nigerians.

Senator Felix Kolawole Bajomo (Ogun West): Mr. President, let me first of all express my gratitude to you and to assure you that I will adhere to your admonition to keep my address very short and plead with others to also make it as short as possible.

I feel very sad and it is most unfortunate that this Senate is being made to address an issue that ought not to be addressed at this moment. NAPEP was set up eight years ago and today we cannot point to any specific programme that it has been executed successfully. This is a subject that affects every Nigerian, not even the poor alone. This is because if 70 *per cent* of our people is poor, even those who are rich, over time, if they are not careful in trying to address the ills of the poor, they will also become poor. So, As far as I am concerned, we are sitting on a keg of gun powder and something must be done about it immediately. If the anxiety and frustration of today is allowed to lead to desperation, I do not know what will befall us as the restiveness may not be easy to address.

The taste of the pudding is in the eating. It is not so much to say you want to bake a beautiful cake or you want to cook *edikaikon* for people and they are waiting for the menu which is not ready and in the process, they are able to drink only *gari* they will be kept alive. These people are not even having the smallest thing in this world to eat.

So, this issue is an issue that must be addressed. There is a specific programme that was handed over to Nigeria when there was death forgiveness; death forgiveness was predicated on the fact that we would address part of what is going to be the fallout on the poverty alleviation but today we are not able to do it.

We have passed many Motions here where we urged and pleaded with the government to do something. I do not know to what extent they are carrying out our urge and pleas. There must be a follow-up to ensure that the Executive does not just receive the outcome of our Resolutions and sit on it but to make sure that it is executed. NAPEP has failed and something must be done about it.

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Senator Ibrahim Mohammed Ida (Katsina Central): Mr. President, this is a very timely Motion. Some of us are really not surprised that NAPEP is being criticised in the manner it is. I say so against the backdrop of the knowledge of how it really came about.

NAPEP as presently constituted; could be remotely traced to 1994 when the Family Support Programme was introduced by the First Lady of that time. At that material time, the mandate of that programme was very clear because along side it were institutions that were also tailored towards addressing the problems of poverty. We had NALDA; NDE, Peoples Bank; Community Banks; Nigeria Bank for Agriculture, DIFRI and so on.

In 1996 there was an effort to put these things together and then Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) came into being. That is really the focus of the NAPEP. In 2001 when FEAP transformed into NAPEP because of the experience of the management of that time; I remember that it was Alhaji (Dr) Abdulahi Aliyu who was then the Director-General and there was a clear effort to ensure that specific programmes were addressed, the programme did not derail.

Unfortunately, over time certain issues were put into the programme that had more to do with politics than really poverty alleviation. I will give examples. There was what we call conditional cash transfers. Under this programme some households were given money, N5,000 cash each. They were not supposed to account for it; it was more or less just cash to the people. There were also what was known as Farmers Empowerment Programme, Capacity Acquisition Programme, General Micro Credit Grants; Promise Keeper Programme, KEKE NAPEP, Millennium Village Programme, Community Economic Sensitisation, Give Back Programme, Socio Welfare Service Scheme, Nature Resources Development and Conservative Scheme, Rural Resources Development and Conservative Scheme; Micro Finance Coordination Scheme, *et cetera*. There is no way that a single agency could see to the realisation of all these. At the same time, we still had NDE; Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, *et cetera*. So really, the programme was moribund and bound to fail from the time it was politicised.

As we are talking today the NAPEP man can easily tell you that he is doing all these programmes but the only one we can easily see physically is the KEKE NAPEP and this is the reason it is being made an issue. KEKE NAPEP was supposed to be a component; not very significant component because it was only to

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address movement. There are areas where you cannot use KEKE NAPEP. In fact, in most parts of the rural areas in Nigeria, you cannot even use KEKE NAPEP; but the others should have been the focal point.

First of all, there is a problem of scope which is much wider. The sponsors of the Motion have not been forthcoming in telling us from the time under reference to date how much money had really been allocated and released to the programme as my friend has raised and its achievements in the other programmes. If we have that we would have been in a better position to appreciate the whole problem.

In addition to looking into the problems of this programme, there should also be an effort to see how we can harmonise the activities of other agencies that are related to this so that the problem of poverty in a country of over 140 million people; if we say that over 70 or nearly 70 *per cent* are living below the poverty line; how much money was granted to these people to make the impact that will show that poverty is being alleviated? The scope of the Committee's assignment should be widened so as to include this.

With this remarks, I want to say that this is a very good Motion and we should really support it.

The Deputy President: The statistics you referred to are the issues that the inquiry will unveil.

Senator Enyinnaya H. Abaribe (Abia South): Mr. President, I completely agree with this Motion to take a look at the activities of NAPEP. But I want to urge my Colleagues as we are taking a look at it, for us not to take this as an opportunity to review every failed policy of government because it seems to me that whatever we have been saying here today we are using NAPEP as a paradigm for failed programmes in Nigeria. Why was NAPEP set up? There was no need to set it up because at that time there were several other programmes such as National Directorate of Employment (NDE) that were simply taken over by NAPEP.

In other words, we want to ask certain questions here. How much was NAPEP given from its inception to date for each and every one of us to stand up and claim that NAPEP is increasing poverty? NAPEP could not have been increasing poverty. The rate of poverty has been increasing all along. What we are saying is that NAPEP has found it very difficult to alleviate poverty due to the fact of failed policy, failed government and, of course, being run by failed people.

There are some unintended benefits of NAPEP. I want to say this with all due sense of responsibility that

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in my place, all the women who tie *gele*, who can no longer stay on Okada because of the helmet policy use the KEKE NAPEP and that means we cannot throw it away for the mere fact that we said NAPEP has failed.

We can continue to say; what does this Committee wants to do? I want to ask the question again, what does this Committee wants to do? This is because all along this is a Committee that has been over-sighting NAPEP and for the past two years, they have been over-sighting NAPEP, and we have not heard anything from them except for this Motion to do a Public Hearing. There is no problem with Public Hearing, but, we would ask in this Chamber, we have passed it and said it all over every time, Committees must do their work, they do not need to come here to obtain another mandate to go ahead to do something. We have done it several times. So, I urge this Committee go ahead and do their work. Do not wait for us to tell you to investigate NAPEP.

Finally, this is for the nation, there is no need to continue to reinvent the wheel that is what we continue to do in Nigeria. You have an Agency that is doing something in poverty; somebody gets up today and decides that he will set up another Commission, that Commission comes up with its own paraphernalia of office and all kinds of things that take the money away from what it is supposed to be used for. If you go to the Ministry of Labour they still have all the Agencies that are engaged in making sure that people get employment. When you turn around you will see MDG also doing the same job of trying to alleviate poverty and create employment. NAPEP, is also there. I am sure that tomorrow, we would get more Bills talking about Commissions all in an effort to solve the poverty problem in Nigeria. The time has come for Nigeria to take a look at its self and at its policies because there is plethora of government agencies and we do not see the effect of them.

Thank God that today we are having serious problem of finance that will lead us to look into the cost of government, because I believe that that is also a very major part of our failure. I urge this Committee to please, do its work.

The Deputy President: Before I invite distinguished Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim to speak, I want to put the record straight. The essence of bringing a Motion such as this for the Senate to empower its Committee to investigate an issue, is pursuant to Section 88(10a) of the Constitution. Let me read it to you. It says:

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Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, each House of the National Assembly shall have power by resolution published in its journal or in the Official Gazette of the Government of the Federation to direct or cause to be directed an investigation into any matter or thing with respect to which it has powers to make laws.

So, they are completely in order to bring this Motion and ask for the mandate.

Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim (Yobe East): Mr. President, I am in total support of this Motion. A lot of issues have been raised by my Colleagues who spoke earlier on this matter. What is most fundamental is what has been revealed in this Motion that 70 *per cent* of Nigerians live below poverty line. Indeed, all our efforts since 1999 have only succeeded in increasing poverty level, I think there is something much more fundamental than raising issues of NAPEP, NDE, and all the other parastatals and agencies of government specifically established to fight poverty.

To me, in a Third World economic setting like we have in Nigeria, and for that matter a failed state which Nigeria is considered to be at the world level, it is, indeed, that Nigeria is regarded by many academicians as a failed state. But that is not the issue before us now. To me, all government activities by any of the ministries or parastatals, or agencies of government, are big components for poverty eradication. Everything that every ministry or parastatal does, in a way, is supposed to be reducing poverty, yet poverty is increasing. We have more fundamental issues to be raised than just declaring that NAPEP has failed. Yes, that NAPEP has failed is not in dispute at all. There are other similar agencies of government that have also failed. They are also not in dispute. But, for eight to nine years, a government established by the so-called biggest Party in Africa keeps on doing things that only increase and not decrease poverty means that there is something more fundamental than what we are talking about.

This Committee is going to investigate beyond declaring that NAPEP has failed. It should also look into the more fundamental issue of why all our efforts end up as failures by increasing poverty instead of reducing poverty.

We have more fundamental problems than just blaming NAPEP and all other agencies of government. We should go deeper to blame those who are in control of the country; those who have made it impossible for us to make progress; those whose activities continue to

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increase poverty and not decrease poverty. We should go deeper.

Finally, I happened to be a Governor for ten years. As a Deputy Vice Chairman of Public Accounts Committee when I saw some claims by NAPEP, I challenged the operators of NAPEP and all I got was; we are sorry, we would pay more attention to your State. But, 90 *per cent* of the claims made by that organization in Yobe State whilst I was the Governor were not on the ground. There was no single Keke NAPEP that ever reached Yobe State. So, there were spurious claims like that. So, I suggest that NAPEP should be forced to deliver to us a comprehensive report on all its activities even before the Public Hearing, so that distinguished Senators would have details of what NAPEP has been claiming to have done in the last eight or nine years. This should be done so that when we go to the Public Hearing, we would be fully armed in disputing or accepting the things they have claimed. In my own case, 90 *per cent* of what I saw was false and I made them to admit that it was so.

So, this is a very important issue. We want a comprehensive report on all their activities from 2001 to date. We want that before the Public Hearing so that we would be armed in looking for solution rather than just blaming them. I have said earlier that the fact that NAPEP failed is no more in dispute. That should not be the main aim of that Committee when they investigate, they should go deeper to find out really why PDP as a Party and as a Government has being operating only to make us poorer. They have been on huge Chairs like that of Mr. President of the Federation, and the Senate President only doing things that make us poorer and not richer. Why? There is more fundamental problem than what we are seeing. It is more than a sabotage. How can anybody sabotage a huge party like PDP in this country? Who can do that? No body. There are internal problems and we must look inwards for solution to this problem.

The Deputy President: That is the beauty of democracy. Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim are you saying that Yobe State is working?

Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim: Yes, it is working.

Senator Nkechi J. Nwaogu (Abia Central): Mr. President, I associate myself with this good Motion. A lot has already been said on the dismal performance of NAPEP. I believe the sponsors of this Motion should be commended.

It is worthy of note, however, that this Agency has been in existence since 2001. One begins to wonder

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why NAPEP was created in the first place. These are some of the problems or concern some of us have expressed in the proliferation of agencies. Recently, we had a nomenclature called MDG, which was fallout from the debt cancellation. Today, it is on record that this MDG is metamorphosing into another bureaucracy called commission. It is the same duplication of the lean resources. Let it be on record that somebody is prophesying that in the next couple of years we will begin to talk about the ineptitude of this Agency if care is not taken. Why can we not drive a programme to a sustainable level? Why is it that we had NDE programme years ago which was geared towards empowering our graduates and non-graduates to be self-employed? Today it has become a mirage.

We are talking about NAPEP, this Public Hearing is definitely required. There is need to review the programmes of NAPEP over the seven years of its existence. Why is it that we have failed as a nation to maintain the virtues of continuity, sustainability and consistency? What do we derive by starting something today and breaking it off tomorrow? I used to be in this Committee called NAPEP for four years when I was in the House of Representatives. For four years we had rhetoric; for four years we had programmes on paper; for four years we gave false expectations to our Constituencies and at the end of the day we failed our people.

This is not a matter of public gallantry. We must, as a matter of urgency, begin to ask questions because responsibilities have been bestowed on us as peoples' Representatives and it behoves on us to turn them into positive realities.

What are we talking about today? What we are saying is that time has come. I urge this distinguished Senate to allow this Committee to conduct in-depth investigative Public Hearing to unearth whatever problems or lapses confronting this Agency. The time has also come for us to begin to punish erring officials. We had had so many Public Hearings where this distinguished body had exhumed mismanagement but what did we get. How far have people been given the right punishment for mismanaging the positions entrusted on them? It is not just to do the Public Hearing; we must devise a means whereby erring officials are brought to book which would act as a deterrent. It would help to make the Civil Servants and those bestowed with some responsibilities and functions to sit up.

It is not good enough to discuss and consider reports and make persuasive recommendations or urge relevant agencies to do something; we must ensure that officers bestowed with responsibilities must be given their due

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punishment according to the law when they betrayed the trust.

I rise to support this Public Hearing. It is worthy of having it and having it conclusively.

The Deputy President: I am going to invite Senator Victor Ndoma-Egba, the Deputy Leader to speak but before doing so, let me also say to Senator Nkechi Nwaogu that the issue of punishment is an executive action and we as legislators have done our own part by investigating the matters and discussing them. Until we make our Resolutions binding it remains for the Executive to ensure that appropriate punishments are meted out to offenders.

Senator Victor Ndoma-Egba (Cross River Central): Mr. President, the issue of poverty is too fundamental and too far-reaching for us to reduce to NAPEP. If we did that we will be falling into the error of over-simplification, scapegoatism and tokenism.

From the statistics given by our very respected Colleague, Senator Ahmed Lawan, poverty has been increasing and why? Can we attribute all of these to NAPEP? I believe that government, whether in Nigeria, America or anywhere else in the world is designed to alleviate poverty. Every ministry, department or agency of government ought to alleviate poverty. Is it NAPEP that is responsible for the lack of power in Nigeria today? We know that power is the major problem of this country. What have we done with power? We have politicised it. We came up with a policy of IPPs. What happened? We are investigating IPPs and have scared away everybody involved in it. Today we have gone to the regulatory authorities and then we expect foreign investors to invest in the power sector when we have chased out and frightened everybody off. Is it NAPEP that is responsible? No, Sir. What is responsible is the failure of policy and too much politics.

Is it NAPEP that is responsible for the state of our roads? You need power and infrastructure for you to address poverty. Is it NAPEP that is responsible for the state of our roads? No, Sir. Is it NAPEP that is responsible for the state of our education because without education you cannot eradicate poverty?

Is it NAPEP that is responsible for our lack of values? No, Sir. To reduce the issue of poverty in Nigeria to NAPEP is to miss the point totally. I will support this Motion on one condition and that condition is that we investigate the functioning of government and the cost of government to those we govern. It cannot be NAPEP. To reduce the issue of poverty, I say once again, to NAPEP is to totally over simplify the issue and

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to search out for scapegoats and engage in tokenism. The issue of poverty is far larger than NAPEP. We must address the issue of power, infrastructure, education and values in our society.

Senator Mahmud Kanti Bello: I have a Point of Order!

The Deputy President: Order what?

Senator Mahmud Kanti Bello: It is Section 88 of the Constitution which deals on power to conduct investigations. I have to raise this Point of Order so that we do not get derailed. I feel that Senator Ndoma-Egba has missed the point. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria mandates us strongly and unequivocally and anybody without even being a lawyer would completely understand this part of the Constitution. It says:

Subject to the provision of this Constitution, each House of the National Assembly shall have power by resolution published in its journal or in the Official Gazette of the government of the Federation to direct or cause to be directed an investigation into ...:

It goes further under Section 88(2) to say: *The powers conferred on the National Assembly under the provisions of this section are exercisable only for the purpose of enabling it to:*

(b) expose corruption, inefficiency or waste in the execution or administration of laws within its legislative competence..

What I am trying to explain to Senator Ndoma-Egba and other distinguished Colleagues is that we are investigating NAPEP in order to defend what we have sworn to. Each Member here has sworn to defend the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Since we have sworn to defend it, we are trying to expose the corruption in NAPEP and this distinguished Body should give the power to the Committee to allow it expose this corruption in NAPEP as enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution which I believe that my distinguished Colleague ought to put us in the right track. I just want to put him in the right track.

The Deputy President: Senator Kanti Bello, I believe that what Senator Ndoma-Egba did was to contribute to the debate and he has the right to disagree with the Motion. All of us cannot agree and he is neither disputing the provisions of Section 88 nor is he saying that we do not have powers under Section 88 to

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do what we are doing. He is entitled to his opinion; that is why it is democracy. So, I am very reluctant to rule you out of order.

Senator Umaru Dahiru: I have a Point of Order!

The Deputy President: Order what?

Senator Umaru Dahiru: I will still rely on Section 88 of the Constitution as read by Senator Kanti Bello and the contribution made by Senator Ndoma-Egba. The body of the Motion is talking about NAPEP activities on the issue of eradicating poverty within the context of Nigeria. But if we are to follow Section 88, I feel the Motion should address itself on the issue of exposing corruption and the money that is said to have been disbursed to the Agency. Certainly, there are some lapses in the application of the funds being given to them.

If one listens to all the contributions they are talking about eradication of poverty. The Resolution we are to confer on this Committee, which has been created by us through the provision of Section 62 of the Constitution, is that they want to apply the power given to us under Section 88 of the Constitution. If I will go through the Prayer of the Motion itself, asking for just Public Hearing, I feel it is not the issue; the issue is the investigation. Without Public Hearing they could do whatever they want. If they want to conduct investigation, they could do it within closed doors or go public. They can go wherever they want to go because that is their problem. But to say they are looking for power to conduct Public Hearing is not an issue. Section 88 as read by Senator Kanti Bello says conduct investigation and we will come down to a level where it says:

(a) in any matter or thing with respect to which it has power to make laws; and

(b)(ii) disbursing or administering moneys appropriated or to be appropriated by the National Assembly.

I believe money had been given by the National Assembly and it was our thinking that it had been abused. So, all the time that has been taken on poverty while we have so many government agencies eradicating poverty, what are they doing? They are not doing their job that is why we are doing this. If the Committee feels that there was misapplication of funds; please by all means, let us stop at giving them that power to do the investigation. So, I submit.

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The Deputy President: When we get to the Prayer, if you have any problem with the Prayer you can raise it.

Senator Julius A. Ucha (Ebonyi Central): Mr. President, three issues can be deduced as the intention of the movers of this Motion. One is that the Motion is asking; how can we ensure that truth does not continue to languish in the operation of government agency like NAPEP? Secondly, that there is accountability and probity in public spending. Thirdly, that justice is done to our people by government agencies, mostly NAPEP.

I sincerely believe that the intention of the creation of that Agency is to ensure that hope is given to the people of Nigeria. As mankind will survive by the instrumentality of hope, this hope has not only been dashed because of ineffective performance of NAPEP as a government agency, created to give our people hope and to act as a bridge between government and the people. Today, the hope has been crushed and the people have now turned to be enemies of government because NAPEP has not been able to perform its function.

I will say that part of the problem emanates from the Legislature in crating these agencies over and over again. Secondly, our budgetary system appears to have been structured to accommodate financial recklessness by the privileged people in the society and that is exactly what is happening with KEKE NAPEP.

When we look at the KEKE NAPEP as my Colleagues have said is a machine which our local engineers have the capacity to construct. KEKE NAPEP is an insult on the sensibility of Nigerians. The people that contrived this idea did so in bad faith because when I see that KEKE NAPEP and people getting into it, I feel ashamed that I am a Nigerian; that in 21st Century an Agency created by government would give the government advice that the only thing they could do is to import a machine that is absurd and looks like a wicked mechanism to destroy the people.

In addition to what the Committee will be asked to do is that the KEKE NAPEP should be cleared off from the streets of Nigeria because it insults our people and exposes us as people who are not friendly with the members of the public.

I sincerely believe that in addition to granting the right to the Committee to investigate the activities of NAPEP we can also direct the Committee that after concluding their investigation, initiate a Bill (*Interruptions*).

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The Deputy President: That can come as additional Prayer when we come to that.

Senator Julius Ucha: I am most obliged. All I am trying to say is that as our Members have canvassed here, we have past Resolutions that have not actually been implemented by the Government but we should initiate a Bill that would repeal the Acts establishing such institutions.

Senator Smart Adeyemi (Kogi West): Mr. President, I rise to say that the greatest threat to democracy today, and indeed, to peace and stability of our nation is poverty. There is no amount of days or hours that is too much to discuss the issues that affect the well-being of the poor people.

The rate of corruption is on the increase in Nigeria, and indeed, among politicians because you have a large army of unemployed people and youths who look on to you as politician to provide their daily bread. If we continue for days to discuss the problem of NAPEP vis-à-vis poverty, is well spent hours.

It is inexplicable that we set aside N2.4 billion to import KEKE NAPEP and we have just been able to receive just 500 units. I stand to say that it is to the benefit of all of us when we look at issues that affect the well-being of the people. We must rise to this occasion first to give support to this Motion but more importantly, we must still have Motions that must discuss the poor standard of living of our people. Democracy is said to be a government that will bringing dividends to the people. Today, poverty is on the increase.

Indeed, the Central Bank Governor acknowledged at one of the workshops he organised in Kaduna that 70 *per cent* of Nigerians are poor. If it is so, in a nation where our revenue earning is on the increase, with other means of revenue accruable to the nation, then we must find a solution.

I want to commend Senator Zaynab Kure and others who sponsored this Motion. Even though we are PDP Members, it is unfortunate that Opposition is dead in this country. These are issues that should be challenged by the Opposition. Some of the Opposition Parties' Members are preparing to decamp to PDP. You can understand the problem of our nation. People are not really compassionate about the poor standard of living of the masses. The greatest threat to our stability is the revolution which is gathering momentum because across this country you have army of unemployed people. We should not pretend and say it is all well with our nation. Forget about military intervention to derail

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democracy, the greatest threat to democracy today, are those youths that are not employed.

Senator Ahmad Ibrahim Lawan (Yobe North): Point of Order!

The Deputy President: Order what Senator Ahmad Ibrahim Lawan?

Senator Ahmad Ibrahim Lawan: Mr. President, it is Order 53(7) with your permission I read. *It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language.* Senator Smart Adeyemi referred to us on this side as people who are angling to move to your side. *(Laughter)* That side is already dead as pronounced by those who are there themselves. We take exception to the statement of Senator Smart Adeyemi.

The Deputy President: If there is any language that is offensive it is yours and I rule you out of order.

Senator Smart Adeyemi: In a nutshell, the issues of poverty and unemployment are serious. NAPEP is a failure by concept and by implementation of some of their programmes. We must, as lawmakers, look at issues that will help us to provide jobs for the increasing number of youths.

Today, we have over 95 universities recognised by the National Universities Commission. Every year, graduates are trooping out without jobs. It goes beyond the issue of NAPEP. We must be able to articulate programmes that will help to improve the standard of living of our people and I will suggest that it is not out of place, for us to revisit the issue of the rail system in our nation; ensuring that we have rail system linking all the cities of this country as one of the ways of providing jobs for the unemployed people.

We must take mechanised agriculture with all the seriousness it deserves. Our leaders must be compassionate. How many of the Governors have been able to set up one or two small agro-allied based industries in the last two years? Today, the exchange rate is ₦153 per dollar because in every allocation people pack billions of Naira out of this country. We cannot be pretending that all is well with our nation. It is either we are ready to serve our nation or we resign and allow the masses to rule themselves. We have failed as a ruling class and we have failed to meet the needs and aspirations of the youths.

Senator James E. Manager (Delta South): Mr. President, in the first place, I want to thank you for the opportunity given to me and the privilege of the moment to contribute to this all-important debate.

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We must not be tired of discussing issues bothering on poverty in this country. I want to urge that we set aside one full week for discussing the issue of poverty in the land. We are in trouble. I want to believe that beyond this Chamber, you are being confronted with problems daily. It is not even outside this National Assembly. The moment you step out of this place, you are being confronted by people who are looking for money. A clash is imminent between the haves and the have-nots and you can imagine the colossal development in that direction, and particularly the haves would be in trouble because the have-nots would consume all of us. Therefore, nobody is safe. We are being considered to be very privileged people, therefore, daily on the road, in your own houses; everywhere, in the Churches and Mosques, if you are a Senator, you are not safe.

When I read through this Motion, certain things came into my mind. One, NAPEP is unfortunate; the naming is wrong. National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) is wrong. How can they eradicate poverty when almost 90 *per cent* of our population is facing poverty? It should have been named; National Poverty Minimising Programme and not eradication.

The other issue that came into my mind is about the Motion itself. I do not have the opportunity of glancing through the Sessional Report of this particular Committee because this is a Committee that is over-sighting NAPEP. What is in their Sessional Report? Ordinarily, if not for Section 88 of our Constitution, these are things that it is supposed to unravel and reveal to Nigerians, not coming by way of Motion. I agree that Section 88 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria gives them power, by the Grace of God, if there is a Resolution on the Floor of the Senate to investigate but ordinarily the Committee's Sessional Report ought to have revealed all these developments about NAPEP.

I, particularly, enjoyed the contribution of Senator Victor Ndoma-Egba, my respected Senior Advocate of Nigeria. Of course, the attempt that was made by the oldest lawyer on the Floor of the Senate and by the grace of God, Chairman, Senate Committee on Judiciary, making an attempt to do something which ought to be done at the end of this Motion. When the time comes, we will look into it because it is a technical thing that he has pointed out using his legal brain.

To sum up everything I have been saying, I would like to refer this distinguished Senate to Section 16 of our Constitution that is, Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy. With your

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permission, I will read Section 16(1)(a)(b) and then Section 16(2)(b)(c) and (d).

Section 16(1) reads: *That State shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constitution -*

- a) *harness the resources of the nation and promote national prosperity and an efficient, a dynamic and self-reliant economy;*
- b) *control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity;*

Section 16(2) reads: *The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring -*

- (b) *that the material resources of the nation are harnessed and distributed as best as possible to serve the common good;*
- (c) *that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group; and*
- (d) *that suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions and unemployment, sick benefits and welfare of the disabled are provided for all citizens.*

I want this Public Hearing, in the final analysis, to reveal if NAPEP is structured and empowered financially by the Government of Nigeria appropriated by this distinguished gentlemen and women to eradicate poverty, which is what they have been asked to do.

The Deputy President: I have exhausted the first list. I do not know if I can put the Question at this stage or do you want us to continue?

Some distinguished Senators: Continue.

Some distinguished Senators: Put the Question.

The Deputy President: All right, let us take those who are against the Motion.

Senator Joy Emodi (Anambra North): Mr. President, let me start by saying that this is the most

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important item that we had taken up in this Chamber since inception of this Senate. It is the most important because a government is set up primarily to take care of the welfare of its people. The issue of poverty is a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the body fabric of this country. Imagine where 70 *per cent* of the population of 140 million living below poverty level. It is not cheering news at all. It is the responsibility of all of us to know what to do about this singular problem ravaging this country. We all know the effect of poverty. It gives rise to crime. Imagine a situation whereby a 74 year old woman is still involved in drug trafficking as a result of poverty. We have our boys roaming the streets and we are happy feeling that this is not the most important item that should be discussed in this hallowed Chamber.

Rather than condemn NAPEP we should take a holistic view at this topic of poverty and see whether or not NAPEP was designed to fail. We have to look at all the programmes set up by the government to fight poverty in this country whether there has been a concerted effort to combat poverty.

Funny enough, few years ago another programme was set up through which government was doling out N3,000 cash to people every month. I could not see that as a means of fighting poverty. Of course, it received serious condemnation from the people of this country. The money was handed out as political patronage. Was that a serious effort to fight poverty?

Again, why must we be talking about KEKE NAPEP when we have 70 *per cent* of 140 million Nigerians living below poverty line? I will urge the Committee that in organising the Public Hearing; they should not limit it to KEKE NAPEP.

Again, we have to ask ourselves; how much was allocated to NAPEP that we expect them to perform miracles? How much was released to NAPEP to fight poverty? We expect a small organisation to fight poverty of 70 *per cent* of 140 million Nigerians for us; are we telling ourselves the honest truth?

The issue is that, I am just sorry to say it, the government still has not actually decided to face the issue of poverty in this country. It is the most important problem, so to say, to tackle and it needs the concerted efforts from all of us.

We are talking about unemployment; what about the motherless babies and the destitute people we chased out of the streets because we do not want to see beggars on the streets. Where would they go? What of

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the old peoples' home? This is a food for thought for the government and also the Committee.

In carrying out this Public Hearing, there is every need to take a holistic look at the problem of poverty; call for inputs from the people so that they would come up with ways that we can tackle the problem. We should not apply a kind of fire brigade approach such as NAPEP.

Do we have effective mechanism like NAPEP in the states? I know they have State Coordinators but what do they do? Most of the time the Coordinator would come to the state and gather some women and hands out, maybe, the sum of N1.5 million and ask them to go without monitoring what those people are doing with the money. They may even use the money as patronage because they did not get enough to work with. While we condemn NAPEP we must also look at what they have been getting from the government and whether the organisation was even designed to tackle poverty effectively.

I support the Motion because it is a wonderful Motion. We are here to see to the welfare of our Constituents who live in abject poverty. I urge the Committee to take holistic look at this issue and not limiting it to NAPEP. After this they should come up with recommendations on how best to reposition the mechanism to fight poverty in this country. Nobody will support poverty. It is good for them to look at the allocations made for the importation of KEKE NAPEP to fight poverty in this country.

Senator Lee Ledogo Maeba (Rivers South-East): Mr. President, I want to speak a little more elaborate on this Motion. Somebody has defined poverty. Poverty by its definition is a sin perpetrated by any government against humanity. It is injustice. Anybody who has been given money to rule a people and see some dying with hunger in the evening; and see children who died as a result of hunger for three days and does not feel guilty should check himself because something must be wrong with him.

Senator James Manager took time off to read all the provisions of the Constitution as it mandates the Executive of any tier of government to be directly responsible to ensure that there is food on the table; drugs in the hospitals and several other things.

Senator Kanti Bello: I have a Point of Order.

The Deputy President: Yes, Point of Order, Senator Kanti Bello.

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Senator Kanti Bello: Mr. President, we should not allow ourselves to be derailed.

I want to read Order 57(1) which says: *Debate upon any Motion, or bill or amendment shall be relevant to such Motion, Bill or amendment except in the case of a substantive Motion for the adjournment of the Senate.* The Motion is very clear; it says: *Further observes that eight years after the establishment of the Agency, it could not effectively impact on the lives of less privileged Nigerians despite the huge resources committed through appropriate and MDG's funds.* This is the Motion and the Motion is urging us to look into this. If you look at the Order Paper that is what the Motion is all about and he is taking us round and round. It is very unnecessary.

The Deputy President: I have noted it.

Senator Lee Maeba: When Senator James Manager was reading out those Sections of the Constitution that are binding on all of us by the Oath of Allegiance we subscribed to here, it behoves on us to rise above board to do those things that will alleviate poverty in the land.

When we were on the Senate Retreat we all went to Kaduna where we were confronted with about 14 Textile Companies that had shut down sending about 84,000 workers into the job market. We all lamented and regretted of not doing anything before now. But when we returned we talked of bailout and government rejected bailout without reason. It was written on all the newspapers. They rejected bailout because of insensitivity to the plight of the people. Eighty four thousand people were thrown to the labour market when the textile companies are ready to work. All these textile companies that were closed down in Kaduna are still producing in Ghana.

Michelin (Nigeria) Limited whilst it was in Port Harcourt employed over 80,000 workers. It was shut down last year. I went to Ghana and I discovered that they had been give a large portion of land to set up. The issue is, what can NAPEP do for all these number of unemployed. Unemployment causes poverty to families and thousands of dependent relations. So, we have a situation of escalating poverty.

In 2006, American CIA generated a report that if some measures were not taken that by 2015 Nigeria would become a totally failed state. People castigated the report that America do not like Nigeria and that we should throw the report away. What were the indices of that report? The indices were escalating poverty due to insecurity and lack of investment. Those things are evident today. Today there is a travel restriction to

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Nigeria by the United Nations because of the activities of the militants. There is also an investment restriction on Nigeria by the World Bank because of insecurity.

The Deputy President: Could you round off, please.

Senator Lee Maeba: Mr. President, it is not a matter of rounding off, the Rules say I should not contribute for more than forty minutes and I have not used up to five minutes.

What I am trying to say is that government has been insensitive to the plight of the people. If you look at the situation in the Niger Delta, all the efforts of government is that militants should drop their arms.

Senator Umaru Dahiru (Sokoto South): Point of Order, Mr. President.

The Deputy President: Order What Senator Dahiru?

Senator Umaru Dahiru: Order 55(3) says: *The President of the Senate shall allocate one- half of such time to be given to debate in favour of and one-half to debate in opposition to such proposition.* You have already ruled. There were lots of contributions in favour of the Motion and we have been thinking that those who can now speak are those who wish to oppose the body of the Motion itself and not just making wide and bogus or general contribution. Senator Lee Maeba is just making a general contribution which has been made by everybody. So, I feel that he is out of context and out of the ruling that you have already made.

The Deputy President: You are in order because I have ruled on this unless this is Senator Maeba's way of opposing the Motion.

Senator Lee Maeba: Mr. President, I will now focus completely on this Motion. I am against it. Senator Dahiru has just asked me to narrow my contribution to this Motion proper. I will do that.

If you look at this Motion from what Senator Joy Emodi has said, I have the Sessional Report of the Committee on National Planning that was submitted in 2008. That Report does not highlight the alarm we are having now. One thing we are doing here that is not correct is that when Committees bring reports they just dump them and we do not discuss them. Our Order is that we should discuss those Committees' Reports so that we will be acquainted with the work of the Committees. We are not doing that.

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I strongly suggest that from henceforth, Committee Reports should be debated. Senators should be allowed to look at the Reports that is what should bring us together as a Senate working from individual Committees.

In order not to take much time, the issue of poverty has placed Nigeria in a way that this Senate must discuss the state of the nation in total. The indices available with us; forget about party, is that we are heading to a total failed state. It is not either you are PDP or ANPP, if you are in a situation like this, it calls for all stakeholders to come together. The Senate must discuss the state of the nation so that we can see how we can stop our failures. How we can stop our drifting to depression. We are in total depression. America is not ashamed to say they are in recession. We should not be ashamed to say we are in a depression. Either it is called by PDP or ANPP, we are heading to a failed state so we should discuss now. We should take a date to debate the state of the nation.

Senator Wilson Ake (River West): Your Excellency, the President of the Senate, I have looked through the Motion and I believe that the people who raised this Motion have good intension, the intension to bring to focus of the Senate the little performance by NAPEP.

But as Senator Ahmed Lawan said earlier one, NAPEP is like a radarless ship with a blind Captain. I agree that it is a radarless ship but not with a blind Captain. If there is a ship without radar no matter how good the Captain maybe that ship will definitely have problem.

Most of our agencies are established based on political exigencies without adequate research and planning and with no set target or statistics. I want to tell you that we do not have good statistics in this country. There are no targets set for NAPEP that we are aware of and we know that they have not met the target. Poverty will continue to grow as long as people are removed from their jobs. No matter the achievement you made, when you add more numbers to the ones you have achieved it would overcome or out strip the achievements you have recorded.

Looking at this Motion, there is no sufficient information. They are asking us to look into what NAPEP has been doing. They are requesting for a Public Hearing, where the public will now tell us what have been happening in NAPEP. If NAPEP had been established to eradicate poverty in the truest sense of it, who are the targets for this poverty eradication? Is it everybody that is unemployed; is it somebody that has

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been thrown out of job; is it somebody who is not educated? Who are the targets? There are categories of poverty and we do not know who the targets are. So, we do not know what has been achieved by NAPEP since inception.

I believe that the Committee should go and do its work and ask NAPEP what they have achieved; how much they received and where they have expended it. One problem we have is that as we establish new agency, we spend money for that. No matter how much you give to them at inception, it would go into administrative set up.

So, I believe that the Motion itself has some problem. It should not have come at this moment. They should have done more work before bringing this Motion and I suggest they should go back to do more work before we look at it. The Prayer is asking for Public Hearing and we know what it means.

The Deputy President: We should go to the Prayers now that we have listened to those who are opposed to it. You can oppose it further at the consideration of the Prayer.

Senator Lee Ledogo Maeba: Point of Order, Mr. President.

The President: Order what?

Senator Lee Maeba: It is Order 55(1)(2)(3) & (4). Order 55(1) says:

- (1) *The Rules and Business Committee shall allocate time to all sequence of speeches, motions or bills coming before the Senate.*
- (2) *During the debate on all motions and bills, the President of the Senate shall allow speeches for the proposal first followed by speeches against the proposal,*
- (3) *The President of the Senate shall allocate one-half of such time to be given to debate in favour of and one-half to debate in opposition to such proposition;*
- (4) *No Senator shall be entitled to address the Senate or a Committee of the Whole Senate for more than forty minutes on any subject.*

I raise this Motion to clarify from you as the custodian of the Rules whether this Rule gives you power to stop Senators who want to speak on Motion to speak or debate on a Motion?

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Every Senator sitting here is privileged to give his debate on any Motion or Bill. Also each Senator sitting here represents individual Constituency that is why the Rule has said that not even can they speak for more than forty minutes but can speak for up to forty minutes.

So, my question to you is that does any part of our Rules give you power to stop anybody who willingly wants to contribute in a Motion or a Bill from doing so?

The Deputy President: My power to regulate proceedings of this Senate is covered by Order 25(1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g) and (h). Order 25(1)(h) says I shall interpret the Rules. Here, I had ruled earlier that those who are against should speak and that was the last part of the debate, which we had taken. You will recall that when you were speaking I ruled that that was your own way of opposing the Motion. So, I have heard both sides, that is, those who are opposed to it and those in support of the Motion which is the important thing at this stage.

So, I rule you out of order completely. We will now go to the Prayers.

Senator Zaynab A. Kure: Mr. President, I just want to make some clarifications judging from the contributions of my Colleagues. Based on what the Constitution says, I would like to say that the Committee has resolved to say we want power to investigate, not power to hold a Public Hearing.

Again, I want to make it clear that NAPEP, of course, was not set up to eradicate poverty in the whole country. It is the sole agency to do that. It is just one of the agencies that had been put in place to eradicate poverty and because funds are being appropriated to it, it behoves on us to look into their activities.

It is true that the Sessional Report that we gave did not capture what we have found out to be their unmaking of what they are supposed to do. It is true. The Report did not capture that. I know that apart from Members of the Committee, other Senators confront us from time to time to find out what is happening in NAPEP. They want to know how to access KEKE NAPEP. They want to know what is really happening because they are not hearing anything in their States. I know that it is through our intervention that even the State Coordinators were being strengthened.

At first, when we came on board there was nothing like State Coordinators. They were only on ground in a few States. Apart from that, most of the states partnered with NAPEP to eradicate poverty. Most of us in the Committee have gone to our states to find out what is

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happening regarding NAPEP activities. Most of us came back with reports that are not palatable. KEKE NAPEP that was mentioned here is not the only aspect that NAPEP focuses on. If anything, it is the minutest of their programmes. There are other programmes as the ones Senator Ida read out; one of which is the Conditional Cash Transfer where grants are being given to families.

I was personally present at the launching of the CCT in Niger State. I went there with Senator Kuta because it was held in his Constituency. As soon as the first round was given nothing again was given to those families and money was appropriated for it for a whole year. This particular investigation we intend to do has nothing to do particularly with Dr. Magnus Kpakor. He is not the only person working in NAPEP. There are Coordinators at both the Local Government and State levels. We believe that with the hue and cry of non-performance, they are not feeling it. Most of my Colleagues would attest to the fact that they have not seen the KEKE NAPEP tricycles that were distributed in their respective States. This we had mentioned to Dr. Magnus Kpakor himself.

We have told him to put in place a Monitoring and Evaluation Committee under his supervision. This is because he cannot just write a Report without verification. There has to be Evaluation and Verification Committee to ensure that these things get to the real people. A good example is the micro-credit scheme which some of us are experts in. Most of us here have poverty alleviation programmes that we are pursuing. Because of the multiplier effect of the Micro Credit Scheme, if it gets to the right people, quite often than not you will discover that in a community if you give a woman, maybe, ₦5,000 or ₦10,000 when the year comes around she may not need it by which time two or three women would have benefited from it.

Most of the reports we have been getting is that these things are not getting to the right people. We cannot say we are reporting in our own Sessional Report that it has not happened without conducting investigation. If we do not have the facts we cannot report anything. That is why we want the Senate to allow us investigate to find out what the true position is.

Senator George Thompson Sekibo: Point of Order, Mr. President!

The Deputy President: What is the point of Order, Senator Sekibo?

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Senator George T. Sekibo: It is Order 55(2) and (3) of our Standing Orders. With your permission, I read:

2. During the debate on all motions and bills, the President of the Senate shall allow speeches for the proposal first followed by speeches against the proposal.

3. The President of the Senate shall allocate one-half of such time to be given to debate in favour of and one-half to debate in opposition to such proposition.

I would like Mr. President to allow me make few comments on it.

The Deputy President: I have noted what you said.

Senator George T. Sekibo: I have not made my point.

The Deputy President: Go ahead.

Senator George T. Sekibo: Mr. President, this Motion is not a Motion for this Senate; it is a Motion for this country.

The Deputy President: Which Motion are you talking about? Is it your own Motion?

Senator George T. Sekibo: It is the Motion that was brought by – *(Interruptions)*

The Deputy President: No, let us deal with your Motion first.

Senator George Thompson Sekibo: I want to speak against the Motion.

The Deputy President: Which Motion are you referring to?

Senator George Thompson Sekibo: The Motion brought by my distinguished Colleague:

The Deputy President: You raised a Point of Order and I will rule on it.

Senator George T. Sekibo: I was not given half the time.

The Deputy President: Can I rule on that? Anyway, I am happy you know what the ruling will be because we discussed this matter and I said we have taken one part of our time for those who are in support

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and we have taken the other part. We will finish with that. We are already taking the Prayers. Based on Order 64 of our Rules, we cannot reopen this issue again unless by a substantive Motion. I, therefore, rule you out of order.

We will go to the Prayers.

Senator Mohammed Kabiru Jibril (Kaduna Central) Mr. President, I have a Point of Order.

The Deputy President: Yes, what is the Order?

Senator Mohammed Kabiru Jibril: My Point of Order is based on constitutional provisions coming from Section 14(1) and (2)(b). Also Section 17(1)(g). Section 14(1) of the Constitution says: *The Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be a State based on the principles of democracy and social justice.*

Section 14(2) says: *It is hereby, accordingly declared that –*

(b) *the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government.*

Section 17(1) says: *The State's social order is founded on ideals of freedom, Equality and Justice.*

Accordingly 17(2) says: *In furtherance of the social order*

3(g) provision is made for public assistance in deserving cases or other conditions of need.

I rise to inform this hallowed Chamber that the Motion under consideration appears to be very restrictive of this constitutional provisions and accordingly, we will not be doing justice to the common man in Nigeria by discussing poverty in relation with the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) without opening it up to other areas of poverty application; poverty reduction and poverty alleviation in the areas of our Government. With regard to this particularly, I will like to say that I come from an agricultural area in Kaduna State and one of the issues that has been bedeviling us for years since the beginning of this administration towards achieving poverty alleviation or eradication is the fact that Agricultural Credit Scheme was launched by this government but our farmers could not access it. I believe it is one fundamental area where poverty could actually be addressed. (*Interruptions*)

The Deputy President: Senator Jibril, you raised a Point of Order and you are now trying to contribute

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through the back door. You have read the Sections of the Constitution and you are saying that we cannot deal with the issue of poverty in relation to NAPEP alone and I have noted that.

Pursuant to Section 88(1) of the Constitution, any issue whatsoever which we have powers to make laws; we can take it even if it means in isolation to deal with it and direct our Committee to investigate it. I do not think that we need to deal with the whole gamut of poverty or wealth before our Committees can do their job. On this note, I rule you out of order.

On Prayer 1 is there any amendment?

Senator Bassey Ewa-Henshaw (Cross River South): Mr. President, because I was not given the opportunity to make a contribution, I would like to lay a foundation for the reason for my Amendment and I would like to refer us to our Rule, Order 97(43) which says:

There shall be a Committee to be known as Committee on National Planning, Economic Affairs and Poverty Alleviation appointed at the commencement of the life of the Senate. The jurisdiction of the Committee shall include:

- (a) *Economic Intelligence;*
- (b) *Economic Planning;*
- (c) *National Manpower Board;*
- (d) *Statistics;*
- (e) *Preparation and Publication of the National Rolling Plan;*
- (f) *Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission;*
- (g) *Economic Policy;*
- (h) *International Economic Council;*
- (i) *National Economic Council;*
- (j) *Fiscal and Monetary Policies of the Government i.e Macro Economics;*
- (k) *Trade and Investment Policy;*
- (l) *Economic Intelligence and Planning;*
- (m) *International Economic Policies;*
- (n) *Designing Policies and reaching out to Rural Areas for a Provision of avenues of employment generation and productive opportunities;*
- (o) *Designing Programmes for Rural Housing, Land Reform, Education, Primary Healthcare, Drinking Water, Communication and Rural Radio and Television;*
- (p) *Designing Infrastructure Development Programmes for rural Roads;*
- (q) *Agriculture, marketing and development of Rural Energy Resources;*
- (r) *Annual Budget Estimates.*

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The point I am making is that the Prayer that we have before us does not do justice to the work that the Committee needs to do. I believe that looking into the affairs of NAPEP that should only be a fraction of what this Committee needs to do.

Senator Kanti Bello: I have a Point of Order.

The Deputy President: Order what, Chief Whip?

Senator Kanti Bello: It is Order 57 of our Rules. We are just deliberately being taken for a ride. Order 57 says: *Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion, bill or amendment, except in the case of a substantive motion for the adjournment of the Senate.* The Motion here is only for an investigative hearing and if he wants to amend it, he should come out and amend it and not taking us round the duties of the Committee which are irrelevant here.

The Deputy President: The stage we are now, if you propose an Amendment, we would put the Question on it and it would either fail or succeed. So, propose the Amendment.

Senator Mahmud Kanti Bello: The Amendment as proposed by Senator Zaynab Kure, is very simple. It says that this Senate should mandate its Committee on National Planning and Economic Affairs to conduct an investigative Public Hearing in consonance with Section 88 of the Nigerian Constitution.

The Deputy President: I did not get that from her. She said she was making some explanations and she raised a number of issues. So, we are dealing with the Prayer now.

Senator James Ebiowou Manager: Before the Amendment I want to raise a Point of Order.

The Deputy President: Yes, go ahead.

Senator James Ebiowou Manager: I am raising this Point of Order out of curiosity and I want clarification. It is Order 102(1)(b). Of course, you have a corresponding provision in Section 88 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. With your permission, I will like to first read Section 88 of the Constitution which says:

Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, each House of the National Assembly shall have power by resolution published in its Journal or in the Official Gazette of the Government of the Federation to direct or cause to be directed an investigation into –

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- (a) *any matter or thing with respect to which it has power to make laws; and*
- (b) *to conduct of affairs of any person, authority, Ministry or government department charged or intended to be charged with the duty of or responsibility for –*

I want to believe that it is by the Resolution of this Senate that we have our Rule Book and it is procedural flowing from Section 88 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which is the ground norm of all our laws, therefore, flowing from there, we have the Rule Book which guides whatever we do on the Floor of the Senate.

With your permission, I go unto Order 102(1)(b) and I read with your kind permission. *Each Committee is authorised at any time to consider such investigations and studies as it may consider necessary or appropriate in the exercise of its responsibilities under this Rule.*

So, this is a Committee on National Planning, it has oversight responsibilities on this particular poverty alleviation, NAPEP. So, it is their responsibility going by our Rules; flowing from the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Section 88 unto Rule 102(1)(b) to conduct investigation at any time. That is my interpretation.

The Deputy President: All right. Let me respond to you then. For two reasons, I would disagree with you on this. Section 88 is clear on its intensions. Besides, in the case of *Shell versus House of Representatives*, the Supreme Court decided that you cannot investigate unless you go through a Resolution of the House. That is already settled. Senator James Manager, I rule you out of order completely.

Senator Ewa-Henshaw, can you now propose your Amendment so that I can put the Question.

Senator Mahmud Kanti Bello: Does she understand original Motion?

Senator Bassey Ewa-Henshaw: My Amendment is as follows-

Accordingly resolves to:

Mandate its Committee on National Planning, Economic Affairs and Poverty Alleviation to conduct a stakeholders conference on issues of poverty to identify problems and prospects of poverty alleviation and in

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doing so they would be able to look into NAPEP but into other areas as well.

I am suggesting that this country will be better off far more benefit to us as a nation for the Committee to conduct a stakeholders' conference into the issues of poverty to identify the prospects and the problems affecting poverty alleviation. In identifying the problems, they can go into NAPEP but they also need to tell us those prospects that would help us alleviate poverty not just NAPEP.

Question put and negatived.

Senator Lee Ledogo Maeba: Mr. President, Point of Order.

The Deputy President: Yes, Point of Order, Senator Lee Maeba.

Senator Lee Ledogo Maeba: I am coming by way of Point of Order under Order 31 which says:

- (1) *There shall be a Chief Whip of the Senate. The Chief Whip shall be a Senator nominated from the party with the highest number of seats in the Senate;*
- (2) *It shall be the duty of the Chief Whip to maintain order and decorum in the Senate including managing the affairs of his party during meetings;*
- (3) *The functions of the Chief Whip shall be:*
 - (a) *Managing the affairs of his party during meetings;*
 - (b) *Organizing the Party Members in divisions and debates;*
 - (c) *Arranging the business of the party on the Floor of the Senate.*

In order not to go far, the Chief Whip have been jumping up to interrupt Senators. As an interpreter of the Rule, I am constrained to ask, have you increased the power of the Chief Whip to intimidate, to harass Senators who want to speak because the over bearing nature of this Whip must be addressed. Our people say, it is better to look for a black goat when it is not yet dark. If we do not define the role of the Whip, one day the Whip will ask us to tell you to keep quite. *(Laughter)* He has done so to me and to Senator Bassey Ewa-Henshaw, Senator James Manager. So, I want you to interpret that Rule for us.

The Deputy President: Distinguished Colleagues, I have carefully studied Order 31 of our Standing Orders and it appears to me to contain all the powers, duties and responsibilities of the Chief Whip of the Senate of

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Federal Republic of Nigeria. I have noted the points you raised and I am sure the Chief Whip is also in agreement that his powers are contained therein. Is there any further Amendment?

Senator George Thompson Sekibo: Mr. President, I want to amend the Prayer thus: *Accordingly resolve to mandates its Committee on National Planning, Economic Affairs and Poverty Alleviation to carry out a comprehensive investigation into the activities of NAPEP.* That is the Amendment.

The Deputy President: I will put the Question on the Amendment.

Amendment put and agreed to.

Question on the Motion as amended, put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the Senate mandates its Committee on National Planning, Economic Affairs and Poverty Alleviation to carry out a comprehensive investigation into the activities of NAPEP.

The President: Any further Prayer?

Several distinguished Senators: No.

The President: The Clerk of the Senate should ensure that this is published in our Journal.

Senator Teslim K. Folarin: Mr. President, for reasons of time constraint, I move that all items on the Order Paper be stood down till another legislative date.

Senator Adeleke O. Mamora: Mr. President, I rise to second the Motion that all other items on the Order Paper be stood down to another legislative day.

Question put and agreed to.

(By leave of the Senate all other items on the Order Paper stood down to another legislative day)

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Teslim K. Folarin: Mr. President, I move that this Senate do adjourn till Wednesday, 18th February, 2009 at 10.00 am prompt.

Senator Adeleke O. Mamora: Mr. President, I second the Motion that this Senate do adjourn till tomorrow Wednesday, 18th February, 2009 at 10.00 am.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the Senate do stand adjourned till Wednesday, 18th February, 2009 at 10.00 am.

The Senate adjourned accordingly at 1.45 pm.