THE SENATE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
NOTICE PAPER

Tuesday, 29th September, 2015

Wednesday, 30th September, 2015

1. Jambs' New Admission Policy
Sen. Joshua M. Lidani (Gombe South)

NOTES that the Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB) was established to among other things to administer a centralized admission system for Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education in Nigeria;

NOTES also, that the same Board was empowered by its enabling legal regime by section 5 (1)(C) (iii) to among other things, conduct matriculation examinations for admission into all Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education and also include the placement of suitable qualified candidates in the tertiary Institutions having taken into account, the preferences expressed or otherwise indicated by candidates for certain tertiary Institutions and courses;

AWARE, that JAMB at its 2015 Combined Policy Meeting held on July 14, 2015 in Abuja, announced the adoption of a policy whereby candidates of Universities with surplus applicants for the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME) are reassigned to other Universities with lower number of candidates than their capacities;

OBSERVES: that the benefits of the policy according to JAMB is that
a. It will be beneficial to needy Universities, that is Universities with lower number of candidates than their capacities as this will ensure that those Universities will have more candidates to admit.

b. Candidates will have better chances for admission in the Universities they are re-assigned to contrary to situations where they would have to wait for admission in the Universities of their first choices which may not materialize and hence forfeit admission for that session.

CONCERNED, that following the announcement of the new policy, the Board was faced with series of massive protest by parents and candidates of and some Organizations like the Association of Tutorial School Operators of Nigeria over the JAMB new Admission Policy and numerous other stakeholders;
FURTHER CONCERNED, that the new policy runs contrary to the letters and spirit of section 5(1) (c) iii of the JAMB Act which requires that JAMB should take into account preferences of the candidates in their choices of Schools and the consequent confusion surrounding the directive that only candidates whose names are forwarded to the University by JAMB are eligible for Post UTME screening and others would have to go back to JAMB website to find out their new Institutions;

WORRIED, that although the Federal Ministry of Education has suspended the implementation of this policy, it is observed that JAMB is still going ahead with implementation thus creating more hardship for parents and uncertainty in the education sector;

FURTHER WORRIED, that some of the candidates are posted to private Universities whose fees are beyond the means of the student parents or guardians and in some cases students are posted to Universities located far away from their places of abode thus placing additional financial burden on their parents.

Accordingly resolves to:

i. Urge JAMB to revert to the status quo ante.

ii. Urge JAMB to consult widely with Parents Teacher Associations, ASUU and all others stakeholders in the education sector with a view to coming out with a friendlier holistic, comprehensive and sustainable admissions policy.

iii. Direct the Senate Committee on Education to inquire into circumstances surrounding the JAMB policy including all allegations of favoritism and generally, review the power of JAMB vis a vis admissions.

2. Worrisome State of Rent in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT)
Sen. Suleiman Nazif (Bauchi North)

The Senate,

WORRIED of the high cost of rent in the FCT despite the various measures introduced by the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) to combat the situation;

OBSERVES that resident of the FCT have on many occasion drawn the attention of government to the activities of the private developers soliciting for pragmatic approaches to high rent rate and other sundry issues bothering on accommodation in the FCT;

NOTES that the same private developers connive with key government staff of the FCDA to drain residents of their meager resources by incestuously creating strategies of sky-rocketing the cost of houses in the FCT;

OBSERVES that the preoccupation of the Ministry of the Federal Capital Territory Administration is land business ranging from selling of land, land swapping and demolition of houses in the name of providing decent accommodation for residents at affordable rate;

OBSERVES also that the land meant for Nigerians residing in the FCT and those who intend to live in the FCT at affordable rate to build and own houses have been converted into a precious business;
OBSERVES that more than 60% of FCT residents resides in satellite towns, suburbs and villages where they are subjected to all forms of hardship from exorbitant rents without anything close to decent or reasonably affordable houses while the numbers of completed, tastefully furnished state of the art Structures are steadily on the increase in the FCT;

AWARE that housing is one of the basic needs of life, good and affordable houses should be the responsibility of a government that cares for the needs of its Citizens.

Accordingly resolves to,

i. URGE the FCT Administration to as a matter of urgency review its acquisition policy and property ownership rights with a view to including property tax on all unoccupied buildings in the FCT to stem the tide of people keeping buildings they ought to have rented out;

ii. URGE the Federal Government to urgently set up a Committee to verify and audit landed property in the FCT with a view to proposing a framework for the establishment of a landed property bank in the FCT;

iii. SET UP an Ad-hoc Committee to look into the high cost of rent in the FCT;

iv. INVITE the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Federal Capital Administration to brief the Senate on the way out of the high rent rate in the FCT;

v. URGE the Federal Government to mandate properties Owners in the FCT to accept one year rent instead of a two years advance rent.

2. Illegal mining of the nation’s solid minerals

Senator DuroFaseyi, Ekiti

The Senate

NOTES, with serious concern the unlawful plundering of the nation’s solid minerals by local and foreign miners which was further confirmed a few days ago by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Mines and Steel Development, Alhaji Baba Umar Farouk while briefing Mr. President on the state of his ministry

WORRIED, that the illegal mining has resulted in the nation’s loss of N8trillion every two years and thus impacting too adversely on the nation’s deteriorating economy

WORRIED further, that the illegal mining would jeopardize the urgent need to diversifying the economy from oil to solid minerals sector, necessitated by the steady dwindling price of oil at the international market

OBSERVES, that the diversification has become imperative to shore up the nation’s earnings, boost the economy and create employment opportunities for our teeming unemployed youths

AWARE, that the illegal mining has resulted in the devastation and pollution of the environment leading to the death of hundreds of Nigerians with several thousands of others infested with various ailments especially in the Northern rural areas.

OBSERVES, that the government appears helpless without concrete strategy in place to tackle this monumental economic sabotage
Accordingly resolves to:

(i) condemn in the strongest terms the mindless and unlawful plundering of our solid minerals

(ii) invite the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Mines and Steel Development and heads of other relevant agencies for explanations and clarifications as a measure towards grappling with this economic sabotage

(iii) set up an ad hoc committee on Illegal Mining to look into the matter with a view to finding lasting solutions to the problem

(iv) direct the law enforcement agencies especially the Inspector-General of Police to be alive to the responsibility of bringing the illegal miners to book as urgently as possible

(v) urge the executive to take concrete steps towards ending the illegal mining