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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 21st July 2009

The House met at 11.00 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Colleagues, the House is called to Order. I have examined and approved the Votes and Proceedings of Thursday, 16th July 2009.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

North/West Consultative Meeting on Budget

The Deputy Speaker: There will be a Second North West Consultative Meeting on Budget today Wednesday, 21st July 2009 in Room 116, New Senate Building at 3:00 p.m.

(Signed)
Hon. Umaru Bature

Public Presentation of Journal of the Committee on Public Petitions

The Deputy Speaker: The House Committee on Public Petitions is organising a Public Presentation of its Journal on Wednesday, 22nd July, 2009 at 11.00 a.m.

Special Guest of Honour: Rt. Hon. Dimeji Bankole, Speaker, House of Representatives.

Chairman: Rt. Hon. Ghali Umar Na'Abba, Former Speaker, House of Representatives.

Keynote Speaker: Mr. Nwosu, former Clerk, House of Representatives.

All Members are cordially invited.

(Signed)
Hon. C.I.D. Maduabum

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List of Conferees on the National Space Research and Development Agency Bill

The Deputy Speaker: This is an announcement from the Chairman, Rules and Business Committee. The following hon. Members are appointed as Conference Members. They include:

Hon. Akinlade Abiodun Isiaq (Chairman)
Hon. Aliyu Mustapha
Hon. Habeeb A. B. Fasinro
Hon. Uzoechi Emmanuel
Hon. Aniedi King Ikpong
Hon. Idris Wase
Hon. Sani Abdu

The Deputy Speaker: This is an announcement from Baba Shehu Agaie. It reads:

Tenth Anniversary as a Member of the Green Chamber

*Hon. Baba Shehu Agaie (Wakilin Agaie),
Deputy House Leader,
House of Representatives.*

A Special Commissioning of Projects across the Constituency

Date: 25th July, 2009;

Honourable Members are invited.

The Chief Servant of Niger State is the Special Guest of Honour. Our guests are Hon. Dimeji Bankole and Hon. Ghali Umar Nabba.

Emergency Meeting

The Deputy Speaker: Here is another announcement:

All Members of Police Affairs Committee are to meet in the Chairman's Office No. 436 immediately after Session.

(Signed)
Hon. Abdul Ningi
Chairman

PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC PETITIONS

The Deputy Speaker: Any member who has a Petition to present to the House may, please, rise to do so.

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Non-payment of Gratuity/Pension

Hon. Mayor Chukwudi Eze (Orlu/Orsu/Oru East): Mr. Speaker, I have just two Petitions from two angry Nigerians. The first is from Mrs. B. U. Obiwulu who retired from the Federal Ministry of Education, Enugu State and ever since, she has not been paid her gratuity.

Her prayers are very explicit, that is, that she be paid her gratuity for twenty-nine years of meritorious service and her pension arrears from 12th April, 2006 to date and to start paying her monthly Pension as at when due.

Forceful Retirement from NIPOST

This other Petition is from Mr. Augustine Osuala who was retired forcefully from Nigerian Postal Service. He is seeking the immediate intervention of this honourable House so that he will be reinstated.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I will lay the Petitions on the Table.

Petition laid.

The Deputy Speaker: The Petitions are referred to the Committee on Public Petitions.

(Petitions accordingly referred to the Committee on Public Petitions)

PRESENTATION OF BILLS

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, the First Business of the Day is Presentation of twelve Bills. The Clerk is invited to read the Short Titles of the Bills.

Institute of Safety Professionals of Nigeria Bill, 2009

Institute of Safety Professionals of Nigeria Bill, 2009 (HB. 252) – presented by Hon. Tunde Akogun; *read the First Time.*

Nigerian Agency of Foreign Assistance Bill, 2009

Nigerian Agency of Foreign Assistance Bill, 2009 (HB. 253) – presented by Hon. Tunde Akogun; *read the First Time.*

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Electronic Transactions Bill, 2009

Electronic Transactions Bill, 2009 (HB. 239) – presented by Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta; *read the First Time.*

Privacy Bill, 2009

Privacy Bill, 2009 (HB. 240) - presented by Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta; *read the First Time.*

Small and Medium Enterprises Commission Bill, 2009

Small and Medium Enterprises Commission Bill, 2009 (HB. 241) – presented by Hon. Godfrey Ali Gaiya; *read the First Time.*

Nigerian Social Insurance Trust Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2009

Nigerian Social Insurance Trust Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2009 (HB. 261) – presented by Hon. Oyetunji Paul Omotayo; *read the First Time.*

Kidnapping and Hostage Taking (Prohibition) Bill, 2009

Kidnapping and Hostage Taking (Prohibition) Bill, 2009 (HB. 262) – presented by Hon. Friday Itulah and 2 Others; *read the First Time.*

Science and Technology Research Development Fund (Establishment, etc.) Bill, 2009

Science and Technology Research Development Fund (Establishment, etc.) Bill, 2009 (HB. 264) – presented by Hon. Abiodun Isiaq Akinlade and 87 Others; *read the First Time.*

Confirmation of Ministerial Nominees (Procedure) Bill, 2009

Confirmation of Ministerial Nominees (Procedure) Bill, 2009 (HB. 265) – presented by Hon. Friday Itulah; *read the First Time.*

Community Service Bill, 2009

Community Service Bill, 2009 (HB. 266) – presented by Hon. Samuel Whesu Sejoro; *read the First Time.*

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National Cancer Institute Bill, 2009

National Cancer Institute Bill, 2009 (HB. 267) – presented by Hon. Abubakar Shehu Bunu; *read the First Time.*

Nigerian Institute of Agriculturist Bill, 2009

Nigerian Institute of Agriculturist Bill, 2009 (HB. 268) – presented by Hon. Peter Gbenga Makojula; *read the First Time.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTIONS

Conference Report on the National Health Bill, 2009

The Speaker: The first Order of the Day is a Motion for the Adoption of the Conference Report on the National Health Bill, 2009 standing in the name of Hon. Alaba Lad-Ojomo. Hon. Alaba-Ojomo is now invited to move the Motion. *(No response)*

Chairman, Committee on Rules and Business, where is Hon. Alaba-Ojomo?

Hon. Ita S. J. Enang (Itu/Ibiono Ibom): Hon. Ojomo said that the Deputy Chairman would present the Report.

The Deputy Speaker: Is the Deputy Chairman of the Health Committee here? *(No response)*

Hon. Ita Enang: May we just stand it down for a while Sir.

Motion with the leave of the House stood down.

Review of Pension

The Deputy Speaker: The second Order of the Day is a Motion on the Review of Pension standing in the name of Hon. Mohammed Ali Ndume and nine others. Hon. Mohammed Ali Ndume is invited to move his Motion.

Hon. Mohammed Ndume, please? *(No response)*
What about the Deputy Minority Leader? *(No response)*

The Motion is stood down.

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Motion with the leave of the House stood down.

Immortalisation of Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola

The Deputy Speaker: The third Order of the Day is a Motion on the Immortalisation of Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola standing in the name of Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon and thirty others.

Hon. Obahiagbon is now invited to move his Motion.

Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon (Oredo): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for your usual traditional indulgence. This is a Motion for the immortalisation of Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola.

The House:

Notes that on Saturday, 12 June 1993, a Presidential Election was held throughout the length and breadth of Nigeria in compliance with all enabling and relevant regulatory laws in place at that time;

Further notes that the Presidential candidates for the election were Alhaji Bashorun Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and Alhaji Bashir Othman Tofa of the National Republican Convention (NRC);

Aware that Nigerians cutting across ethnic, tribal, regional and religious divide, in the exercise of their civil and political rights, trooped out in their millions to vote for a President of their choice;

Further aware that the election was widely acclaimed and adjudged the most free and fair and also the most peaceful in the annals of Nigeria's political and electoral system by both local and international observers who monitored the election;

Concerned that the annulment of June 12, 1993 Presidential Election by General Ibrahim Babangida in a broadcast to the nation amounted to a brazen violation of the Fundamental, Civil and Political Rights of Nigerians as constitutionalised and recognised in the Africa Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights;

Resolves to:

Immortalise Chief M.K.O. Abiola having selflessly sacrificed his life for the growth of democracy in Nigeria.

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I beg to move.

Hon. Audu Ado Dogo (Jama'a/Sanga): I stand to second the Motion moved by Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon.

Question Proposed.

Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon: Mr. Speaker, let me seek the indulgence of Mr. Speaker to amend the Prayers slightly before I move my Motion. Rather than

immortalising Chief M.K.O. Abiola, I would like to amend my Motion to read: *Urge the Federal Government to immortalise Chief M.K.O. Abiola having selflessly sacrificed his life for the growth of democracy in Nigeria.*

With your indulgence I want to add that Addendum and to call on Parliament this morning that we stand at the threshold of history with our moral conscience and with our social *egregor* being tickled.

Both the Federal Government and this Parliament have today dedicated themselves to bringing about the cleansing of the Aegean Stables in our electoral process. The National Assembly and the Federal Executive Council have announced to the whole world that we are committed to the process of electoral reform. It is my submission and a submission I make with all sense of responsibility that there is no way the Federal Government and the National Assembly can show greater commitment to the process of electoral reform without immortalising the memory of Chief M.K.O. Abiola.

It is very clear; it was audible to the deaf and visible to the blind that in our almost fifty years of electoral history up till today Chief M.K.O. Abiola enjoyed the most popular Pan-Nigerian mandate; that was a mandate that defied cancerous tribalism, meningistinal statism; gangrenous parochialism; religious bigotry and debilitating nepotism; it was a true Nigerian mandate to the extent that in the entire military cantonment in Nigeria, Chief Abiola was overwhelmingly voted for. That mandate proved Nigerians wrong in terms of religious accommodation of the country.

Against all centrifugal tendencies, against all *sensiparous* proclivities Nigerians for the first time flew a Muslim/Muslim ticket; yet Nigerians voted for that ticket. However, for reasons best known to a microscopic military cabal and their civilian collaborators that held the country hostage at that time they decided to relegate that mandate to *sepulchre*

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Abiola was the Pillar of Sports in Africa. He built mosques and churches in this country; the Bashorun of Ibadanland and the Aare Ona Kakanfo of Yorubaland gave scholarships no matter whether you were a Northerner or a Southerner; no matter whether you were rich or poor. After we conducted a free and fair election, the votes of Nigerians no longer mattered. In fact, let me in two minutes briefly recapitulate the bullet points in that period.

On June 10, 1993 when Nigerians were already thirsty for an election; we got an injunction from an

Abuja High Court on the instigation of one Abimbola Davies and the Association for Better Nigeria presided over by late Justice Ikpeme.

The National Security and Defence Council met and on the persuasion of Professor Humphrey Nwosu, the election was approved and we were told to go on. On June 13, 1993 when it was clear that Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola had won that election we again went to court this time presided over by Justice Dahiru Saleh and an *exparte* injunction was granted restraining the National Election Commission from releasing those results.

Professor Humphrey Nwosu in his book titled: *Laying the Foundation for Nigeria's Democracy* has announced to the whole world that as at June 14, the result of that election had come in and the winner was known.

An attempt was made to proceed to the Kaduna Court of Appeal to vacate the Injunction. Before that was done, on June 23 1993, the military cabal annulled the freest and fairest election that this country has ever produced.

Today, we are the beneficiaries of that fight by Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola. In the course of that fight after the Epetedo Declaration when the Military cabal was challenged, there began the man's journey to physical incarceration. Need we say today that he lost his life for that fight? Need we say today that his amiable wife who gave him succour, Kudirat Abiola, lost her life in the course of that fight? Can we sit in the sacred precinct of this Chamber as representatives of our people who are supposed to emblematised the moral conscience of Nigerians and behave as if immortalising that name does not matter to us?

The Federal Government can immortalise Abiola by naming the Abuja Stadium M.K.O. Abiola Stadium. Abiola's birthday can be converted to a public holiday

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just like the late Martin Luther King. In any case, the Federal Executive Council can declare Abiola a posthumous President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with all concomitant privileges appertaining thereto. The Aso Rock Presidential Villa can be renamed M.K.O. Abiola Villa.

I am not *ipse dixit* in what way and manner Chief M.K.O. Abiola should be immortalised. That is why if you look at the prayers, it was carefully re-crafted to say: *Urge the Federal Government to immortalise Chief M.K.O. Abiola* in whatever way and manner; in whatever template they choose to do.

To do less will be a lugubrious fiasco.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Colleagues, I will now give the Floor to those in favour of the Motion.

Hon. Mayor Chukwudi Eze (Orlu/Orsu/Oru East): Mr. Speaker, every nation has a history and there is no way we can talk about modern democratic growth in this country without mentioning Chief M. K. O. Abiola.

When we look at the single Prayer of the Motion, it says:

Urge the Federal Government to immortalize Chief M. K. O. Abiola for the selfless sacrifice he made for the democratic growth of this country.

Hon. Colleagues, let us understand one thing; all of us are beneficiaries of democratic process in this country. What is democracy in the first place? It calls for equity, justice and fairness. Recently, we were spited in the international arena in a very shameful way no matter how you see it when President Obama shunned Nigeria for what he stood for and went to Ghana. No matter how we see it, it is a very big slight when you talk about the position of Nigeria in Africa simply because we are not seen as a transparent democratic environment.

Ghana was lauded by the President of the United States by the last election they conducted and the way and manner they conducted it where the winner embraced the loser and the loser congratulated the winner. This is the tenet of democracy.

Till today, we are still talking about litigations even in this Chamber. Wherever you have a bi-cameral legislation, the House of Representatives or the House of Commons will always identify with the wishes of the masses. The Senate all over the world will always

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represent the districts. This is the heartbeat of any nation. We, as the firsthand representatives of the people, will look at this issue and the consequences; nobody is saying that Chief Abiola should be exhumed and made the President of Nigeria; what we are asking for is the least honour so that when that monument is named after M.K.O. Abiola, we will all quickly refresh our memories and go back to history and remember the role this man played in making sure that democracy grows.

As from today, as long as democracy stays in any country, there must still be human sacrifices. People should look at the present and the past and remember that the onus is upon all of us to pay sacrifices so that there would be freedom; freedom of expression, freedom of movement and justice. These are the integral parts of democracy.

For those who may want to speak against this Motion, I urge you to have a rethink because we have nothing to lose by supporting this Motion.

Hon. Patricia Olubunmi Etteh (Ayedaade/Irewole/Isokan): I would like to support this Motion. Before doing so, let me congratulate and at the same time salute the courage of the mover of this Motion.

I want to say that this Motion is actually belated when we are talking of immortalising the late M. K. O. Abiola. There are many things that can easily come to mind when we are talking of this late sage. When you are talking of somebody who has actually contributed to the progress of this nation in terms of industries, late M. K. O. Abiola is an industrialist per excellence. When you are talking of Sports, there is no way you can mention anybody's name before you mention his name as far as this country is concerned. When you are talking of somebody who has actually touched the lives of Nigerians whether Northerners, Southerners, Moslems or Christians, late M. K. O. Abiola is number one to reckon with and when you are talking of politics, late M. K. O. Abiola was a democrat and he died for what he believed in. At the same time, when you are talking of people that have been immortalised in this country, be it in private or public office, M. K. O. Abiola should have been immortalised.

For us to sit here today and be debating whether it should be done or not I think it is belated. There are certain things we can do for people who even when they are in their graves can still be praying for this country.

I am urging my Colleagues to, please, support this Motion and ensure that at least we immortalise his name.

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In immortalising M.K.O Abiola, let me say that there is no election that is as free and fair as the June 12 Elections. Therefore, to sit here and be discussing whether we should do it or not, I think it is high time we rise up to our responsibility and do him that honour because we believe that this man died as a democrat. I believe an institution should be named after him; we can probably call it M. K. O. Abiola Democratic Institution.

Hon. Emmanuel Deeyah (Gokana/Khana): First and foremost, let me thank our dear Colleague for bringing up this Motion.

Chief M. K. O. Abiola represents many things to many people. We know he was a philanthropist and a good man. He ran for election and won that election. Today in Nigeria everybody points to the factors surrounding that election; nobody bothered about who his running mate was but the fact was that Abiola won an election.

At the time, I was a Member of the Rivers State House of Assembly; Abacha dissolved existing political structures. We all went to our houses until M. K O. Abiola made that declaration in Lagos. He got some of us to recall because we were already serving in office but this was a man who was not yet there; he gave us the courage. I then summoned my Colleagues, called for the Parliament to resume. I was arrested, detained and taken to court and so on.

If you look back to some democracies like in the United States, there was the Civil Rights Leader. At his time, people did not recognise what he was talking about because he was talking about the Fundamental Human Rights of the Black people in the United States; the right to vote and be voted for; the right to education *et cetera*.

I do not want to take all the time of the Parliament because there are other serious businesses to do but I want us not to look at this issue as Abiola's because it could have been any one of us. What is important today is for us have a landmark; let us have something that people will remember long after this time that this was a man who struggled to actualise his mandate and this is the reason for which we want Nigerians to immortalise him.

I thank my Colleagues because I know they are going to vote overwhelmingly for the adoption of this Motion.

Hon. Isah Idris Umaru (Igabi): I stand to support the Motion ably moved by Hon. Patrick

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Obahiagbon because of one reason. Nigeria and indeed all our Colleagues should recall as they go back to the annals of history, the genesis of the collapse of the First Republic and Second Republics and note that the Third Republic has changed the landscape of political atmosphere in Nigeria.

This change came as a result of the role played by two people; the late Musa Yar'Adua and indeed M.K.O. Abiola who cut across the entire nation against the backdrop of ethnic and regional background. Their efforts in penetrating the entire Nigeria yielded what we are now actually benefiting in the Fourth Republic.

Nigeria in its struggle to survive goes above the issue of religious and regional sentiments and by the act of these two people, Nigeria goes above the elements of regional sentiments or religious acrimony while you are making your campaign. Therefore, I support the Motion that Abiola should be immortalised. In fact, it has been done by Nigeria; we know that by this action Nigeria will not forget Abiola in the history of Nigerian Politics.

Despite the fact that the mover of the Motion has not categorically stated what should be done, he has made some suggestions and I believe the Federal Government of Nigeria can consider one or two of his suggestions.

Hon. Braimah A. Ogwime (Etsako East/West/Central): Permit me to make some prefatory remarks before attempting to lacerate the fundamental substratum of Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon's submission this morning.

It would sound very impious, imperious, iniquitous and incommodious if I do not acknowledge and recognise the analytical brilliance of Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon this morning.

Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon has given this Parliament an opportunity we must not miss. It remains incontestable if we maintain that Chief M.K.O. Abiola insisted on his God and man-given mandate laid the external foundation for the democratic atmosphere we all enjoy in this country today.

The Constitution of this country remains supreme and must be respected at all times. It was wrong for the Military Government at that time to have dealt with the will of the people in such a shabby manner. This is a window of opportunity for us to correct that wrong.

On the rock of Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon's submission this morning I stand.

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Hon. Ogbuefi Ora Ozomgbachi (Ezeagu/Udi): Mr. Speaker, let me align myself with the justifications well laid out by Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon for this Motion. I believe that Mr. Speaker and all my Colleagues would appreciate that the journey for the entrenchment of democracy in Nigeria was a journey that was embarked by the teeming population of this country for a long time.

On reflection, we would appreciate that so much amount of money was spent by this country for the purpose of entrenching democracy. I believe that the ruling military elites at that time must have by now with the benefit of hindsight realised that they committed a class *hara-kiri* by destroying by one single action what would have remained the best legacy which the then military regime would have bequeathed this country.

That legacy should have been a legacy or civilian democracy founded on free and fair election. If that legacy had been kept alive today, this Parliament and indeed all Nigerians would not be worried about the electoral reforms we are talking about.

Immortalising Abiola is not about honouring him as a person. Immortalising Abiola means recognition of the transparent and open electoral processes that threw up the Pan-Nigerian Presidency that never was. It is about the sacredness of the process; the mere fact that Nigerians from all walks of life went on June 12, 1993 to cast their votes for a Pan-Nigerian ticket that produced Abiola and Kingibe as President and Vice President that never was.

Hon. Ogbuefi Ora Ozomgbachi (Ezeagu/Udi): I recall at that time that even in Enugu where I come from we had an NRC Government. NRC lost at the Government House Polling at Okpara Square; NRC lost to SDP. That was to show you that look, Nigerians went out irrespective of religious or political lineage to cast their vote.

I believe that in trying to entrench and sustain our democracy we should also leave some symbols for generations to come so that they will see at every point in time that history was made at a point in time.

I would like to modify Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon's prayer by saying that in immortalising MKO Abiola, June 12 should be recognised as a work-free day in this country.

Some hon. Members: No!

Hon. Ogbuefi Ora Ozomgbachi: That is my opinion; you are free to express your opinion because I

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believe that that day should be observed as a Public Holiday in this country.

Hon. Olumuyiwa B. Obadina (Ifo/Ewekoro): I align myself *in toto* with the submission of Hon. Obahiagbon on the immortalisation of the late Chief M.K.O Abiola. For a very long time I have really been thinking of something. I find it extremely difficult to understand and the question is; what will it cost Nigeria to immortalise Abiola? That is the question that has been going on in my mind for a very long time.

I do not think it is going to cost us anything. Abiola is a symbol of democracy in Nigeria and I believe very strongly that nobody can water down the symbolic effect of June 12 in democracy in Nigeria; nobody can do that in this country.

Hon. Ali A. Atai Usman (Ankpa/Omala/Olamaboro): Mr. Speaker, I support this Motion that my very good Friend, Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon raised. As the last Speaker said, it will not cost Nigeria anything to immortalise this great man.

Abiola can be classified as one of the greatest men that have passed through this world. Abiola can be regarded as the Mandela of Nigeria because he has paid the supreme price to entrench democracy in Nigeria.

In 1991 when all the first nine among which are Yar'Adua and Liman Jibrilu were disqualified from contesting election, nobody in the political class had courage to come out to contest election. In fact, Abiola was one of the most courageous people in this country. When he came, people thought that he was just a stooge for the government in power then. Little did people know that he was very serious; he was out to pay the supreme price and he did. As the previous speakers said, Abiola laid the foundation for the democracy we have today.

So, I enjoin my hon. Colleagues to support this Motion because it will not cost Nigeria anything to immortalise our great men. Other countries of the world have immortalised people that contributed little to the development of democracy and human rights all over the world.

So I enjoin my Colleagues to support this Motion so that we immortalise this great son of Africa.

The Deputy Speaker: Those against the Motion will now take the Floor.

Hon. Abdulrahman Suleiman K. Sumaila (Sumaila/Takai): Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to

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our Colleagues who supported the Motion but I have some observations to make. First of all, we have to commend General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, the then President of Nigeria who conducted free and fair elections which even our brothers admitted that it is the most free and fair election conducted in the Nigeria nation.

Today, Nigerians are asking for free and fair elections. We cannot have a good government unless we allow people to participate fully in electing their leaders. On June 12, we voted for M.K.O Abiola without sentiment irrespective of religion, tribe and region. For example, I came from Kano. The presidential candidate of NRC was from Kano; he lost in his local government but to our surprise after the nullification of the elections, some cabals surrounding Abiola started insulting, castigating and abusing us for nothing. Everybody knows that the whole cause changed to regional and tribal affairs when from the initial stage, we came out en-masse and voted for Abiola. I do not think that we can immortalise Abiola without immortalising Bashir Usman Tofa whose action up till now clearly shows that he is a democrat. Therefore, this Motion is uncalled for. We have to put all machinery in place to conduct free and fair elections Nigerians are asking for in a situation where a democratic elected government failed to conduct free and fair elections twice in Nigeria.

Hon. Leonard Okuweh Ogor (Isoko North/Isoko South): Point of Order, Mr. Speaker!

The Deputy Speaker: What is your Point of Order, Hon. Leo Ogor?

Hon. Leo Ogor: My Point of Order is Order IX, Rule 1(4) of our Revised Standing Orders at page 31 which states categorically that *a Member must confine his contribution to the subject matter under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto.*

Mr. Speaker, it is important for my hon. Member that has just spoken to be properly guided by the Rules of Debate of this House. He is deviating from the issue and playing unnecessary and unwarranted politics on the Floor of the House.

I am therefore appealing to you to, please, call him to order.

The Deputy Speaker: Can you be more specific?

Hon. Leo Ogor: By saying that the government was unable to conduct a free and fair election; I think

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that is not the subject matter in respect of the issue that we are discussing at the moment.

The Deputy Speaker: Deputy Minority Leader, kindly stick to the issue. You know we have a court ruling that the election conducted was free and fair. It was a decision of the Supreme Court.

Hon. Abdulrahman Suleiman K. Sumaila: But up till now, my Party and other Parties are contesting the election either at the Court of Appeal or at the Supreme Court.

The Deputy Speaker: You can only say that in the meeting of the Minorities.

Hon Abdulrahman Suleiman K. Sumaila: Not only in the meeting of the minorities; it can also be discussed even in the majority. Even in this honourable House, there are cases in courts between contestants that are PDP Members.

The Deputy Speaker: Anything that the Court has decided on any issue is final.

Hon. Abdulrahman Suleiman K. Sumaila: Up till now there are pending cases in courts which the minority Parties are contesting. Even some PDP Members are contesting some elections in court now.

Therefore, we have to commend General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida for conducting free and fair elections unlike the elections conducted in 1999, 2003 and 2007. General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida should be commended for what he had done to the nation as President and true democrat, unlike the people who are leading the affairs of Nigeria today.

The Deputy Speaker: Those who are leading the affairs of Nigeria today include your Governor, you, your Local Government Chairmen and Councilors.

Hon. Abdulrahman Suleiman K. Sumaila: I won free and fair elections in 2003 and 2007; no body took me to court. The PDP never took me to court because it was clear that I won free and fair elections.

The Deputy Speaker: Your Governor was taken to court and he accepted it.

Hon Abdulrahman Suleiman K. Sumaila: I am referring to my own election as Hon. Suleiman Abdulrahman. The election in my Constituency was free and fair.

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The Deputy Speaker: If you are talking about yourself, why then did you bring something about others? Your State was taken to the Court of Appeal and you have accepted the verdict of the Court of Appeal because it was in your favour; you are not saying that that judgment was delivered in error.

This present Government is a legitimate Government. The people have decided and the court has confirmed it.

Hon. Friday Itulah (Esan North East/South East): Point of Order, Mr. Speaker!

The Deputy Speaker: What is the Point of Order!

Hon Friday Itulah: My Point of Order is Order X, Rule 1 of our Revised Standing Orders at page 37. It says:

Whenever the Speaker or the Chairman rises during a Debate, any Member then speaking or offering to speak shall sit down and the House or the Committee shall be silent so that the Speaker or the Chairman may be heard without interruption.

The Deputy Speaker: The Order is sustained. I will now give the Floor to those against the Motion.

Hon Mohammed Sani Abdu (Alkaleri/Kirfi): Mr. Speaker, my opposition to the Motion is not on the person, personal achievement or iconic achievement of Abiola. I personally had witnessed his big heart; largesse and whatever that have been said so far in the House. However, my opposition to it is that of context.

I feel that it is June 12 1993 itself and the people of Nigeria that should be immortalised, not Abiola as a person. The reason I am saying this is that we have to look at the evolution of Nigerian democracy right from 1946 to date, particularly the kind of war, suffering and gallantry exhibited by various Nigerians for us to achieve even what we want to immortalise today.

Therefore, I do not have to go back far. In 1966, there was the first coup; it was a coup against democracy. In 1983, there was also a coup against democracy. The June 12 1993 annulment was another brand of a coup. We have just now finished with a problem whereby people felt also that there was a coup in 2007 and even when the Supreme Court has ruled but let us not go into the details.

The most important thing is that some people are still feeling - *(Interruptions)*

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The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Sani Abdu, we have ruled on that. Therefore, reference should not be made on that.

Hon Mohammed Sani Abdu: At any rate, June 12 1993 was a phenomenon. That day was iconic and fundamental and Nigerians indeed exhibited that they were insensitive and inelastic to religious diversities, ethnicity and class. They wanted to express themselves; they wanted true democracy, better and good governance in this country and they came out fundamentally to choose two people who came from the same faith; Muslim/Muslim ticket after all that had happened.

Therefore, it is the phenomenon, the date, time, the epoch, and the saga that need to be celebrated, not an individual. Many individuals contributed to free and fair elections even if it were at the Local Government level.

We had Waziri Ibrahim who brought this issue of politics without bitterness and it was so celebrated and that is what we are looking for today. We had Sam Mbakwe and Gambo Sawaba. We had Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, who in Jos decided to relinquish his personal wish and endorsed Abiola's candidacy himself. Therefore, June 12, 1993 should be immortalised as a date just as May 29 has been made Democracy Day. As I said earlier, my opposition is not for Abiola but we need to amend this Motion to immortalise June 12 and even celebrate it.

The Deputy Speaker: I will now put the Question.

Hon. Emmanuel Yisa O Jev (Buruku): Point of Order, Mr. Speaker. I am raising Order IX, Rule 3 of our Revised Standing Orders at page 33. It reads:

Time Limit and Sequence of Speeches

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

At the last count, at least nine Members had spoken in favour of this debate and I counted just two against. Several Members are still willing to speak against the Motion. It will only be fair if we meet half-half before the Question.

The Deputy Speaker: Do you want to speak against the Motion?

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Hon Emmanuel Yisa O Jev: Yes.

The Deputy Speaker: I can allow you to speak against the Motion. It is not because of this provision because the provision says *the Speaker shall allocate one-half of such time to be given to debate in favour of and one-half to the opposition of such proposition*. That does not mean the half must be equal; the half may not be equal. Moreover, the Rule does not ask you to count. It is talking about time, not the number of people that had spoken.

Hon. Emmanuel Yisa Okey Jev (Buruku): I kept keeping time.

The Deputy Speaker: What you mentioned was the number of people that had spoken.

I will only grant you amnesty and allow you to speak. Go ahead.

Hon. Emmanuel Yisa Okey Jev: Let me also hasten to add that I have a lot of respect for the person of M.K.O. Abiola and indeed I voted for him during the June 12 election and continued to hold him in high regard. I have no problem about Abiola being immortalised but I have a problem with this Motion. The relief says he should be immortalised.

Let me say that the Parliament is like the Court; Parliament is not supposed to act in vain. We have a Committee on Legislative Compliance. If we go ahead and pass this Motion as it is, how do we enforce it? In Abuja here I do know that a street has been named after Abiola. If you pass this Motion without specifying actually what we want done for Abiola, how do you enforce it thereafter?

I am not offering any Amendment. As far as I am concerned, Abiola has been immortalised. If any Member wants to propose further Amendment, he should have said so.

Question put and negatived.

**Incessant Maltreatment and Dehumanising
Search on Nigerians by Foreign Airlines
and their Immigration Officials**

The Deputy Speaker: The fourth Order of the Day is a Motion on Incessant Maltreatment and Dehumanising Search on Nigerians by Foreign Airlines and their Immigration Officials standing in the name of Hon. Abasi Ogwime Braimah and 58 others.

Hon. Braimah is invited to move his Motion.

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Hon. Abass Braimah (Etsako East/South East): Before I move my Motion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to quickly make a correction on the Prayers:

Mandates the Joint Committees on Aviation and Foreign Affairs to carry out a detailed investigation on the maltreatment of Nigerians on British Airways, Ethiopian Airline and their Immigration Officials and make recommendations to the House within *four weeks*, not one week.

The House:

Notes that Section 32 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria guarantees the Fundamental Human Rights for Nigerians whether at home or abroad;

Further notes that in recent times Nigerians onboard British Airways Flight BA.075 and Ethiopian Airline ET.605 were either maltreated or humiliated and subjected to dehumanising search in utter disregard to their Fundamental Human Rights;

Aware that whenever this unwholesome act is done to a Nigerian by these foreign Airlines and their Immigration Officials no apology is rendered to the Nigerian Government;

Worried that the spate of inhuman, contemptuous and humiliating treatment of Nigerians by these foreign airlines shows disrespect for Nigerians and Nigeria as a country;

Resolves to:

Mandate the Joint Committee on Aviation and Foreign Affairs to carry out a detailed investigation on

the maltreatment of Nigerians on British Airways, Ethiopian Airline and their Immigration Officials and make recommendations to the House within four weeks.

I so move.

Hon. Dino Melaye (Kabba/Bunu/Ijumu): Mr. Speaker, I stand to second this Motion.

Question proposed:

Hon. Abasi Braimah: Mr. Speaker, the title of this Motion, once again, is on the Incessant Maltreatment and Dehumanising Search on Nigerians by Foreign Airlines and their Immigration Officials.

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I have brought this Motion to this House this morning in order to expose the embarrassing, intimidating, contemptuous, lugubrious and dehumanising treatment of Nigerians by British Airway Officials, other Airlines and their Immigration Authorities. The fundamental *peripecia* of this Motion is the fact that it carries a very powerful currency of moral conscience.

On 27th March 2008, 135 distinguished Nigerians; Nigerians that will have a constitutional nexus with were travelling on board British Airways Flight BA.075 from Heathrow Airport to Lagos. On board that flight was a Nigerian that was about to be deported and everybody on that flight protested against the brazen brutalisation of that fellow Nigerian. The astonished passengers including one Mr. Ayodeji Omotade, who probably had more courage to challenge the Nigerian tormentors, were ordered off the plane. Mr. Omotade for speaking up was later arrested, handcuffed, detained and banned for life from travelling on British Airways and was finally charged to court.

It is pertinent to let this honourable House know that Mr. Omotade finally won that case in court a couple of months ago and British Airways has been asked to pay Mr. Omotade damages that had been incurred from this incidence.

While we were trying to recover from this incident, the inevitable climax happened right here in Nigeria and it was to no other person other than one of the Royal Fathers of the world; the Sultan of Sokoto, who was travelling on British Airways from Nnamdi Azikiwe Airport. We were told that he and his entourage arrived the Airport in good time and while they were waiting to board the flight, the British Airways pilot took off. What was the Sultan's offence? His offence was that he did not subject himself to the humiliation of scampering along with other passengers, tickets and boarding pass in hand to queue at the boarding gate.

The fundamental question to submit here is; will the British people do that to a British Monarch, the Queen of England or to a Saudi Prince? They must be told in very clear terms and in unequivocal language that it is the way and manner they value, respect, acknowledge and regard the Queen of England that we hold our traditional rulers in this country.

We also have an incidence here of four Nigerians who were travelling from Dubai to Nigeria. They complained about the faulty cooling system of the Ethiopian Airline aircraft; what did they get instead? These were passengers. They were forced to disembark from the Aircraft, detained and spent four days in jail in

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Dubai for reasons best known as security threat to Dubai.

We have many other instances of our women having been frisked to their private parts in Heathrow Airport because of profiling. The crime is because you carry a Nigerian Passport, there must be element of criminality hovering around you. Any truly elected Government must stand by its people. We owe a duty to strongly intervene in situations like this to save our people from further humiliation and maltreatment in the hands of organisations like British Airways that exploit our people financially and emotionally.

This Parliament is the beacon of hope for the Nigerian people; this Parliament is the moral conscience and the bastion of the Nigerian people. This Parliament conceives of individuals who are holders of power in trust for the Nigerian people. It will sound unconstitutionally ridiculous for this Parliament not to show to the Nigerian people that we can rise to the collective mandate that has been given to us.

Hon. Patrick O. Obahiagbon (Oredo): Mr. Speaker, let me thank Hon. Abasi Braimah for this very intrepid seminar and clinical submissions. For me, it is not about the person involved. That would be *ad hominem parliamentary gerrymandering*. I still would have been saddened; I still would have been in a state of *lacrimucism*. It still would have given me mental pabulum and would have provoked in me a sense of disappointment if it were an Aminu Talakawa that was treated in the way and manner the Sultan of Sokoto was treated.

It is very clear that the way and manner Nigerians are being treated daily by Foreign Airways and Foreign Immigration Officers leaves much to be desired. Of course, they are quick to adduce arguments such as the fact that in every Nigerian, you will see a potential criminal. However, the truth of the matter is that it has become audible to the deaf and visible to the blind in this global village that if you compare the crime rate with which the Nigerians are involved and foreigners; even that of Nigerian pale into thin insignificance. We must not continue to allow that. Our government must not continue to behave as if the welfare of the citizens does not matter to it.

Our foreign policy must be retooled from this position of somnolence and recumbence and to gharries itself with one of diplomatic recusancy. That is the quiddity just now of real politics in global international relations. No country these days go to the international market with the Biblical injunction that if you slap me on my left cheek, you turn the right cheek; that does not work any longer. Yet we say that we are practising

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citizen diplomacy and that citizen diplomacy is the *primus mobile* of our foreign policy whereas what we see in practical terms is that our foreign policy is anything but citizen diplomacy.

This Parliament must rise today as usual to defecate in the strongest of indolence the lackadaisical, the Olympian and the harum-scarum manner with which our citizens are treated either by foreign airlines or by Immigrations Officers and the maunderings who are in control of our foreign policy; the political *major-domos* who are driving the foreign policy just now must be told in plain language by this Parliament that when we talk about citizen diplomacy, it starts and ends with the citizen.

Finally, I pray and expect that this Motion, not being a controversial and contentious Motion, not being a Motion that would provoke ethnic and religious sentiment; should go without any degree of our opposition.

Hon. Samson R. Osagie (Orhionmwon/Uhunmwode): Mr. Speaker, this is a Motion that brings to the fore the way and manner our citizens are being treated. Of course, this Parliament has blazed the trail in the past to rise up to the occasion and condemn in the most despicable terms the inhuman and degrading treatment that our fellow citizens have continued to suffer in the hands of foreign airlines and immigration officials. This is again coming in the umpteenth time to remind us of the fact that this habit and act had continued unabated and as the peoples' representatives we cannot close our eyes to it.

We must continue to fight for the restoration of the Right to Dignity of the human person of our people. We must continue to strive in respect of the rights of our citizens wherever they find themselves because the situation right now is as if Nigerians are the worst criminals all over the world and so you find us being subjected to various kinds of maltreatment and searches when we travel outside the shores of this country.

We deserve a great measure of respect; we deserve a high degree of accolade anywhere we go and, of course, we deserve to be respected the way we respect foreigners. When you are travelling from abroad and you are entering Nigeria you will see the way foreigners that are travelling with you into Nigeria are being treated; they are given red carpet reception. When you travel from anywhere in the world into this country; immediately you land in any of our International Airports the way the citizens of other nationals are being treated when they come into Nigeria is such that you marvel whether or not we are the same Homo

Sapiens created by God.

What we are saying in this Motion is that Nigerians deserve respect. The custodians of our Foreign Policy thrust must rise up more than ever before to defend the rights of our fellow citizens.

I support this Motion.

Hon. Dele Obadina (Ifo/Ewekoro): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to take off from where the last speaker stopped. I agree *in toto* that Nigerians deserve respect. However, the issue is that we also must respect ourselves.

This Motion basically addresses the issue of rebranding Nigeria. How do we go about it? What should we do? It speaks so much about the reputation of our people. If you go to any International Airport outside Nigeria, if they pick on ten citizens, seven of them would be Nigerians carrying cocaine and so many odd things. That does not speak well of Nigeria. Right here in Nigeria a group of Europeans would come; our people would be the ones to clear the road for them and in some cases bypassing the normal rules. It is the way we hold ourselves that foreigners will treat us. Re-branding Nigeria must start from here.

The Deputy Speaker: Members who want to speak against the Motion will now take the Floor. (No response)

I will now put the Question.

Question that the Question be now put, put and agreed to.

Main Question as amended put and agreed to.

The House:

Noted that Section 32 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria guarantees the Fundamental Human Rights for Nigerians whether at home or abroad;

Further noted that in recent times Nigerians onboard British Airways Flight BA.075 and Ethiopian Airline ET.605 were either maltreated or humiliated and subjected to dehumanising search in utter disregard to their Fundamental Human Rights;

Aware that whenever this unwholesome act is done to a Nigerian by these foreign Airlines and their

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Immigration Officials no apology is rendered to the Nigerian Government;

Worried that the spate of inhuman, contemptuous and humiliating treatment of Nigerians by these foreign airlines shows disrespect for Nigerians and Nigeria as a country;

Resolves to:

Mandate the Joint Committee on Aviation and Foreign Affairs to carry out a detailed investigation on the maltreatment of Nigerians on British Airways, Ethiopian Airline and their Immigration Officials and make recommendations to the House within four weeks.

Need for a Special Concession to Government Hospitals by the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN)

The Deputy Speaker: The Fifth Order of the Day is a Motion titled: Need for a Special Concession to Government Hospitals by the Power Holding Company of Nigeria standing in the name of Hon. Bashir Bolarinwa and 37 others.

Hon. Bolarinwa is invited to move his Motion.

Hon. Bashir Omolaja Bolarinwa (Lagos Mainland): The Motion, as has been rightly titled, is the need for a Special Concession to Government Hospitals by the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN):

This House:

Notes the enormity of the problems the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) has brought on the nation;

Concerned that even institutions of government which offer essential services like hospitals barely have enough power to carry out their routine services to the public;

Worried that most government hospitals run on generators or other alternative sources of power due to the inadequate power supply by Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN);

Disturbed that most Nigerians can no longer afford the high medical fees as a result of the enormous cost of alternative power sources used by government hospitals to power life-supporting medical equipment like Ultra-scans, X-Rays Machines, Baby Incubators, Dialysis and Heart Transplant Machines;

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Regret the consequences of the inadequacies of the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) resulting to high medical bills, delayed treatment, worsening cases of diseases, failures during medical operations and even death.

Resolves to:

- (i) Urge the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) to give special consideration to all government hospitals nationwide;
- (ii) Call on the Presidency to expedite actions on its resolve of attaining 6,000 Megawatts by December 2009 to enable the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) discharge its statutory duty to supply regular and uninterrupted power to all Nigerians.

Hon. Falade Ajibade (Ede North/Ede South/Egbedore/Ejigbo): I do second the Motion moved by Hon. Bashir O. Bolarinwa.

Question proposed.

Hon. Bashir O. Bolarinwa: The havoc caused by the interrupted power supply by the Power Holding Company of Nigeria is no longer news to Nigerians. It has become clear that virtually all sectors that rely on power for their day-to-day operations are almost at a standstill.

I am of the opinion that hospitals, being community life support in terms of general health care needs and in times of natural disasters, should be given special attention in the sense that it is the only place that you will have cause to visit at one time or the other, whatever class you belong to. By virtue of the work hospitals render which every one of us term as essential services I am of the opinion that special consideration should be given to such a sector.

The situation we are in these days is pathetic in the sense that most government hospitals now run on generators most of the time because electricity supply from Power Holding of Nigeria is becoming increasingly irregular. Ironically, generators provide the major source of power for our hospitals today while the alternative source is now coming from Power Holding Company of Nigeria. This is not good for our government hospitals.

For instance, I had cause to visit the University of Lagos Teaching Hospital in Idi-Araba one day and they told me that they spend as much as ₦6 million on diesel

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weekly to be able to power their generators. This is rather unfortunate and I am sure that such a thing is not peculiar to LUTH. It is happening in all other hospitals in this country. The government hospitals we are talking about occupy strategic positions.

It is true that the elites in this country patronise private hospitals but one snag I have discovered is that many of these private hospitals do not have the sophisticated equipment that you will find in government hospitals. The implication of this is that most cases are referred eventually to government hospitals when they get out-of-hand. In other words, we all visit government hospitals one time or the other irrespective of the class.

The effects of not having regular power in hospitals are very many. They range from high medical bills; delayed treatment, worsening cases of diseases to failure of power supply when major surgeries are being performed. There are times when PHCN would disrupt power supply during critical operations; we all know that these sometime result in death. We also know very well that when our drugs are shelved they are expected to be stored under certain conditions and temperature but this cannot be possible unless we have regular power supply. It is on this note that I am appealing to Members of this House to join me in supporting this Motion for the sake of Nigerians.

On the issue regarding the generation of 6,000 megawatts of electricity which the President of this country promised Nigerians by December 2009, I am calling on Members of this honourable House to join me in appealing to the President to see that he does not renege on the promise; he should do everything possible to fulfill that promise.

Hon. Elizabeth Ogbaga (Ebonyi/Ohaukwu): Mr. Speaker, I support this Motion with a simple practical experience. Not quite long ago I was at the Emergency Section of the National Hospital when a group of accident victims were brought to the Casualty Section. As efforts were being made to give the critically injured first-aid treatment, NEPA struck and the whole place became dark. The hospital said there was no diesel in their generator. To make matters worse, those already dead could not be taken to the mortuary due to lack of electricity; it was a bad sight. As if that was not enough, there was also no electricity at the Paediatric Section where you have premature babies and we all know that premature babies can only live with light. In the X-Ray Department, it was the same story.

Some of our doctors are being frustrated and the best option for them is to take appointment outside the country thus making it look as if we do not have

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experts. Some of us here have resorted to travelling abroad for medical treatment whereas we have qualified medical personnel that can take care of some of these ailments. However, our problem is that the procedures to be used like heart surgery cannot take place here because of inadequate light, fluctuating light or no light at all. Since NEPA changed its name to PHCN, the illiterates will say *Nigeria never have light*.

If you look at the procedure in our hospitals in terms of the use of scanning and mammographic equipment, constant power supply is a necessity. For the newly qualified doctors, they have been trained in the application of some of the procedures theoretically and when they are in the hospital to put these theories into practice, you will find out that they are referred here and there. At the end of the day, our medical personnel are referred to as theoretical doctors and nurses who are not given the opportunity to practicalise in the hospitals what they learnt in school.

I am in support of this Motion aimed at giving special concession of electricity to all government hospitals nationwide so that these trained experts can show Nigerians that they are equal to the task rather than sending out our trained nurses, midwives, medical doctors to be slaves abroad because when they go outside, they work more than they are expected to do because they are Nigerians and foreigners.

Hon. Friday Itulah (Esan North East/Esan South East): I would like to thank Hon. Bashir and others that sponsored this very beautiful Motion. What we are simply being told this morning is that there is the need to save lives. I am sure that all of us who are here would be supportive of this idea and the intendment of this Motion.

The Sponsors are using the same Motion to call on the government to expedite action because every time we read in the newspapers that the government is desirous of increasing the megawatts so that we have enough power to bring light to all and sundry in this country.

As things are at this moment we know that the power being generated is not sufficient to go round all critical areas but in terms of priority the health sub-sector should take the first place and, therefore, the intendment of the Motion is to ask that PHCN gives special priority to our hospitals.

We can see from the third premise of this Motion that the inability of PHCN to give light to these special hospitals is causing a lot of problem. This is transferred to the costs these patients pay. Moreover, in cases of

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emergency when PHCN strikes, we also know the consequences; it could lead to death and paralysis.

Therefore, what the Motion is asking is something I am sure all of us will agree with. There is need to give special concession to hospitals and particularly to government hospitals across the country. Therefore, all of us who are here are in support of this Motion and we urge all to have it passed without single dissent.

Hon. Dino Melaye (Kabba/Bunu/Ijumu): One would start by wondering if there is a corroboration between Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) and the ability of the old NEPA to hold power if the name *Power Holding* is to hold power. The essence of this Motion has been lucidly elucidated by the Sponsor of the Motion.

Beyond this, one must also ask very important question. A popular Yoruba adage says; if you use seven years to prepare for madness, how many years will you use for running mad? Nigerians are actually very tired with logistic explanations, policy analysis, policy statements, the statistics, memo writing and all that as regards power and we all know that the negative concomitant effect of this epileptic supply of electricity in this country is enormous.

Last week, the Committee on Industries was in Kano and we visited an industry that told us that they are spending over ₦90 million every month on diesel; we saw the vouchers from Texaco. We now asked the question, if you are to get regular electricity supply, how much are you supposed to pay NEPA monthly? In reply, they said they were supposed to pay less than ₦3 million to NEPA. You can see the negative concomitant effect of this on the cost of production and at the end of the day on the prices of goods, commodities, job creation and all that.

It is time we stop paying lip service on the issue of Power. My Colleagues had spoken seriously on the seriousness of electricity supply to the Health sector but it is a holistic approach. We do not understand the way the Federal Government is going to do it. The same way Ghana did it by celebrating their 10th year anniversary of uninterrupted Power supply, Nigeria can do the same.

Hon. Abdullahi Umar Faruk (B/Kebbi/Kalgo/Bunza): I also want to align with the positive effect of this Motion. This Motion has gone a long way in reminding all of us about what the Constitution has already regarding the relationship between the Government and the people.

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Let me refer this honourable House to Section 14(2)(b) of the Constitution dealing with Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy. With your permission, I read: *The security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of the Government.* If this is the case, this Motion is very apt and should be commended.

It is true that the issue of power supply is a lingering problem here but while we are trying to solve it we should ensure that the greater percentage of the people are being assisted in cushioning some of the exorbitant cost of incessant power failure particularly when about 60 to 70 *per cent* of us are living below the poverty level. What it means is that about 60 *per cent* of us cannot pay the exorbitant hospital bills brought about by the high cost of running generators.

We can urge PHCN to give special consideration to all government hospitals and assist PHCN by incorporating it in our budget.

Hon. Abdulkadir Mamman Nasir (Kafur/Malumfashi): I would also join my Colleagues in supporting *in toto* this noble Motion by Hon. Bolarinwa. In addition to Power Holding Company ensuring stable power supply to hospitals especially the Specialised Hospitals this House should add on this matter that multinational organisations like the communication outfits, the Oil companies and business-oriented companies should come in and show their social responsibility in ensuring the stable provision of Power especially to these specialised hospitals.

You will agree with me that these companies are doing business in Nigeria and making a lot of profit but instead of financing critical sectors like the Health sector they embark on wild goose projects. It is better for them to finance Hospitals and Social amenities rather than embarking on these wild goose projects.

I am in total support of this Motion and I urge all my hon. Colleagues to do the same.

The Speaker: I will now give the Floor to those against the Motion.

Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo (Abak/Etim Ekpo/Ika): Mr. Speaker, the reason I am speaking against the Motion is that you cannot offer what you do not have. We can sit down here and talk about dedicating Power supply to Health institutions like the hospitals though we may forget about the Health Centres that control the vaccines that are being administered to our kids and equally adults that may be open to that and forget about

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the most important aspect of it which is, power generation. How do they generate it? So if we sit down here and pass a Resolution that Power Holding Company do this or that and ask the Committee on Legislative Compliance to go and effect it, it would be ineffective. Let us, in the first place, ensure that there is power supply in the country before we move ahead to embark on this other directive so that we do not ridicule ourselves.

There are other important institutions that need power, not only the Health Sector. Like in the National Assembly here, if we do not have power supply we cannot sit. We control the heartbeat of this nation and we spend millions of naira in running generators on diesel even in our homes. Cost of living would get higher and higher when you do not have power supply to refrigerate your food in the refrigerator and it makes it very high for us to sustain our living. Let us look at the issue of addressing power generation before you can talk of dedicating certain power supply to some sectors.

Hon. Leonard Okuweh Ogor (Isoko North/Isoko South): I am speaking against this Motion because of my little conviction. Let me with due humility state that the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the number one citizen of our great nation, has given us a public assurance that by December we would have attained 6,000 megawatts of electricity. We must avoid the concept of accepting defeat; a kind of deficit approach in looking at life.

The authors and mover of this Motion are indirectly saying that we should look at the possibility of extending power to some sectors. I agree but to some extent. Let us call a spade a spade and tell ourselves the truth that as a nation we have a problem. We have a problem but the problem does not really mean that we should adopt a stopgap approach in addressing this problem. We must be prepared as a nation to look at issues holistically and in looking at issues holistically we may end up addressing the fundamentals that affect this problem rather than saying we should take a stopgap approach and give power to a particular sector when you know that at the end of the day, that power might not be there.

I appeal that we must be very conscious in taking resolutions; resolutions that may at the end of the day, make us look as very unserious people. We know as a nation that we are being confronted with an energy problem; there is nobody among us here that will not appreciate the enormity of this problem.

Give or take, let us believe in what the President of our Federal Republic of Nigeria has told us; let us manage the situation so that by December, when we

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achieve that 6,000 megawatts, we can move further from there.

Hon. Ike Chinwo (Obio/Akpor): I thank my Colleague and the rest of them that sponsored this Motion. I am sure that they did that because of their desire to ensure that we minimise the loss of human lives.

Beyond that, I do not think that the intention of all of us seated here and those who are not here is to begin to attend to the problem of this country by the epileptic nature of the power supplied by the Power Holding Company of Nigeria. This is a mere cosmetic approach to solving a deeper fundamental problem that we are all facing today as a country.

This Motion seems to suggest that because Nigeria does not have sufficient food to feed her citizens and to export, all we are having as a revenue should be devoted to agriculture or that because we are addressing the problem of Power today all that we are having as revenue should be devoted to Power. That is simply the interpretation of this Motion.

I believe that we should use our powers to see how we can increase the budget for Power to enable PHNC generate enough capacity so that even hospitals, agriculture, industries *et cetera* will have enough to generate employment and to keep human welfare well sustained and well managed.

I believe very sincerely that this Motion should not have a place here at all. We should ask the Sponsors to withdraw this Motion honourably so that we do not reduce this House to a mere House that approaches Nigeria's problem by mere cosmetically.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Bashir, you are raising your hand.

Hon. Bolarinwa Bashir Omolaja: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I want to appeal to my Colleagues that had spoken against the Motion. It appears that they have misunderstood the intention.

Hon. John Halims O. Agoda (Ethiopia East/Ethiopia West): In line with what Hon. Ike Chinwo said, what the drafters of this Motion may want to achieve could be in terms of reducing the suffering of the people in the hospital but the fact remains that they have not been able to address the fundamental issues.

There is a popular legal parlance *nemo dat quod non habet* meaning you cannot give what you do not have. When you pass this Motion the way it is drafted,

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you will be giving the Nigerian public the impression that those who are working in the Power sector do not have the interest of the country at heart.

As a concerned citizen and a lawmaker of this honourable House, I went to the PHCN office very close to Apo two weeks ago and inquired what the problem was. In Apo, we do not have regular light; sometimes we do not even have. In other parts of the Federal Capital Territory we do not have, so what is the problem? He told me: Honourable, you know the problem; you are just here to bother us. The problem is producing electricity you know we do not have.

Before now, PHCN use to give 10 megawatts to Aso Rock and 7 megawatts to Apo and he gave me the figures of how they are distributing electricity round the city but that what they have now given to them to cover Apo, Aso Rock and parts of Wuse is less than 7 megawatts and if they give Apo, then they will close down Aso Rock, Wuse and other areas and that they are in a tight problem.

Having heard from the desk officers as a lawmaker, I went to my house disgusted as to how do we solve this problem? I cannot sit down here in this Green Chamber and allow a Motion that is giving impression at the end of the day that the officers who are to distribute are the cause of the problem of electricity supply in Nigeria because once we pass this Motion as it is, then we have given that impression.

I want to say that those who are in charge of power, either the Executive or the Parliament or anywhere, should do everything reasonably possible to give Nigeria light. We must produce enough power first; we must talk of production before we talk of distribution. In that respect, when you remove that from this Motion, it becomes an ordinary piece of paper. I therefore I urge you that we should do something that is realistic that would take us forward.

Hon. Bolarinwa Bashir Omolaja: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier on, it appears my dear Colleagues that had spoken against the Motion misunderstood my intention.

We do not need to deceive ourselves with respect to Prayer (ii). So many efforts and promises have been made and even as at yesterday it was reported in some of the newspapers that the deadline on the 6,000 megawatts of electricity Mr. President promised is being threatened. What I am saying in Prayer (ii) is that the President should do everything within his reach to see that this objective is achieved.

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One other thing I want to stress on Prayer (i) is that even if it is additional 5 *per cent* that PHCN can generate as at today, let a specific percentage be conceded to the Health sub-sector. This is because today PHCN gives dedicated lines to some areas and I see no reason why PHCN cannot give dedicated lines to the Health sector that 70 *per cent* of Nigerians patronise. It is on this ground that I am appealing to my dear Colleagues that had stood up against this Motion to support it.

The Deputy Speaker: I have one Amendment here. It reads: *Urge multinational companies to come into such sectors as the Health sector.*

The mover of the Amendment is Hon. Abdulkadir Nasir. Is any Member seconding this Motion?

Hon. Darlington O. Okereke (Ivo/Ohaozara/Onicha): I rise to second that Amendment moved by Hon. Nasir.

Amendment put and negatived.

The Deputy Speaker: Let me put the question for the prayers of the Motion.

Main Motion put and negatived.

CONSIDERATION OF BILL

Federal Capital Territory Agency of Mass Education (Establishment) Bill, 2009

A Bill for an Act to Provide for the Establishment of the Federal Capital Territory Agency of Mass Education and other Matters Connected Therewith, 2009 -

Order for Second Reading.

The Deputy Speaker: The sixth Order of the Day is commencement of debate on the General Principles of a Bill for an Act to Provide for the Establishment of the Federal Capital Territory Agency of Mass Education and Other Matters Connected Therewith, 2009.

The Bill was read for the First Time on Thursday, 14th July 2009. I now invite Hon. Ali Atai Aidoko Usman to move that the Bill be read the Second Time.

Hon. Ita Enang, why is this Bill so fast? It was read on the 14th of this month; just one week.

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Hon. Ita Enang: It is because the Sponsor is ready to take it, Sir.

Hon. Atai Aidoko Ali (Ankpa/Omala/Olamaboro): Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill for an Act to Provide for the Establishment of the Federal Capital Territory Agency of Mass Education and Other Matters Connected Therewith 2009 be read the Second Time.

Hon. Nasiru Sule Garo (Gwarzo/Ikabo): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the Motion.

Hon. Leonard Okuweh Ogor (Isoko North/Isoko South): Point of Order, Mr. Speaker! I am relying on Order XV, Rule 8 of our Revised Standing Orders at page 75. It reads:

Bills passed by the preceding Assembly and forwarded to the Senate for concurrence for which no concurrence were made or negated or passed by the Senate and forwarded to the House for which no concurrence were made or negated or which were passed by the National Assembly and forwarded to the President for assent but for which assent or withholding thereof was not communicated before the end of the tenure of the Assembly, the House may resolve that such Bills upon being re-gazetted or clean copy circulated be re-considered in Committee of the Whole without being commenced de-novo.

You can clearly see that the Bill before us was a Bill that we deliberated on and I am sure the Chairman, Rules and Business Committee will confirm this because this House did pass this Bill and I remember it was sent to the Senate. I do not know whether or not the Senate forward it to Mr. President for his assent because we had passed it through Third Reading and our hon. Member who actually chaired the Committee believed that such a position is very important.

Therefore, I believe that we should commit the Bill to the Committee of the Whole.

Hon. Ita Enang: Mr. Speaker, there are two things that I have to say with your leave. One, this Bill was passed by this House and communicated to the Senate but the Senate did not pass it. The procedure is that we should take the steps agreed and itemised in Order XV, Rule 8 of our Revised Standing Orders.

Two, with respect to that Bill, the House will have to resolve and the House will only resolve upon the

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Motion that he has moved. So the stage that Hon. Leo Ogor intervened is improper because it has been moved and it has not been seconded; the House has to hear him.

The House does not have to hear the Bill at all; it is to shorten the procedure. Even members who were here at the time this Bill was passed can change their mind. When you put the question for the House to resolve as it is stated in the eighth or eleventh paragraph here the House may not resolve in the affirmative.

So, this provision does not stop this House from attending to the Bill; it will only shorten the process that you may not have to go for Public Hearing. I pray that Hon. Atai be allowed to put his argument after the Bill has been seconded.

The Deputy Speaker: What happens after his argument?

Hon Ita Enang: After the argument, the Bill will now be committed to the Committee of the Whole.

Hon. Ali A. Atai Usman: Mr. Speaker, the Point of Order by my Colleague, Hon. Leo Ogor is in order and the observation Hon. Ita Enang made is also in Order. Therefore, I will use the opportunity to say that all the information provided by both of them are correct. I will only throw more light on this Bill then I will request that the Bill be committed to the Committee of the Whole.

This Bill, which seeks to establish the Agency for Mass Education, is a very simple and straightforward Bill. The Agency is in existence already. What we seek to do is to give it the backing of the law and to enact this law that has been passed by the previous House so that this Agency that we as a Committee have always been complaining about operating without the backing of the law will get the backing of the law in this present House.

Therefore, this Agency is very important to FCT. It is an agency that is responsible for Mass Education towards giving Adult Education in the rural areas. I want to join Hon. Leo Ogor to beg the leave of the House to take the opportunity of Order XV, Rule 8 to commit this Bill to the Committee of the Whole for further urgent action.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time and referred to Committee of the Whole.

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ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Tunde Akogun: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do adjourn till tomorrow, Wednesday 22nd July, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Hon. Baba Shehu Agaie: I rise to second the Motion that this House do adjourn till tomorrow Wednesday, 22nd July, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

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Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do stand adjourned till tomorrow, Wednesday 22nd July, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

The House adjourned accordingly at 1.27 p.m.