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THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2024



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 3RD SITTING - SECOND MEETING

Thursday, 28 November 2024

Parliament met at 1.59 p.m. at Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker, Ms Anita Among, in the Chair.)

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome you to this afternoon's sitting. The nation is currently experiencing a lot of rainfall, which is causing a lot of disasters and flooding in various parts of the country. Yesterday we highlighted the situation that was unfolding at Pakwach Bridge. I am reliably informed that the taxi that was trapped amidst the flood was successfully retrieved, and the passengers are safe. *(Applause)*

However, on a sad note, in the process of the rescue, we lost one of the engineers of the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA). That was really a very tragic incident. We must take note that the floods are all over the country. When you go to the east, the floods are there. I am informed that Nabuyonga Bridge, at the entrance into Mbale, is off; you cannot enter. You cannot cross the road between Mbale and Soroti. Tirinyi Road has the same problem. Bulambuli – and, last night Hon. Ssasaga sent me pictures of people who had died in the floods. That is what is happening in the country, specifically the landslides.

The landslides in Bulambuli have been reported to have buried 40 households across the estimated six villages. The process of recovering the bodies is ongoing. We really need urgent action from the Prime Minister's office – that is the minister for disaster preparedness. These people need to be supported.

Based on that, it now takes us back to the issue of the Uganda Red Cross Act. The Uganda Red Cross Act was enacted in 1964. It is almost obsolete now. We need the Government to ensure that the Uganda Red Cross Bill is brought to this House and then we have an Act that helps on what should be done and how these people should be operating. We need a legal framework on which Uganda Red Cross should be operating.

Honourable members, as we commemorate the World AIDS Day on 1 December 2024 – this day will fall on a Sunday – I will invoke Rule 25 (1) of the Rules of Procedure to vary the Order Paper and accommodate a statement from the minister for the presidency – whom I do not see here. We need a statement for that.

In the public gallery, I see some people clad in orange—that is against domestic violence. Madam Anyoti, you are most welcome. *(Applause)* We thank you very much. We will also expect a statement on issues of domestic violence. However, I do not see the responsible person here.

Based on the fact that – now that the people have not yet come, we will vary and give

the LoP an opportunity to present his brief statement of findings on his oversight role.

(*Members rose*) Are you reacting to my statement? Hon. Tinkasiimire?

2.08

MR BARNABAS TINKASIIMIRE (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I want to thank you for your communication. I remember yesterday, when I was in the House, you asked the Government to respond immediately to the crisis on Pakwach Bridge.

Madam Speaker, you referred to us having lost an engineer from UNRA. It is sad, indeed. Our condolences to the family and to the Government that has lost such an experienced person.

Madam Speaker, we recently rationalised UNRA. From my experience, whenever we would have a crisis, we had a number of phone numbers to call. If you could not reach the director in Kampala, you would call the regional managers and a number of other engineers, from UNRA, to come and respond to the crisis, particularly in our respective constituencies. The rationalisation meant that it is now the commissioner – is it the engineer-in-chief? Who is in charge of coordination and receiving our calls?

You will agree with me that it is very difficult for him to receive phone calls from the number of constituencies that we have in this country. Therefore, we ask the Minister of Works and Transport to provide lines that we can call so that they can respond to various crises that are going or happening in our respective constituencies.

The roads which the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) used to work on have been washed away by the rains. Some bridges have been washed away and we are stuck. We are on the Floor and there is no minister from the Ministry of Works and Transport.

Even if I got out to call that engineer, the whole day, I would not be able to talk to him. We are like hitting a dead end.

I would like to use this opportunity, Madam Speaker, since you have mentioned UNRA which was politely abolished due to rationalisation to state that we need those help lines. . I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. There is nobody you are putting on order. Member from Buhweju-

2.11

MR EPHARAIM BIRAARO (NRM, Buhweju West County, Buhweju): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am responding to your communication about the floods that happened in Bulambuli. You said that they sent you pictures on the phone and you have read them.

It is very amazing and positively surprising that the whole Rt Hon. Speaker is receiving pictures from us. That is a very big plus for you.

You mentioned the floods; I was in Buhweju last weekend. On Saturday, I managed to traverse three sub-counties, and 28 landslides occurred there. My biggest pain is when we report to the relevant ministries like the Ministry of Works and Transport that do not respond. - Our roads in Buhweju were washed away on 20 September 2022. To date, there has been no response from the Ministry of Works and Transport. If I had had time to know that we would talk about that one, I would have come with a pile of letters I have written to the minister of State, the minister himself, the permanent secretary, and the engineer-in-chief, but to no avail.

Three roads have been cut off since 20 September 2022. Madam Speaker, where do we go?

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I hope the Government is taking note because you will respond to all of them. Member for Tororo-Doctor.

2.12

DR EMMANUEL OTAALA (NRM, West Budama County South, Tororo): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity and your communication regarding the disaster that is now covering the whole country in terms of flooding.

I think that on this note, we need the Government to come up with a comprehensive plan for addressing this emergency. If we started now with each one submitting on this subject, you will find that there is no safe place.

In Tororo, almost every corner is now cut off; the main bridge to Rubongi is cut off. That is why the landslides are occurring across mountainous areas.

That is why we need to press the Government to come up with an urgent plan to address this disaster. You alluded to the issue of bringing here an amendment to revise the Red Cross Act and I thought that other than shifting our direction to an international agency- (*Hon. Ekanya rose*_)

Are you giving me information or clarification? Okay, clarify.

MR EKANYA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Dr Otaala is talking about the Red Cross. It globally operates like a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and I am surprised that we have an Act that is dormant and the Government has not been operating.

Isn't the Red Cross a global NGO that we should really not handle? How do we handle the Red Cross? How is it appointed, its structure and so forth and yet globally it is an NGO? I need to be guided-

DR OTAALA: Thank you, I think I was driving-

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the Uganda Red Cross Society was formed by an Act of Parliament in 1964. It is based on handling societies, helping humanity, and helping where there are disasters.

However, the Red Cross Society of Uganda relies on the Prime Minister's office for it to get its funding and relies on the Minister of Health. The little that the Prime Minister's office gives them is what they use for their humanitarian activity.

It is not an NGO but an Act by formation of this Parliament, formed in 1964, and the issue that they have is - if it was formed in 1964 and now we are in 2024, we are not in a static environment. Why don't we have an amendment to the Act so that you give a vote to the Uganda Red Cross Society? Yes, Dr. Otaala.

DR OTAALA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I conclude, I think you rightly guided that the Red Cross Society of Uganda is part of an international humanitarian agency.

I think that other than leaving it to be getting subventions from the Ministry of Health or the Office of the Prime Minister, we as Parliament, should recognise that the Uganda Red Cross is doing quite a lot of humanitarian work in terms of disaster occurrences in this country. We need to compel the Government to make it a substantive vote where money is voted for immediate response. (*Applause*)

I also want us to recognise that we have a fully-fledged Ministry of Disaster Preparedness and Refugees. We should not be shifting our attention to an international agency rather than focusing on the ministry over which we have oversight.

Finally, as I conclude my submission, the Government needs to mobilise emergency humanitarian assistance across the country. People are displaced by floods, they have lost crops, and they are trying to harvest crops prematurely, like in Tororo, most of the crops are now rotting.

The Government needs to come in to see the people who are displaced and need emergency shelter and rescue operations, like in mountainous areas where people have been buried in mudslides.

We need a substantive statement from the relevant ministry to address this emergency. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I think we need strategic planning for these disasters. This business of handling disasters in an ad hoc way is not good for this country especially when you know that the rains- you can never predict when the rains are coming.

Yes, Hon. Sharon, then I will come to your procedural matter.

2.19

MS SHARON BALMOYI (NRM, Woman Representative, Gulu): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I still rise on a matter of national importance in regard to the floods.

THE SPEAKER: No.

MS BALMOYI: Sorry, I am reacting to your communication in regard to the floods that are ravaging the entire country. As you are all aware, yesterday in Northern Uganda experienced terrible floods.

So many people were stranded for hours that they were not able to cross, and I also send my condolences to the family of the engineer who died in the flood.

I always wonder, for how long are we going to keep on acting on emergencies? Why don't we prepare ourselves as a country to curb such emergencies?

When it comes to the Tangi River, which bursts its banks every year, the Uganda National Roads Authority just goes and piles hard-core and marram, and that is it.

In a matter of days, it is washed away. Why can't we get a lasting solution to this bridge or river that keeps on bursting its bank over the years so that, at least, it does not surprise us when such national calamities happen?

This has happened time and again and if you drive along that road, - because that is the route

we are currently using, to and from northern Uganda, or Gulu in particular - the bridge is washed and much as it is no longer being used, the railway is hanging.

Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) should wake up from its sleep and - Ministry of Works and Transport - sorry, forgive me, I am still used to UNRA.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, there are matters of national disaster. As much as you put up a permanent bridge, one day, it can be pushed off.

MS LAKER: Most obliged, Madam Speaker, but it can at least last for a period of time because money is being used every year to do the same work.

Apart from that, there is a looming famine because gardens have been submerged, people are harvesting premature crops and there is nowhere to even dry their crops.

The Ministry of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees should, therefore, prepare itself to at least send emergency relief to our people who are suffering right now because I am getting phone calls time and again. I submit.

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

DR APEA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to draw your attention, honourable colleagues, that in this House we appropriated a budget and in that budget we have a 0.5 per cent Contingency Fund, which is supposed to address all these issues.

The discussion we should be having now is for the Minister of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to confirm in this House, if that money is available for us to go to see that all emergencies are being responded to.

Otherwise, the floods are there and as I talk now I cannot go to Amolatar because the lakes have all burst their banks and the roads

are all covered up. Madam Speaker, are we proceeding right? Can the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development really tell us?

THE SPEAKER: We are proceeding rightly. It is common knowledge that in the Constitution we have a Contingency Fund from where that money is supposed to come.

The Minister of Disaster Preparedness cannot respond without knowing what the problem is because she is also here. She does not know what is happening in Bukedea, and she may not know what is happening in Amolatar, Bududa, Sironko, and Sembabule. So, let us determine the issues, and then the minister will respond.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, another procedural matter?

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I entirely agree with your guidance on the Contingency Fund. But, our major challenge is that we come here, bring these issues - personally, I brought issues four months ago on this very Floor. The Minister of Disaster Preparedness told us she did not have resources. But now we are going into a second cycle of bringing the challenges, same issues and I am very sure the minister is going to stand there and tell us that she has no money.

Madam Speaker, our question, again, is: why can't the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development facilitate the minister or the Prime Minister's Office to deal with the problem? Because we cannot keep bringing our problems here every now and then and then there is no action because there is no money. So, the question is - luckily the minister is here, can you guide? (*Hon. Otimgiw rose*) Yes, information please.

MR OTIMGIW: Thank you, my honourable colleague, for giving way.

Madam Speaker, what Hon. Enos Asiimwe has said is a fundamental issue. However, despite the fact that we claim there are no funds, it is in

the nature of the response that is coming from the Prime Minister's Office. Some of us, for example, still have cases which were submitted to the Office of the Prime Minister two years ago and no action has been taken but you will find there are some areas where action is taken and they get a response within a month.

Therefore, what is the criteria from the Office of the Prime Minister in responding to some of these disasters? Is there any first-come-first-serve basis because some of us who submitted a long time ago have never received any response. That is the reason why we are wondering what the situation is so that we could know. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Nyendwoha?

2.26

MS NORAH BIGIRWA (NRM, Woman Representative, Buliisa): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to thank you for your communication and I rise to respond to it.

You mentioned a number of areas that are suffering because of the flooding. I would like to inform you and the rest of us in this House that Buliisa District has greatly suffered because of flooding.

We are actually in the second phase of flooding. We submitted a request way back, in September, and were promised that in October, when the new quarter starts, the release will come. But now most of the homes of our people have been submerged. People have been displaced and have nowhere to go.

Madam Speaker, I think as a country and as a Parliament, we need to know how prepared we are to respond to disasters and as we go in this cycle of budgeting, I think it is imperative that we allocate the right resources so that all these disasters we are hearing countrywide can be resolved. Otherwise, people are suffering and there is need for urgent attention to them. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Mwenge representative?

2.26

MR DONALD KATALIHLWA (NRM, Mwenge County South, Kyenjojo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am rising to talk about your communication in regard to the submerging bridges. It is true that everywhere bridges have submerged and people are suffering because of these floods. But I am happy that the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is in this House.

In my district, there is a key bridge that connects Kyenjojo to Kamwenge over the Mpanga River—a very big bridge. As we talk now, I have pictures that I would like to share with you, Madam Speaker, since other people are also sharing with you, where even vehicles have submerged in that river. That bridge is on a road that was initially planned to be tarmac.

Unfortunately, under unclear circumstances, in 2021, it was removed from the budget - the road connecting Kyenjojo to Kamwenge through Kyakatwire up to Kahunge. But discussions are still ongoing about how we can have it reinstated.

My concern now that goes directly to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, I am sure very soon - I do not want to debate in anticipation - but very soon, the minister will come with a supplementary to tell us what he is spending under three per cent and the House will be very surprised on the issues they will have spent on.

Madam Speaker, if the House is agreeing that everywhere we have these floods and bridges submerging, why can't we agree that in this supplementary they are bringing, they cater for all the bridges because they know the supplementary three per cent of Shs 72 trillion is a lot of money. Why can't we have that supplementary this time around, managing all these bridges so that our people are able to cross and have their businesses running?

I would like to request this House, that this time, Hon. Musasizi should not bring us a supplementary, especially on the three per cent when he is only coming to report to us on issues that do not touch our communities. We want a supplementary which handles our emergencies, especially the effects of the bridges collapsing because of the floods. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, most of these issues you are raising are best raised when – the good thing is that we have a Minister of Disaster Preparedness here, but I will allow you to raise other issues when the Prime Minister is here during Prime Minister's Time.

Can we hear from the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness first? Yes, you have a procedural issue?

MR SSEMUKUJU: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Hon. Otaala from Tororo to the North, Bunyoro. Everybody is crying. Those who are crying loudest so far are from the National Resistance Movement (NRM) side –(*Interjection*) - I am raising a procedural issue, if you can wait.

I was born in Masaka so I usually go home. That bridge in Katonga, which was swept away now more than three years ago, has not been fixed, so are many others before you raise the new one.

Madam Speaker, you listed disasters in your communication and forgot one disaster that befell this country; the disaster of the NRM, 38 years in power. Therefore, the procedural issue I am raising is whether -

THE SPEAKER: Which disaster was that?

MR SSEMUKUJU: The disaster of NRM that befell this country 38 years ago.

THE SPEAKER: Which disaster was that?

MR SSEMUKUJU: The NRM coming into power was a disaster.

THE SPEAKER: No.

MR SSEMUJJU: So, I am -

THE SPEAKER: That was not a disaster, come on.

MR SSEMUJJU: I thought you would allow me to speak and you rule after.

THE SPEAKER: First listen.

MR SSEMUJJU: Can I raise -

THE SPEAKER: I do not know the disaster you are talking about. There is no disaster called the NRM. Did it -

MR SSEMUJJU: No, I thought you would allow me to raise the issue, and then you rule, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Let me tell you this, Hon. Ssemujju Ibrahim, let us have respect for each other's party. If we are talking about serious matters, where floods are killing people, nobody in your constituency will take you seriously because you have talked about the disaster of NRM, which has stabilised this country for the last 38 years. *(Applause)*

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Speaker, I thought you would allow me to raise the procedural issue, and then you rule. If what you are saying - and I do not want to engage with you Madam Speaker - then we would not have Members of Parliament from the ruling party crying. They should be coming here to celebrate but each of them is taking our time. We should be the ones complaining. If you allow them, they will all stand here and complain. Then they will go and say, "NRM oyee."

I am only saying, Madam Speaker, that until - because the chairperson - Pardon me if she is not, but she has also been complaining. Everybody is complaining so what motivates you to support a government that makes you complain? Then you come here and begin complaining.

Therefore, the procedural issue I am raising - allow me, Madam Speaker - is whether this

Parliament should not deal with an NRM disaster that does not prioritise all roads and is making you cry.

You have heard my brother from Bunyoro saying that they should not bring a supplementary budget here. Is that not the substantive issue we should be dealing with?

Your President is now moving, touring bridges that have collapsed and you are here. He is in your areas touring -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju, we do not have an NRM disaster. The disasters we are talking about are natural disasters. The NRM you are talking about is a party in power. It has been here and it is still going to be there. *(Applause)* Can I hear from the minister in charge of disaster?

2.34

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (RELIEF, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND REFUGEES) (Ms Lillian Aber): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to, first of all, take note of all the issues raised -

THE SPEAKER: Why don't you be happy that I have initiated her? *(Applause)*

MS ABER: Madam Speaker, two months ago, I was here and I gave -

THE SPEAKER: *Hajjat* wants to say something.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to welcome Hon. Lillian Aber to the fraternity of *Hajjats*. Before you name her *Hajjat*, may she profess what they profess before they are called *Hajjats* so that I officially welcome her.

THE SPEAKER: *Hajjat*, for your information, I did all the induction. I did everything.

MS AISHA KABANDA: She is most welcome to the world of - and may you please wear like that all the time. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Amen.

MS ABER: Madam Speaker, I do take note and confirm that you did a good job.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS ABER: *As-salamu alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh. (Laughter)*

Madam Speaker, this period, the weather forecast indicates that we will have heavy rains. I did mention this when I came to present a paper on the disaster situations in the country.

The nature of our disaster response is a multi-sectoral approach. When a disaster occurs, for example, flooding, which has swept off bridges, we coordinate with the Ministry of Works and Transport to support the intervention, and we have been doing this. This morning, the Prime Minister chaired a meeting tackling all the disasters in the country and coordinating with the team in response.

Madam Speaker, where I need support from this House is deliberate funding on some key areas that facilitate disaster as a response.

First of all, the Ministries of Works and Transport, Health -

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order.

MR SSEMUGU: Madam Speaker, I sit on the Budget Committee. This Parliament moved money from items that Parliament did not consider essential. You went to the Cabinet and castigated Parliament. The minister is now saying that she needs support from Parliament - which was made almost at gunpoint to restore what the chief executive called, "priorities."

Is she in order to come here and begin mocking Parliament that it can give her money when what was given was taken away? *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, Hon. Aber is just informing you of her request.

MS ABER: Madam Speaker, I took note when Members were talking about the need to make or to fund the Red Cross. I want to confirm that the Red Cross gets funding from the Government under our budget of disaster and also gets funding from international bodies. They complement our work and we work as a team.

Our interventions are immediate, mid-term and long-term. The immediate interventions are those that include response in terms of relief items, non-relief items, shelter, among others.

The mid-term interventions are the issues that we look at addressing the challenge that we have. Last week, I chaired a meeting that brought together UN agencies and the leadership of Ntoroko to look at how we can engage the agencies with modern equipment on bridging where the flooding comes from and affects our people.

Therefore, we are doing all it takes to do what we can amidst the meager resources that we are allocated.

We pledge to continue providing responses at every time of need. I also want to confirm that the ministry for finance has allocated funding, and that we are soon going to dispatch relief items to the different parts of the country. The requests that were received, and reports attached to, will receive support of relief items in their respective districts.

Other Members here can confirm that last week, they already received the food items, but we cannot send them all at once. We will send them bit by bit, because of the transportation, since we will have to rely on the same trucks. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: There was a clarification.

MR EKANYA: Madam Speaker, I thank you very much, and I thank the minister.

Madam Speaker, we passed a disaster policy in this Parliament 10 years ago. The minister is right to say that our disaster management is

multi-sectoral. Within the policy framework, the Government is supposed to develop programmes to address recurring disasters and prevent them from recurring.

Madam Speaker, like the issue of bridges flooding; within the policy, we have engineering studies should have been conducted to come up with a mechanism to ensure that in the next two or three years, we do not have more bridges flooding and roads closed. It is within the policy. The minister has not talked about it. It is going to be the case, year-in, year-out.

Secondly, the issue of homesteads being washed away is within the policy. It is a global climate issue. It is the policy that within a radius, there should be trees and a mechanism established. Madam Speaker, I did not hear the minister talk about it. The minister talked about meeting international Non-Government Organisations to bridge areas.

The population of Uganda is increasing, and since poverty is not being addressed, population will continue to affect the swamps and the sources of the rivers. The mechanism is within the policy to ensure that the community near the rivers, riverbanks, and so forth, are moved away and money is provided. The Minister has not talked about that.

Madam Speaker, I seek clarification from the honourable minister. When are you coming up with a comprehensive programme to implement the policies, so that resources are provided for and we stop this ping-pong, year-in and year-out?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I refer you to Article 249 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the Disaster Preparedness and Management Commission. “There shall be a Disaster Preparedness and Management Commission for Uganda, to deal with both natural and man-made disasters.

(2) Parliament shall, for the purpose of this article, prescribe the composition, the functions and procedures for implementation of the functions of this commission.”

When shall we have a commission to this effect which will help us manage these disasters in the country? It is a constitutional requirement.

MS ABER: Madam Speaker, that is underway. We had a meeting and discussed that with the senior minister, and we are meant to have another meeting with the Prime Minister to discuss the issue of the commission –

THE SPEAKER: Number two, when shall we have an amendment of the Red Cross Act of 1964?

MS ABER: Madam Speaker that is a task that we will take on with the Attorney-General, and we will report back to Parliament.

Madam Speaker, I want to say something on the disaster risk management policy. The policy is exactly what the honourable member talked about, but we have to fund the policy. The policy looks at decentralisation of the approach on response. We need to procure equipment. If we know that Bududa in the Elgon Region, is prone to landslides, then the equipment meant for response to landslides must be assembled within that area. However, we cannot implement the policy the way it is if we do not fund it.

THE SPEAKER: Hajat.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The procedural issue I raise is to the effect of the oversight role of this Parliament.

Madam Speaker, when we delegate committees, we do not delegate our oversight role. A year back, Parliament interviewed a team of judges appointed by the President to acting capacities. Six months later, the same names appeared for appointment to substantive capacities. One of the many names –

THE SPEAKER: Not 6 months. It was two years later.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you –

THE SPEAKER: Can I request that you bring up that issue when the Prime Minister is in.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Madam Speaker, I will raise the issue so that you give a directive.

THE SPEAKER: No, I have a reason why I want you to bring it up when the Prime Minister is in.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you. Most obliged.

THE SPEAKER: Yes.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, first of all, I thank the new minister. Your submissions are good, and since you have been inducted by the Speaker, you are on point.

However, Madam Speaker, the procedural matter I raise is that a while ago you talked about the minister for presidency, and on several occasions before this Parliament, I have complained and raised procedural matters of ministers who are ever absent from here.

One time, I talked about Hon. Minister Mayanja attacking the Buganda Kingdom and missing Parliament sittings over a hundred times. Now, here we are. You talked about the minister for the presidency here. She is another ex-official who does not appear, yet we have issues. For any issues to do with the President, the minister for the presidency should be –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Gonzaga, Hon. Mayanja actually came while you were away. *(Laughter)*

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Then secondly, the minister for presidency is just next to – so, if you have a question to ask, please ask.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Madam Speaker, but he is representing the other one. However, let me take it as you have stated. The powers are vested in you.

My issue is for the minister for the presidency. There is a gentleman in Kalungu called Mr Vincent Ssemugenyi. He is a combatant. This man was conned by State House operatives to get access to the President, and he paid them Shs 20 million. My interest- minister for presidency, through the Speaker, is to know why somebody who wants to meet the President of the country has to pay money. What criteria do they use? This is an old man who is going to die. What is the right price for meeting Gen. Museveni in the State House by his own combatants, and who are those people conning people from Kalungu, where I come from?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, listen to the Member. Have you finished?

MR SSEWUNGU: Madam Speaker, this story is not a joke. It is from the Government newspaper, *The New Vision*. This is *New Vision* writing a full page about somebody conning. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the President has always said, nobody should be charged money for seeing him. If that perpetrator is doing that, then he should be brought to book. He is not an agent of the President.

Hon. Kyofatogabye, on the issue of conning people for money to see the President, can I ask you to take up that issue and have that person brought to book?

MR KYOFATOGABYE: Most obliged, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The money should be refunded to the person from whom they conned it. They do not pay money to see the President.

MR KYOFATOGABYE: I will seek assistance from Hon. Ssewungu on the details of the gentleman, and then we carry on.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The Leader of the Opposition (LoP)?

MR SSEWUNGU: Honourable minister should take advantage of this news and lay it on Table – the telephone number of this gentleman is attached – and do the needful, as you look for where you put your rosary today.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, before the LoP comes in, in the public gallery, we have officials from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. They include Ms Angela Nakafero (commissioner at the ministry), Ms Rebecca Nagawa – please, stand up. Are you not here? They are there. We also have Ms Doreen Bakeiha. They are accompanied by staff from the Department of Corporate Planning and Strategy, Gender and Equity, Parliament of Uganda, led by Mrs Salome Anyoti. You are most welcome. *(Applause)*

They are here on the statement of 16 Days of Activism – a campaign against gender-based violence.

In the public gallery, we also have a delegation of leaders and officials from Kabale Regional Referral Hospital. They are led by Dr Filbert Nyeko, the Senior Executive Consultant. Where are you? You are most welcome, and thank you so much for coming. *(Applause)*

They are represented by Hon. David Bahati, Dr Kamara and Hon. Catheline. Hon. Catheline, first come and greet your people. Dr Kamara, you start.

2.51

MR NICHOLAS KAMARA (FDC, Kabale Municipality, Kabale): I thank you for your indulgence, Madam Speaker. I also want to take this opportunity to welcome the executive members of Kabale Regional Referral Hospital to Parliament. This is a mode of parliament, which is only in four hospitals: Moroto; Gulu; Lira; and Masaka.

These are representatives of the workers in the hospital. They include heads of departments, the in-charge and top management. The only thing they do not do is to make laws. However, they do oversight, debate and also represent their members.

Madam Speaker, they have also told me to thank you and the entire Parliament for the appropriation that Parliament has done because Kabale Regional Referral Hospital now has a modern CT scan. Through your appropriation, Members, Kabale Regional Referral Hospital also has a modern ICU under construction.

On top of that, I also want to thank you, Members, for your appropriation, which has enabled Kabale Hospital to have three oxygen plants. *(Applause)*

However, they still have challenges and one of the top challenges is the staff structure. Under the new structure, Kabale Hospital always comes lowest. Its staffing level is at 22 per cent. Since we have started the budgeting process, my prayer is that, at least, Kabale Hospital gets the budget to raise its staffing level, at least, to 50 per cent, such that it can be at the level of other hospitals.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Catheline?

2.54

MS CATHELINE NDAMIRA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kabale): Thank you, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Doctor, I am happy that you are appreciating what the Government is doing. *(Applause)*

Yes, Hon. Catheline?

MS NDAMIRA: Madam Speaker – and honourable members – I want to add my voice to Hon. Nicholas' in appreciating you and the Ministry of Health. You have done what it takes to empower and equip Kabale Hospital. We are very happy.

I appreciate the effort by Hon. Anifa Kawooya, who also went there and did what she did. *(Applause)* Thank you so much, Hon. Anifa

Madam Speaker, I want you to continue thanking these people who have managed to

work in hard and bad conditions in Kabale, but have managed to produce results.

Madam Speaker, you know that Kabale is the coldest area. However, they have managed to work in those conditions. Also, most of the health centres are in hard-to-reach areas.

Madam Speaker, as you have always guided, can you also guide and direct the Government to empower the health centres which are in hard-to-reach areas, for them to get equipped with equipment and necessary health workers, for them to enjoy their work. Thank you so much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The people of Kabale, you have brought very good Members of Parliament. You have a doctor here, Hon. Bahati, Hon. Musasizi – finance minister, those people need – *(Laughter)*

2.56

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to welcome our people from Kabale Regional Referral Hospital to this Parliament.

Madam Speaker, it is not the first time, but I have always said that Hon. Kamara, much as he is from the Opposition, always supports our programmes. *(Applause)* Today, our people have witnessed what I have always told them –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Kamara, thank you so much.

MR MUSASIZI: Madam Speaker, Kabale Regional Referral Hospital serves a population of close to one million people from Kisoro, Rubanda, Kabale, Rukiga, Rukungiri and Kanungu. Therefore, it requires – much as we have given them what we can in the circumstances, they deserve more. Working with the Ministry of Health, we shall look into the challenges and provide the support as required. *(Applause)* Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, we must move. Let us hear from *Senga* and we move.

2.58

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Anifa Kawooya): Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I want to thank the honourable colleagues from Kabale for thanking you because the success that we have registered is through you and this Parliament. I want to welcome our people from Kabale Regional Referral Hospital.

Madam Speaker, I have interacted with them more than five times. I am the one responsible for inaugurating the board. I have only come to say that very soon, as the finance minister has said, there are many health centres – more than 10 – that are going to be commissioned very soon. We have laid out the programme and equipment. Like everywhere, we shall continue working with you to ensure that you have strengthened health system in our health centres. We are moving and very soon we shall reach you. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members in the VIP gallery this afternoon, we have Hon. Peter Mutuluza Clever – *(Applause)* – former member of Parliament of Mawokota North, Mpigi, who was in the Seventh and Eighth Parliament. You are most welcome. Thank you for coming. *(Applause)* Hon. Leader of the Opposition in Parliament (LOP).

3.00

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN PARLIAMENT (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate you for making time to accommodate my brief statement. However, before the statement, allow me to slip in a quick procedural issue.

There are some matters that get to alarm us. This one alarmed me, personally. I do not know if it did to other people. The fourth estate – including Government media houses – has reported a heist at the Bank of Uganda. Some reports have indicated \$17 million, which is

about Shs 62 billion. Others have indicated \$13 million, which is about Shs 48 billion.

Some narratives suggest that some people in South Asia hacked into accounts, and the money was swiped to accounts in Asia. Other reports indicate it was an inside job of the Bank of Uganda. This alarmed me because this is our central bank.

Madam Speaker, in the past couple of months, nearly every two months you would hear of a heist at a commercial bank. Commercial banks are privately owned, it bothers us, but when it comes to the central bank, it is more problematic.

I will tell you why I found it problematic; let me read to you a section of the Bank of Uganda Act, Section 4(1), about the functions of the Central Bank.

“The functions of the Central Bank shall be: To formulate and implement monetary policy directed to economic objectives of achieving and maintaining economic stability.” That is how serious the role of the Bank of Uganda is, locally and internationally.

I have seen even international media houses report about this, and that does affect us in every sense. I thought, Government, through the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, should help us understand, because you supervise the operations of Bank of Uganda to an extent. Yes, it is autonomous but you are the overseers. It is important that we know what exactly is happening at our central bank. If monies are being siphoned, whether it be by hackers or staff of the Bank of Uganda, it should worry all of us.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable LoP -

MR SSENYONYI: Yes, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Could you help us find out where it was?

MR SSENYONYI: In the *New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor*.

THE SPEAKER: You have it in the *Daily Monitor*?

MR SSENYONYI: They have been reporting about this almost on a daily basis, giving an update. The Government should not continue to be quiet about this matter. We want to know what exactly is happening, through you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: If you have the *New Vision*, please help us. Lay it on the Table. It is not you-

MR SSENYONYI: I carried one of the dailies that reported about this heist and there are several others that I can avail to the finance minister. But for now, I lay this one on the Table.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister.

3.03

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES)

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am alive to what several media houses have been reporting. I wish to state that it is true our accounts were hacked into, but not to the extent of what is being reported.

When this happened, we instituted an audit and at the same time an investigation. The Auditor-General is doing the audit and Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID) at the same time, is doing an investigation.

Madam Speaker, to avoid misrepresentation of facts, I seek indulgence of this House and request you to we be patient. When the audit is finalised, which is now at the tail end, and also CID finalises his investigation, I will come to this House and report. Otherwise, as of now, any matter I disclose on this issue will risk misrepresentation of facts. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the minister is in agreement with what the Leader of the Opposition is saying, but he says it is under investigation. Let us wait for a report from the investigation and then we will handle it that way.

We thank you, for bringing it up and the minister has clarified that it is correct.

MR SSENYONYI: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the minister. Rarely do they concede to some of these things, but the Government, through the minister of finance, has conceded. Of course, now he has thrown things a bit off balance. He is saying, no, it might not be entirely factual even though there was a heist. That clarity should have come because if he is saying these figures are wrong, what are the correct figures?

However, he is talking about an ongoing audit-

THE SPEAKER: There is an ongoing audit.

MR SSENYONYOI: How long will it take? When will we get a report as Parliament on this matter? We are insistent on this because when the central bank's network firewalls are penetrated, it worries all of us.

MR MUSASIZI: Madam Speaker, all these processes will be concluded within one month, and I will report back to the House.

THE SPEAKER: One month is okay. Honourable members, there are two institutions that are investigating this issue; there is the Auditor-General, and the police CID are also investigating. We cannot discuss what is being investigated already.

It is good we have the information. In one month's time when we come back, we shall be able to ask the minister to give us feedback. Next item.

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Madam Speaker-

THE SPEAKER: Let me tell you members; issues of money are issues of security. You do not discuss it just anyhow.

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your guidance. Our hope is that in this one month, there is no continuous hacking happening, because all those are matters that are of concern to us. The month might

elapse, and then we hear there is- nearly on a monthly basis- I believe you are a consumer of intelligence information and so on -

THE SPEAKER: That has stopped.

MR SEENYONYI: Commercial banks have been hacked very regularly. There must be something convoluted that we need to have a good understanding of because even commercial banks host monies belonging to Ugandan citizens.

THE SPEAKER: Can we have your report now that you brought that very important information and it has been handled?

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you very much-

MR SSEMUNJJU: Madam Speaker, thank you very much. I am speaking as a shadow minister for finance; LOP, my supervisor, will allow me.

THE SPEAKER: You come in front. Why do you sit there?

MR SSEMUNJJU: I sought permission to sit here.

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

MR SSEMUNJJU: Madam Speaker, I agree with your guidance and the plea from the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. What a responsible Government does is issue an interim statement reassuring the public and disclosing what will not prejudice the investigations. A responsible Government does not stand up in Parliament and say, "We are investigating; we will not tell you anything."

By saying that you are going to investigate, you are even carrying out an audit. You have actually admitted that you do not know. That is why you are investigating; that is why you are auditing. You share with the public on whose behalf you transact Government business, on an interim basis, what you know so far and think is not a danger. But you do not plead that

"I am not going to say anything; you see this matter."

Madam Speaker, I thought that I was asking the NRM Government to do what they cannot, to be responsible, but I think they can learn to at least try. We will then forgive you if we see that at least you are trying.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the Government is doing whatever it takes to stop what happened, and there is not much that you can do. That is a human disaster.

LAYING OF PAPERS

THE PROPOSAL TO BORROW UP
TO UA 13,500,000 EQUIVALENT
TO US\$18.09 MILLION FROM THE
AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FUND TO
FINANCE EAST AFRICA'S CENTRES
OF EXCELLENCE FOR SKILLS AND
TERTIARY EDUCATION IN BIOMEDICAL
SCIENCES PROJECT - PHASE I
- UGANDA CANCER INSTITUTE -
ADDITIONAL FINANCING

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the money they are getting is for tertiary education, the Biomedical Sciences Project – Phase I and the Uganda Cancer Institute. That is the money they are proposing.

We are not passing the money now. The report has to go to the committee. The committee will make its analysis on whether we should borrow or not.

Honourable members, Article 159(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda requires that when borrowing is done, there should be an approval of Parliament. That is pursuant to Section 39 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015 and Rule 159(1) of the Rules of Procedure. I now invite the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to table the loan request.

3.13

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES)

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Pursuant to Article 159 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and Section 34 of the Public Finance Management Act; and pursuant to all the applicable Rules of Procedure of Parliament, I beg to lay a proposal to borrow up to Units of Account \$13,500,000, an equivalent of US\$18.09 million from the African Development Fund to finance East Africa's Centres of Excellence for Skills and Tertiary Education in the Biomedical Sciences Project - Phase I, Uganda Cancer Institute - Additional Financing. I beg to lay.

THE SPEAKER: Please lay. In furtherance to Rule 155 (2) of the Rules of Procedure, I refer the request to the Committee on National Economy. Procedure?

MR MACHO: Madam Speaker, before my boss and good brother, the Leader of the Opposition (LOP), comes in, I am an independent Member but you know where I kneel.

Yesterday, I appreciated Hon. Jimmy Akena for his good role that he is doing to promote Uganda through motorsports and as a leader of a political party. At the same time, I also submitted that we have other leaders of political parties who are using their positions not to bring out a good brand of Uganda.

Madam Speaker, good enough, the LOP gave a submission concerning the Bank of Uganda and said he got it from social media and laid the newspapers too. At the same time – *(Interruption)*– Madam Speaker, I seek your protection because I am being harassed by my sister who is seated behind me and that is domestic violence. You know we have a week of activism. *(Laughter)*

I, therefore –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, what is your procedural matter?

MR MACHO: Madam Speaker, I do not know whether we are proceeding well this time; that I watched the leaders of one political party called National Unity Platform (NUP) in Santiago, Chile in North America, attending a conference with the theme of democracy and freedom. However, they resolved, under Resolution 8, that LGBTQ – homosexuality – must be defended.

Moreover, Hon. Abed is here. He wrote a letter to the leadership of NUP, asking them about their stand on homosexuality. They did not respond. I want the Leader of the Opposition to look into the cameras and give the position of NUP concerning homosexuality in this country and defend the law that we made here. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the Leader of the Opposition has not gone anywhere. He has been here with you in Parliament. But if you are saying there are people who have gone and attended any meeting in regard to whatever you have said, even the Bible says, “We shall know them by their fruits.” We shall know them.

Honourable LOP, just present your paper.

STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE
OPPOSITION ON AN OVERSIGHT VISIT
TO BUSOGA SUBREGION ON THE
DRASTIC FALL IN SUGARCANE PRICES

THE SPEAKER: LOP? I will give you, *Hajjati*.

3.18

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. When we were passing the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, there were two Members of Parliament who objected and they were not members of the opposition which I lead. They were members of the NRM. I just thought I should throw that out there. *(Applause)*

But also, you know when we are entering the gate at Parliament, they normally check for guns and other artillery. I think, as we

especially enter the Chambers, they need to check for maybe other substances *-(Laughter)-* in people’s jackets and so on that motivate the way people speak.

Madam Speaker, let me get to the statement – *(Interruption)*

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MR SSENYONYI: I will proceed with the background, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter, LOP. *(Laughter)*

MR ENOS ASIMWE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the honourable Leader of the Opposition for giving way.

Madam Speaker, I do not know whether we are proceeding right. First and foremost, Rule 72 of our Rules of Procedure tells us that the speech of a Member should be relevant or must make reference to the subject matter under discussion.

The Rt Hon. Speaker allowed you to talk about Busoga, but now you are bringing in a different matter. I do not know whether he is moving in the right direction. *(Applause)*

Secondly, I do not know whether it is also right for the Leader of the Opposition to insinuate that Members of Parliament speak under the influence of drugs. I think that is also something that we should expunge off the record of Parliament. I am seeking your guidance, Madam Speaker.

MR SSENYONYI: Madam Speaker, I did not say any of the allegations being made by my colleague - I think they are filibustering to delay my statement. I beg that you allow me to proceed with the statement.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Leader of the Opposition, you said that we should be checking Members when they are entering into the chambers for any stuff.

MR SSENKYONYI: For anything.

THE SPEAKER: For anything.

MR SSENKYONYI: Yes.

THE SPEAKER: Maybe we need to understand the word, “anything.”

MR SSENKYONYI: Madam Speaker, the word “anything” has a very good meaning, and the meaning of anything is anything.

THE SPEAKER: So, do you mean the Member speaks out of anything?

MR SSENKYONYI: I do not know and that is why we need to, I guess, improve our security mechanisms here, Madam Speaker. Even for your safety, I see there are changes here that were made, and maybe we need to up it up some more.

Nonetheless, Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Aber, your size mate.

MS ABER: Madam Speaker, whereas we debate with humour, there are some issues which are very important. It is important that my good friend, the Leader of the Opposition, withdraws that statement. It needs to be expunged because it goes on record that maybe some Members of Parliament come with something or anything that impairs their submission. He was very emphatic that we need to check anything that may derail people from speaking.

Madam Speaker, isn't it procedurally right that the honourable LoP withdraws the statement and expunge it from the record of Parliament? I thank you.

MR SSENKYONYI: Madam Speaker, let me rephrase so that there is proper clarity -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, all Members of Parliament come here in their best mind to be able to legislate for this country. *(Applause)* We cannot say that something

is activating anybody. Nobody comes with anything.

MR SSENKYONYI: Madam Speaker, with your permission, let me rephrase -

THE SPEAKER: Go to your report.

MR SSENKYONYI: Okay, but I want to make a correction. Hon. Aber said that I am her good friend. I am not her good friend, for the record, but she is a colleague; that is okay.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate you for making time for this brief statement – *(Interjections)* - Hon. Aber used to be a good friend of mine when she was still part of the Opposition. I see some colleagues are complaining.

Madam Speaker, I will make this statement brief. I did travel to Busoga Subregion, specifically Jinja District, with some Members of the shadow cabinet and some Opposition Members of Parliament from Busoga Subregion to interact with sugarcane farmers. They had been reaching out to us with several complaints so we decided to pay them a visit and interact with them.

I will skip a couple of things and go to the background.

Background

Busoga is one of Uganda's leading sugarcane growing regions, contributing significantly to the country's sugar production. The sugar industry is one of the fastest growing industries in our economy under the manufacturing sector, contributing over Shs 300 billion in taxes annually, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, employing over 100,000 Ugandans directly and many more indirectly.

The industry also produces over 150 megawatts of electricity from bagasse, of which about 70 megawatts is supplied to the national grid.

Busoga has the biggest number of sugarcane mills and a huge acreage of sugarcane, making

use of its fertile soil around Lake Victoria and Lake Kyoga, coupled with good rains. However, the persistent poverty in Busoga continues to raise questions about whether cane cultivation is benefiting farmers.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2020 figures show that Busoga has 1.2 million poor persons; this is 2020 and it could be different now, of which 400,000 are living in food poverty. Food poverty, often referred to as household food insecurity, can be triggered by a crisis in finance or personal circumstances. It encompasses both the affordability of food and its availability within local communities.

The Economic Policy Research Center asserts that Eastern Uganda, particularly Busoga, has the largest sugarcane milling capacity, accounting for 35 per cent, followed by Central Uganda at 27 per cent, then Western Uganda at 26 per cent, and Northern Uganda, the newest entrant in sugar milling, at 12 per cent.

Despite the importance of sugarcane, farmers face persistent challenges that threaten their income and well-being. These are some of our findings:

1. Low cane prices

Farmers sell sugarcane to millers at extremely low prices, often below production costs. For instance, in 2023, last year, the price per tonne was Shs 98,000, a decline from previous figures, which would at times go to beyond Shs 200,000. Even then, what the farmer eventually gets is so meager due to the other operational costs such as harvesting, cutting, loading, and so on.

2. Delayed fulfilment of the presidential pledge to construct two sugar mills owned by farmers.

In 2021, the Government pledged to construct two sugar factories in Busoga that very year, owned by the farmers, as a way of empowering them. These factories were to be constructed in the districts of Buyende and Luka, in 2021.

However, to date, no construction has taken place. Rather, there has been a back and forth by Uganda Development Corporation, despite the release of more than Shs 8 billion for the purchase of land.

3. Delayed payments

Many millers delay to make payments to farmers, leaving them cash-strapped. Farmers reported that at times, they would wait for up to six months for their payments.

4. Recovery cost

The millers charge the sugarcane farmers that supply cane 9 per cent per ton as recovery costs for the milling of the cane.

5. VAT charge

These sugarcane farmers told us that they are charged 18 per cent VAT on the sugarcane, which is not in tandem with the tax laws of Uganda. VAT is charged on finished products, not raw materials. That is why it is referred to as "Value Added Tax." What is even more bothersome is that it is doubtful that the millers who collect this money eventually remit the same to Uganda Revenue Authority.

6. Formula for pricing of sugar

The price of sugarcane is calculated based on only one by-product, that is sugar, and yet there are many other by-products from sugarcane.

Some of the social and infrastructure issues that we discovered include:

i. Limited access to inputs

Farmers struggle to afford fertilisers, pesticides, and high-quality seedlings.

ii. Poor infrastructure

Poor roads delay the transportation of harvested cane to mills, leading to losses in weight and quality.

iii. Non-provision of agricultural subsidies

The sugarcane farmers are reported not to be receiving any agricultural inputs or subsidies from the Government through NAADs, like it is with other farmers.

iv. Inadequate farmer representation

The farmers report inadequate support from cooperatives or unions to advocate for better conditions.

Madam Speaker, we have crafted some recommendations for the Government.

1. The first one is to do with pricing. Our economy was liberalised, meaning that forces of demand and supply will always be at play. However, this does not take away the Government's role to regulate and ensure that people are not ripped off, and specifically, in this case, to ensure that sugar cane farmers earn a fair income from their toil.
2. Fast-tracking the fulfilment of the presidential pledge. The Government, through UDC, should fast-track the purchase of the land that was identified in Luuka District to pave the way for the construction of the promised sugar factory to be owned by the farmers, as a way of empowering them, as was promised.
3. Timely payments. The Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Cooperatives should take an interest in the issue of delayed payments to farmers and perhaps even set a minimum payment period for farmers for the supplied sugarcane.

The other recommendations that to do with farmer empowerment:

1. The first one is about strengthening cooperatives. We are saying that the Government should aim to support sugarcane farmers' cooperatives to negotiate better terms with millers, and to access bulk purchases of inputs.

2. Calibration of weighbridges, is another complaint that these farmers made. Uganda National Bureau of Standards should ensure that the weighbridges are accurately calibrated and periodically monitored to address the issue of weighbridges that are cheating farmers of the tonnage of sugarcane; they complained of being cheated by these weighbridges.

3. Then formula for pricing. Pricing of sugarcane should be calculated based on at least five major by-products of sugarcane, such as molasses, ethanol, spirits, and bagasse, among others, as compared to the current status of the price being based on only one by-product, which is sugar. Yet the other by-products fetch a lot of revenue too.

4. The last one is non-charge of VAT. The millers should stop deducting VAT from the money paid out to sugarcane farmers for the sugarcane supplied because the value has not been added yet to the sugarcane; they are raw materials.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, sugarcane farming in Busoga and indeed other parts of the country—because sugarcane is not only grown in Busoga— so it's not the only region that faces significant challenges that undermine sustainability and profitability.

Addressing these issues requires a multi-stakeholder approach, including Government intervention, farmer empowerment, and private-sector accountability. Implementing these recommendations will ensure a more resilient and profitable sugarcane industry.

I hope that the Government will respond to these issues and address the concerns of sugarcane farmers, not just in Busoga but in other areas also. However, it is Busoga, which we visited so that they can profit from their toil. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable LOP, I request that next time you bring this as a report and not as a statement. A report where we shall

ask for action taken on your findings because when you bring it like this, you do not have the latitude to ask for the action the Government has taken on the findings. On the next visit, please bring it as a report.

MR AFIDRA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The procedural issue I want to raise in regard to the LOP's statement is that –

THE SPEAKER: He has given us information. It is not for debate.

MR AFIDRA: Correct. A couple of months ago, you received a petition from the sugarcane producers. You directed that petition to the Committee on Trade, Industry and Tourism. As I speak, I belong to that committee. We have been meeting with the stakeholders, and a report is almost being concluded.

The procedural issue I wanted to raise is, that perhaps, could this statement be utilised by the committee so that once our report is done and presented on the Floor, we can have a debate thereafter. This is because the committee is nearing completion.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, nothing stops you from using this statement. It is a very good statement. You can enrich your committee's report with the LOP's statement.

Yes, LoP.

MR SSENKYONYI: Madam Speaker, I appreciate your guidance. This is a report from the oversight visit that we carried out. Because these oversight visits are our responsibility, my legal responsibility as Leader of the Opposition is to keep the Government in check. It is for the good of the Government to do better, to work on the areas that we point out as critical areas of concern.

Now that I, with your permission, have been able to present this report on the Floor, it would be good for the Government to respond to these issues. It is good for you. We are like a thermometer that tells you that this is the reading of your temperature. Do something about it.

Therefore, when we went to Busoga and interacted with sugarcane farmers, that is the reading of their thermometer. They have all these complaints, and it is important that as a Government, you address these concerns and give us feedback on the same. Thank you for your guidance, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: That is what I was saying; next time you bring it under Rule 35 so that we designate a debate for it and we seek for actions taken under each issue that has been raised. Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM CAMPAIGN AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence is an international campaign that commenced on 25th November, which is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Men. It ends on 10th December, which is the Human Rights Day.

This commemoration is important for awareness and accountability for steps that have been taken to eliminate gender-based violence. As you are aware, gender-based violence remains a big challenge in society for which we are required to concentrate our efforts on eliminating it.

As I said before, the boy child is equally endangered. It is not only about the girl child. Even the boy child is endangered. All we need to do is to eliminate gender-based violence. I now invite the Minister of Gender, Labour, and Social Development to present her report.

3.37

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (GENDER AND CULTURE) (Ms Peace Mutuuzo): Thank you very much for providing space, Madam Speaker.

I wish to notify you that the purpose of this statement is to brief Parliament on the commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism

Campaign against Gender-Based Violence, 2024.

The 16 Days of Activism Campaign against Gender-Based Violence is a global campaign that was inaugurated in 1991, spearheaded by the Women's Global Leadership Institute, a programme that is in Rutgers University in New Jersey, USA, which trains women in leadership based on global good and practice.

The campaign has since grown globally and is marked by a wide range of activities organised by the Government and stakeholders. This year, 2024, marks the 33rd anniversary of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign Against Gender-Based Violence.

In 2008, another initiative, UNiTE to End Violence against Women by 2030, was launched in the United Nations to reinforce the 16 Days of Activism Campaign.

The UNiTE campaign calls for global action to increase awareness, galvanise advocacy efforts and share knowledge and innovative measures to address gender-based violence.

The inaugural 16 days of activism campaign in Uganda started in 2008 under the leadership of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and has since been adopted as an annual campaign to galvanise efforts by state and non-state actors, to commit to eliminating gender-based violence.

The campaign contributes to the effort to deliver on the international, regional and national commitments to gender equity and women's empowerment, which include the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 5 on Gender Equality, Uganda Vision 2040 and the Third National Development Plan 2020-2025 among others.

Madam Speaker, the impact so far is that the Government has initiated policies and a lot of legal frameworks to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and among them are the Anti-Female Genital Mutilation Act, 2010, the Domestic Violence Act, 2010, the Markets

Act, 2023 and the Computer Misuse Act, 2023, among others.

We have also amended laws to address gaps in addressing gender-based violence over the years. They include the Employment (Amendment) Act, 2023, the Succession (Amendment) Act, 2023 and the Land Act, among others.

There are also relevant policies that have been developed as key national policies to eliminate gender-based violence, specifically the Gender-Based Violence Policy of 2016.

As a result, there is increased awareness of women's rights and response to gender-based violence. There is increased reporting, which is evidenced in the police annual crime reports, and I want to state that what used to be a taboo, for men to report violence against them by women, they have now started responding and are reporting.

The deliberate efforts to widen platforms for reporting by the Government and stakeholders has yielded great results. We have a Sauti-free helpline, 116. On this helpline – two days ago we were there – they are able to record 1,500 cases per day. Those are the ones that they can record, but they receive about 4,500 other cases that remain pending because we have limited staff to receive and record these cases on that helpline.

The commitment of the Government and partners to ensure continued access to integrated services by survivors through the current 21 functional shelters has ensured much-needed immediate services such as temporary accommodation, psychosocial support, legal aid, medical examination and treatment, resettlement and reintegration to communities.

Continuous involvement and dialogue with religious and cultural leaders are ongoing as gatekeepers of social-cultural norms that perpetuate violence against women and girls. It has been instrumental in making public pronouncements that castigate to violence

while calling for peaceful coexistence and respect for human rights.

The cultural institutions, under the umbrella of the Council for Traditional Leaders of Africa (COTLA), Uganda Chapter, have made several commitments to end violence against women and girls.

We have strengthened coordination for addressing gender-based violence from the national to local level. The structure includes the high-level GBV referral groups at the national level, which has committees at the district level.

Other local structures and initiatives to address gender-based violence include the women and youth peace mediators who provide mediation in communities, the male role models and male action groups, survivor support groups, para-social workers and paralegal who have been the community foot soldiers in offering support and referral pathway to gender-based violence survivors.

Madam Speaker, this year's global theme is "Towards 30 Years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: UNiTE to End Violence Against Women and Girls". Uganda has adopted this global theme as a national theme.

The campaign calls for all duty-bearers, state and non-state actors around the world to end violence against women and girls and prioritises the review of the 30 years of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the political declaration focusing on commitment, accountability and resourcing.

This includes the implementation of comprehensive strategies in partnership with women's rights organisations, allocating necessary budgets and actively reporting on progress to end impunity and prevent violence against women and girls with particular urgency regarding its extreme manifestation of femicide, which is escalating worldwide and is beginning to crop within our systems. Femicide is the deliberate killing of women because of their gender.

When we were tallying the biggest causes of violence, there was a point to alcohol and drug abuse this year, 2024, and the second one – we were evaluating the performance of the Parish Development Model (PDM) and many of the people who are reporting violence are talking about the men's need to control the PDM money, which has been received by women.

As the global community approaches the 30th anniversary review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and following the 2023 SDG Summit calls for accelerated progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda, violence against women and girls remains alarmingly prevalent across private and public space and across all its forms.

Despite the efforts to demand justice and accountability and some notable progress in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, significant challenges persist and they need to be addressed.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is coordinating the organisation of the national launch, which was held on 25 November 2024 at Hotel Africana, Kampala.

A number of activities have also been planned by stakeholders, including government MDAs, development partners, civil society organisations, the private sector, religious, traditional and cultural leaders throughout the 16 days across the country.

The 16 days of the activism campaign have already commenced and they started on the International Day of Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women and Girls. This was flagged off in various activities up to the district level and we shall progress with the national theme. It will end on 10 December 2024.

This is just the battle time; the fight continues throughout the year.

Madam Speaker, I wish to inform you that the objective of the campaign is to call for action,

for all stakeholders to accelerate action and implement laws and policies to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls with adequate resources in accordance with international and regional conventions and commitments.

It is also to strengthen the justice sector, and ensure meaningful access to gender-responsive justice for women and marginalised groups, enabling them to seek remedies without fear of negative consequences.

To raise awareness about the magnitude of violence against women and girls, calling for zero tolerance of vice across society at large and preventing violence through transforming harmful social norms.

Madam Speaker, we note that there are also some men who are undergoing violence. *(Applause)* And the magnitude of the problem is bigger. Yes, we do note, and that is why the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is responsible for both men and women. However, the magnitude of the problem is much bigger for women than men.

I take this opportunity to inform you that this year's national launch of the 16 days has already been held, but we shall continue with the conversation.

Madam Speaker, I am privileged to have been consulted by your office because you intend to run another discussion with Parliament when we are not in the House, but rather outside so that you can get all these reports from the different agencies.

We have moved to a level of quantifying in monetary terms what we lose as a country when we do not act on violence against women and girls and how long it will take us to achieve gender equality or even develop to the middle income status if we do not attend or address the gender-based violence.

Once that time comes, I pray that all of us are able to join because on many occasions when we invite Members of Parliament, they do

attend, but a number of them are also engaged in different committee activities and so the attention we get does not touch everybody and not everybody is able to make it.

We, therefore, pray that within that session everybody is able to come so that we handle these vices because they affect each one of us, irrespective of age, economic status, or level of education, all of us are affected by violence against women and girls.

Honourable members, I appeal to all of you to be part of this campaign by participating vigorously, organising engagements at different levels and as we go back to the villages for Christmas, I pray that you take these voices so that we can all be counted to be fighters against violence, whoever is affected. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister, for your statement and your creation of awareness and accountability that has been taken to eliminate gender-based violence.

As I said before, violence is not only against women and girls, but it is also against women and men. You will find that most men suffer in silence. The awareness should be customised to all genders.

Yes, doctor-

3.51

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanyi-Kabonera Division, Masaka City): I would like to appreciate the statement of the minister. As you have said, there are many societies in this country where men are suffering silently.

I would like to implore the minister to include in her work and report the issue of "violence against men and the boy child," especially from stepmothers. That is a big issue for boys.

Lastly, I expect –

THE SPEAKER: Some not all stepmothers.

DR BWANIKA: Of course not every stepmother. I expected, that this report being informative, would give us data on the

prevalence of domestic violence, disaggregated region by region and what are the causes so that –

THE SPEAKER: And on women and then men.

DR BWANIKA: Exactly. We need to know how to attack and I believe that will be a good source for awareness.

THE SPEAKER: Dr Mutuuzo, one thing that we should not run away from is that these empowered, well-educated, women who have it all end up mistreating these men.

The men are suffering. I am telling you because I have been involved in counselling people. Even the Prime Minister will tell you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, first assure them *(Laughter)* Men have issues that we are keeping quiet with. Let us look at both men and women.

All these people are suffering. It is just the magnitude that differs but all these people are suffering. You need to look at area by area and then the percentage of the people, both women and men. You want to debate a report, which is informative?

3.54

MR DAVID KABANDA (NRM, Kasambya County, Mubende): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank Dr Abed Bwanika for that very good submission. However, caution should be given to men who struggle with their wives and then after getting money, abandon them and start marrying many wives; they should be cautioned. When you marry your wife, you struggle with her, how do you then abandon her after getting money? When you are struggling with your wife, you should also continue enjoying your sweat with her. I beg to submit, Madam Speaker. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, Hajjat –

3.55

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Hon. David Kabanda is my

brother, and I can confidently say that he does not have marriage experience *-(Laughter)-* therefore, he has no moral authority to talk about issues of marriage.

However, Madam Speaker, allow me also to add, as we thank the minister for the good statement, that the unabated actions of state actors that interfere with the operations of Government institutions worsen the situation of gender-based violence.

Indeed, gender-based violence should be looked at on both fronts, man and woman. However, when state actors go and act in a way that disregards institutions, it increases conflict, causes displacements, and disturbs people's families, which has increased cases of gender-based violence.

Also, the stereotyping we have makes people fear to talk about issues. For example, last time when I was here and talked about the violence that was committed against me, one media house chose to report that I came to the Speaker and asked her to investigate the issue of men who touched my knicker - very different from what I submitted here.

That is to create a stereotype among women so that a woman will fear to talk about issues once they have been affected. Stereotyping in our communities; the unabated institutional abuse by Government actors, exacerbates gender-based violence in our communities that the minister should be able to touch it as we fight against gender-based violence.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes –

MR DAVID KABANDA: Madam Speaker, I agree I am your brother and you are my sister. However, on this issue of marriage, I do not think it has to do with experience.

THE SPEAKER: There is no school for experience of marriage.

MR DAVID KABANDA: Today as I was reading the Government paper, *New Vision*, I read a story where a couple that had been together for 50 years; today that couple is no

more. You cannot say that Kabanda who is not married cannot talk about these issues of marriage because of, please –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable –

MR DAVID KABANDA: I am only saying that – Madam Speaker, some men here were bitter with me but this is the truth.

THE SPEAKER: You know Hon. Kabanda is very correct. You men here; you come from the village, somebody helps you to become a Member of Parliament, and when you become one, all you do is start marrying left, right, centre and leave the women who helped you to come to Parliament; leave the women suffering there. Hon. Kabanda is very right.

Honourable members, this document is straightforward. What we need is to create awareness about domestic violence and see how best we can eliminate it. That is what we need.

We have a team here that has been waiting since yesterday. Can we have their report presented? Hon. Kajwengye, can you summarise that report before the Prime Minister comes in?

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
DEFENCE AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS
ON THE PETITION OF THE COUNCIL
FOR ABAVANDIMWE REGARDING
ALLEGED INFRINGEMENTS BY THE
GOVERNMENT ON THE RIGHTS OF
BANYARWANDA, WHO WERE BORN
AND RAISED IN UGANDA

THE SPEAKER: Pursuant to Rule 30(13) of the Rules of Procedure, the petition was laid in this House and now is ready for reporting. Hon. Kajwengye?

4.00

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Mr Wilson Kajwengye): Madam Speaker, I thank you so much. Indeed, I am going to summarise this report but before that, I am presenting

a report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs, which was given to us by the House to process. I beg to lay on the Table the minutes and other documents relating to the processing of this report. I beg to lay.

Madam Speaker, this is a report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on the petition of the Council for Abavandimwe regarding alleged infringements by the Government on the rights of Banyarwanda who were born and raised in Uganda. I am going to summarise this report.

Madam Speaker, on 16 April 2024, the Parliamentary sitting on a Tuesday, Hon. Ssewungu, MP for Kalungu West County, presented a petition from the Council for Abavandimwe regarding the alleged infringement by Government on the rights of Banyarwanda who were born and raised in Uganda. The Rt Hon. Speaker referred this matter to the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs – *(Interruption)*–

DR BWANIKA: Madam Speaker, we need a clarification. Who are the Abavandimwe? Because you are mixing Banyarwanda and Abavandimwe. Define it so that we understand.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Madam Speaker, the statement is very clear. It is a petition by Abavandimwe but on the matter of Banyarwanda. It is very clear and we have understood. The statement will explain. Have you read it?

THE SPEAKER: What is your statement about?

MR KAJWENGYE: My statement–

THE SPEAKER: I try to avoid mentioning those tribal things again, because you will think I am tribal, again. *(Laughter)* Yes?

MR KAJWENGYE: Thank you. Madam Speaker, the petition that was presented before this august House, which we processed, was on the rights of Banyarwanda, who were born and raised in Uganda but it was presented by an

association of Abavandimwe. I am done with the introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, why don't you listen to the report and react afterwards?

MR KAJWENGYE: My report, Madam Speaker, has a rich background, and problem statement and it is uploaded.

THE SPEAKER: I want to tell you before you talk about these people, they are here. They are watching you and you have representatives here in the House. Mr Gashumba, can you stand up with your team? All of you. I even have one who is a voter in my area. He is there. That one there is my voter.

MR KAJWENGYE: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you for coming.

MR KAJWENGYE: Madam Speaker, let me quickly present the report.

THE SPEAKER: Yes.

MR KAJWENGYE: Having given the background, which is there, rich as it is, in their petition they had specific prayers. These are:

- i) That the relevant committee of Parliament investigates the segregation and the violation of rights of the Banyarwanda in Uganda and makes a report, which we have done.
- ii) The House urges the Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control and National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) to issue national passports and identity cards to the Banyarwanda based on their recognition by the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, as an indigenous tribe in Uganda.

That a Munyarwanda be appointed as an Immigration Officer and Supervisor to facilitate a fair interview process as opposed to being interviewed by a Mufumbira.

- iii) That the alleged corruption at the Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control be investigated.

Honourable colleagues, this is the methodology that we followed to arrive at the report being presented before this August House. The committee, while considering this petition, sought to determine the alleged Government infringement on the rights of the Banyarwanda, who were born and raised in Uganda. During the process, the committee held meetings with and received written memoranda from the following:

- i) Hon. Joseph Ssewungu Gonzaga, MP - Kalungu West County;
- ii) Hon. Christine Kaaya Nakimwero, District Woman Representative -Kiboga;
- iii) The Ministry of Internal Affairs -

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MR DAVID KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This issue being a sensitive one, wouldn't it be procedurally right that the minister responsible for this docket is asked by the Prime Minister to come here and be there when these issues are being tabled before this House, because I do not think these are matters to be taken lightly. These are serious issues. Let the Prime Minister get any of these ministers to be here so that we can move in a proper direction.

THE SPEAKER: The Prime Minister will handle this. She is a super minister.

MR KAJWENGYE: Madam Speaker, I was reading the list of people we interviewed; people who submitted us written memoranda. I have finished the above.

- iv) The Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control;
- v) The National Identification and Registration Authority;
- vi) The leadership and representative members of the Council of Abavandimwe, the honourable people who are in the gallery;
- vii) We also listened from the leadership of Umubano Association.

Madam Speaker, we also reviewed the following documents:

- i. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda,
- ii. The Registration of Persons Act, CAP. 332,
- iii. The Uganda Citizenship and Immigration Control Act, CAP. 313, and
- iv. The report of the Uganda Constitutional Commission of 1993, a very rich document, the *Odoki Report*.

We had our findings and recommendations. I beg that I answer each prayer as presented.

Prayer number one was that the relevant committee of Parliament investigate the segregation and violation of the rights of the *Banyarwanda* in Uganda and make a report.

Madam Speaker, the committee reviewed the considerations for defining Ugandan citizenship and citizen rights according to the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995. Specifically, the committee is based on the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda to establish who should be considered a citizen and the rights and obligations of a Ugandan citizen.

According to Barya - the report down there - citizenship holds legal significance and is often used interchangeably with nationality. In Uganda's legal context, citizenship refers to every individual who was a citizen at the start of the 1995 Constitution and remains so. In contrast, Prof. Barya suggests that nationality includes both legal and sociological dimensions.

The committee noted that sociologically, nationality may represent a group of individuals with the same or similar ethnicity who share common ancestral roots, language, colour, and culture. These individuals can belong to an ethnic group within a specific nation or across several nations, inhabiting a common geographic area and sharing collective culture, language and beliefs. In this context, Uganda is inhabited by various nationalities, including the *Banyarwanda*.

The committee is aware that Chapter 3 of the 1995 Constitution outlines the different categories for qualifying as a citizen of Uganda, including citizenship by birth, citizenship by registration, and citizenship by naturalization.

The Constitution recognises individuals born in Uganda and parentage in Uganda, as citizens by birth under Article 10(a), and acknowledges the *Banyarwanda* community as an Indigenous community in the third schedule of the same Constitution. Article 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda states that "*The following individuals shall be citizens of Uganda by birth-*

- a) *Every person born in Uganda, one whose parents or grandparents is or was a member of any of the Indigenous communities existing and residing within the borders of Uganda, as at the first day of February 1926, and set out in the Third Schedule to this Constitution; and*
- b) *Every person born in or outside Uganda, one of whose parents or grandparents was at the time of birth of that person, a citizen of Uganda by birth.*"

However, Madam Speaker, being born in a country does not automatically make one a citizen. Specific conditions must be met. For example, having parents or grandparents with diplomatic or refugee status at the time of birth may disqualify an individual as provided for under Article 12 of the 1995 Constitution.

Citizenship by birth is limited to those whose parents and grandparents belonged to Uganda's indigenous communities and were residents of Uganda as of 1 February 1926, when the country borders were finalised.

Therefore, the committee asserts that citizenship by birth, in the Ugandan context, was intended for individuals born in Uganda with traceable ancestry. The indigenous communities were listed in the Third Schedule of the Constitution, as those present and residing within the borders as of 1 February 1926, to acknowledge their existence and rights.

As such, citizenship by birth rights in Uganda depends on being recognised as part of an indigenous community listed in the Constitution. Ugandan citizenship has obligations, including renouncing all other citizenships for non-Ugandans seeking citizenship and demonstrating national loyalty.

However, the committee noted that the Constitution classified Banyarwanda, a nationality, as a tribe or indigenous community in Uganda. In the Republic of Rwanda, the known ethnicities include Hutu, Tutsi, and Batwa, who together form the Banyarwanda community.

The committee observed that given Uganda's long history of receiving and maintaining Rwandese refugees in the country, between 1957 and 1960, who fled during the uprising that removed the Tutsi monarchy and hegemony of Rwanda, many such Banyarwanda acquired citizenship through registration since they had overstayed in Uganda and assimilated with other indigenous Ugandan groups.

However, classifying the Banyarwanda community and recognising them as an indigenous group, was the genesis of the citizenship problem of Banyarwanda in Uganda. It potentially makes the entire nation of Rwanda an indigenous community in Uganda.

Individuals from Rwanda can claim Ugandan citizenship based on the indigenous community recognised in the Ugandan constitution. Yet, some Banyarwanda desiring the rights of Ugandan citizenship, and those who wish to become Ugandan citizens, still want to maintain their Rwandan identity because of their roots in Rwanda, raising questions about their loyalty.

The committee opines that removing the connotation of Rwanda in the "Banyarwanda" title would require a constitutional amendment, so that the Banyarwanda can belong to their original tribes within Uganda's boundaries, which were carved out of the Rwandan Kingdom.

Therefore, while the petitioners argue that Ugandan authorities are infringing on their citizenship rights concerning national Identity Cards (IDs) and passports, the Ministry of Internal Affairs explained to the committee that every applicant undergoes an interview to verify the facts detailed in the application forms, ensuring that all legal requirements are fulfilled.

Since Banyarwanda born and raised in Uganda have fully integrated with the local community and no longer speak Kinyarwanda despite having names of Rwandan origin, it is challenging to determine their Ugandan identity based on their Rwandan ethnicity. Therefore, if there is uncertainty about information provided by the applicant during the interview, the responsibility to demonstrate eligibility for Ugandan citizenship rests with the applicants themselves.

Based on the above analysis, the committee observes that the alleged segregation and infringement on the rights of the Banyarwanda, including challenges to their citizenship, passport denials, and confiscated national IDs, arise from the dispute on whether all Banyarwanda are indigenous to Uganda. The timeline of events and the historical background regarding their classification as Banyarwanda in the Constitution will perpetuate the debate over who genuinely qualifies as a munyaarwanda residing within Ugandan borders as of 1 February 1926.

The current sieving process and legal framework is comprehensive in dealing with applicants for national IDs and passports. The Ministry of Internal Affairs is obliged to issue identity cards and passports to those who qualify for Ugandan citizenship, according to Uganda's laws. Thus, applicants for national identity card or passport must prove their identity as Ugandan citizens as they assert. Consequently, each application is evaluated individually based on the provision of the Constitution. The applicant's biographical details in the applications are assessed against legal criteria leading to a conclusion based on a balance probability.

The Committee therefore recommends that;

- (i) Indigenous communities in the 1995 Constitution should be determined based on their ethnicity and ancestral criteria.

Banyarwanda who cannot trace their ancestral lineage but have lived in Uganda since birth should seek alternative forms of Ugandan citizenship of naturalisation or registration as outlined by the law.

- ii) That the House urges the Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control and the NIRA to issue national passports and identity cards to the Banyarwanda, based on their recognition by the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda as a tribe in Uganda.

Madam Speaker, during the petition's consideration, the Banyarwanda alleged that the Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control and NIRA infringed upon their rights by denying them passports and national IDs, claiming they could prove their citizenship.

The committee noted that rights and privileges under Chapter 4 of the 1995 Constitution accrue to all categories of citizenship. Therefore, the primary concern for the DCIC and NIRA is to ensure that individuals are correctly identified and placed in the appropriate citizenship category to identify and issue passports and national IDs.

The ministry informed the committee that officers are instructed to evaluate whether a person is a citizen of Uganda by birth, based on the constitutional provisions and related laws and each case is examined individually to ascertain if the applicant fits the defined categories.

During the process, some affected Banyarwanda are directed to apply for naturalised citizenship and renounce their Rwandan citizenship before obtaining Uganda travel documents or national IDs. As at the meeting date, NIRA reported to the committee that statistics of those Banyarwanda whose citizenship status is still under review are detailed in table 1.

The Ministry further revealed that the classic examples of the individuals mentioned in the petition did not provide specific details to determine the extent of the facts relating to segregation and violation of rights.

However, through DCIC, the ministry responded with information on the status of each of the cases mentioned in the petition.

These are elaborated in Figure 1, part of this report. In addition, it can be followed. It is part of the report.

Drawing from the above, the committee observes that:

- (i) A large number of applicants for national identity cards who received a notification to cancel their registration was based on inaccurate information of fraudulent registration.
- (ii) The lack of a national identity card severely affects the livelihood of the affected Banyarwanda, as they cannot transact with banks, enrol in school, or obtain necessary SIM cards, among other things.

Additionally, those with expired passports studying or working abroad have been denied renewal, forcing them to abandon their jobs and education.

However, the petitioners did not present any proof of these allegations to the committee. The ministry issues national identity cards and passports to eligible Ugandan citizens in accordance with the Constitution, adhering to strict criteria for determining citizenship and passport or ID eligibility.

Individual applicants must submit personal information, which undergoes assessment based on legal standards. All Ugandan applicants, including the Banyarwanda community, are recognised as indigenous in Ugandan national ID or passport. Those who do not fulfil the citizenship requirements specified in Article 10 of the 1995 Constitution are encouraged to consider naturalisation or registration procedures.

Under Section 57.1 of the Registration of Persons Act, CAP 332, the NIRA can cancel the registration after notifying the individual to show cause against the registration.

The Committee therefore recommends that:

- (i) All aggrieved Banyarwanda should pursue the dispute resolution process outlined in Section 83 of the Registration of Persons Act, Cap 332, and Section 10 of the Ugandan Citizenship and Immigration Control Act, CAP 313 if they are unsatisfied with the decision made by NIRA and DCIC respectively.

NIRA has set up an internal citizenship verification committee to handle such cases. The committee is responsible for investigating claims of citizenship by birth and providing recommendations to the management regarding whether an individual's registration should be upheld or revoked.

On the other hand, the ministry has a National Citizenship and Immigration Board to address complaints. Still, if the affected does not find redress with the Board, he or she can appeal to the minister. If the applicant is still aggrieved, he or she may appeal to the High Court of Uganda.

- (ii) The Ministry of Internal Affairs should increase awareness and educate all citizens, including Banyarwanda, about their citizenship rights and obligations.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, this table includes responses to the complaints contained in the petition of the Council of Abavandimwe. The petition presented names to convince the committee that those were the ones denied IDs, passports, and status. We presented these names to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which responded to each and every name presented. Details are contained here.

(Interjection)- The response was that each one was denied because they either had entered the Republic of Uganda with Rwandese National ID, which was in the system. Specific

names that are here were denied because the Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration presented to the committee evidence on each and every name submitted.

Prayer 3: That a munyarwanda be appointed as an immigration officer and supervisor to facilitate a fair interview process as opposed to being interviewed by a mufumbira.

The petitioners informed the committee that during the passport application process-

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, can you listen?

MR KAJWENGYE: The petitioner's informed the committee that during the passport application interviews. Applicants are interviewed by immigration officers from their respective tribes. However, Banyarwanda applicants are interviewed by a Mufumbira by tribe immigration officer, even when he or she may not fully comprehend the Kinyarwanda language due to the heavy influence of Rukiga on the Mufumbira-Kinyarwanda dialect.

The Ministry informed the committee, that the recruitment of immigration officers who interview applicants for passports is carried out in accordance with the laws that govern the recruitment of public service in Uganda, prioritising qualifications, skills, and competency over tribal affiliations.

The committee believes that the ministry appreciates that many indigenous applicants might not be proficient in English. Also, officers must comprehend the relevant local languages to accurately assess an applicant's connection to an indigenous group.

Therefore, the committee asserts that the ministry's administrative recruitment strategies are thoughtful and culturally sensitive, ensuring the selection of qualified individuals suited for the immigration officer role.

Prayer four: Alleged corruption at the Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control to be investigated

The petitioners informed the committee that during the process of applying for passports, the immigration officials at the Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control (DCIC) had allegedly made it a norm to extort bribes, ranging from Shs 10 to 15 million from the Banyarwanda applicants, under the pretext of granting them passports.

The ministry informed the committee that applying for passports is now robust and has significantly reduced opportunities for bribe solicitation. Applicants must visit the DCIC passport portal and answer security questions. After this, one can print the payment advice form and use it to pay the fee at their chosen bank. Once paid, one can schedule an appointment through DCIC's homepage link, print the appointment and visit the passport centre with the form and required documents. Ordinary passports are charged at Shs 250,000 with an additional Shs 150,000 for express processing, payable at the bank, separately.

Therefore, the committee found this automated process exhaustive and capable of minimising personal contact, which may often lead to bribery. The committee, thus, tasked the petitioners to adduce evidence of the allegations to facilitate clear direction for investigations to be initiated, to no avail. Accordingly, the corruption allegations in the petition could not be sustained.

Conclusion

Madam Speaker, the committee reviewed the petition and made recommendations for Parliament. It concluded that the classification of the Banyarwanda, a nationality, as an indigenous tribe, confuses their citizenship rights in Uganda. As such, the Ministry of Internal Affairs must ensure that National Identity Cards (IDs) and passport applications are highly scrutinised to ensure that applicants prove eligibility if uncertainties arise.

Indigenous communities must be recognised by their ethnic lineage. The Banyarwanda, who cannot trace lineage, should seek alternative

Ugandan citizenship and use legal processes, if they disagree with National Identification and Registration Authority and DCIC decisions.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs should educate all citizens, including the Banyarwanda, on their rights and responsibilities.

Madam Speaker, I beg to report. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, committee chairperson. What the chairperson is reporting borders on Article 43(2)(c) of the Constitution. Could we first hear from the minister?

4. 31

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Madam Speaker, I want to inform Members of this august House that the President met the group he is talking about, the Abavandimwe and others, on 25 October 2024 and briefed the Cabinet on 28 October.

Madam Speaker, a number of things are being done and I want to promise Members that the Government is doing a lot to make sure that this is solved. Thank you so much. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: *(Members rose_)* What is it that you did not present to the committee? Honourable members, the minister is saying - I wish you could sit.

Honourable members, the Prime Minister says that the same team met with the President and brought up all these issues for action. Whether you make a correction or not, the government is the implementer. Okay?

(Members rose_) No! Until you all sit down.

Honourable members, this is a very sensitive matter for you to discuss. No, no, no! It is a very sensitive matter; you are even going to chase away people from Uganda. *(Members rose_)* Why don't you listen? If you do not sit down - honourable members, this report is going to be adopted and we want action from the Government.

Prime Minister, we want action from you. We are adopting this report. (*Members rose*) When you make noise - sit down! Members, please, sit down. Honourable members, sit down.

There is just a correction that is going to be made. Yes, Dr Abed?

DR BWANIKA: Madam Speaker, in his presentation, the committee chairperson called the citizens of Rwanda “Banyarwanda,” which is incorrect. The citizens of Rwanda are “Rwandans.” We should correct that in our *Hansard*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. That one should be corrected on the *Hansard*. (*Ms Aisha Kabanda rose*) Yes, *Hajat* – no, we are only making corrections. Yes?

4.36

MS AISHA KABANDA, (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I am a granddaughter of the Banyarwanda – those are my mothers. Allow me to amend and add one other resolution. I do not want to go into the merits. I can realise your fears.

Madam Speaker, prayer number two – (*Members rose*)-

THE SPEAKER: Respect the person holding the Floor.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Madam Speaker, prayer number two concerns the many difficulties people are encountering at NIRA. Resolutions and recommendations have been made based on the insufficiency of the evidence presented. However, that does not mean that people are not having a lot of difficulties.

So, we urge the ministry—NIRA—to take care of the interests of indigenous Banyarwanda who have been in the country and not to deny them the official documents—that is, the National ID and the passport.

THE SPEAKER: *Hajjat*, that is operational and generic. Even for Ugandans who are known to be Ugandans, you must prove that you are Ugandan and come from this area. That is generic; that is operational. That should not be in – that is okay.

MS AISHA KABANDA: With your permission, Madam Speaker, I came to this Parliament earlier and put it to the Minister of Internal Affairs that actually, the Banyarwanda find it extremely difficult to access passports. I told him that I have cousins and personal relatives that are forced into a naturalisation process.

Now, you cannot denounce what you have never been. People that have never been to Rwanda and have never assumed the Rwandan nationality cannot be forced to denounce a nationality that they have never belonged to.

THE SPEAKER: *Hajjat*, they will have the passports. The Government has committed itself to that. Yes, Government Chief Whip?

4.36

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Madam Speaker, I have listened to the report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs and also attentively listened to your guidance and the response of the Rt Hon. Prime Minister. I am indicating to this House that on the 25th of October, His Excellency the President met the group that had petitioned Parliament, whose report has been presented on the Floor. He even committed that he would solve this issue.

Also looking at the fact that the matter involves the names of two countries; Uganda, when you talk about Rwandans, you are talking about Rwanda.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move a motion without notice, under our Rules of Procedure, that the report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs be adopted by this Parliament, with the amendment made through the correction. I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the Prime Minister made a commitment that there is an Executive action being taken - can you sit – by the Government. It was discussed in the Cabinet and actions are being already taken.

We will not adopt the report because the other one supersedes the report of today. We thank you. We will wait for the response from the minister on actions that have been taken. Next item?

STATEMENT ON THE
COMMEMORATION OF THE WORLD
AIDS DAY

THE SPEAKER: Prime Minister's time. Honourable members, to our dear people up here, the Government has taken it up to make a follow-up on what you raised in the report. That is what is happening. It has already been discussed.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Government for its position. Madam Prime Minister, through the Speaker, the issue is now about timeframe. As we speak, these people want passports. They want their documents, but do not have IDs.

I seek your indulgence, Madam Speaker, to know the timeframe for them to report back to Parliament. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Prime Minister? (*Hon. Aisha Kabanda rose*) Who are you ordering?

MS AISHA KABANDA: Madam Speaker, is Hon. Kyofatogabye in order to cross the front row on the right-hand side to the front row on the left - the state minister for Kampala.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I want my people to leave. Let the Prime Minister first commit and then I have my people leave.

MR SSENKYONYI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thought I would get very quick guidance from you before the Prime Minister comes in.

The doctrine of separation of powers is preponderant. Parliament has got its modus operandi; the Executive is a separate arm of Government. I thought that it would be prudent for us, as Parliament, to execute our mandate because there is a committee report. Let us do what we want with it.

As Parliament, we cannot even say we have thrown out the report or that we are adopting the report; whatever the case might be, but the Executive should also do its work. I am not too sure when we abdicate our responsibility as Parliament because there is a petition that came, it was processed by a committee and has come to us.

Madam Speaker, I think we should neatly finish our job as Parliament and let the Executive also execute its mandate, but there should be no fusion. We have a committee report before us. Let us process it, deal with it as we deem fit, and the *—(Interjection)—* I am concluding, honourable minister.

MS NANKABIRWA: I am on a point of procedure.

MR SSENKYONYI: I raised on procedure. Were you not attentive, honourable minister? (*Laughter*) Let me finish my point of procedure, then you will come in. Calm down, honourable minister.

If we could finish neatly as Parliament, then the Executive, whether it be out of that committee report or whatever the case might be, does its job too. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, much as we respect the separation of powers, we complement each other because this involves a multisectoral approach. If the mover is in agreement with us - he agrees; you are not the mover. Give the mover; give Hon. Ssewungu.

MR SSEWUNGU: Madam Speaker, he is not a minister. He should be sitting at the backbench, but he is sitting in front here. He is very irregular but is causing problems.

Madam Prime Minister, the Speaker said that we should adopt the report. Once you adopt a report with challenges in it and upon which we are going to cause debate, you, as the Prime Minister, came out and gave evidence that our group met Gen. Museveni at State House, as you stated. Even the name is okay; it is on record.

Once you said that, I am against adopting a report that is challengeable on the Floor. I can assure you of that. That is why I asked for a timeframe because at the end of the day, this report will suffice in Parliament. In case you do not meet the required time of the – *(Interruption)*

MS NANKABIRWA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I heard the Government Chief Whip clear, moving a motion that the report of the committee be adopted. You asked whether – *(Interjections)*– I heard the Government Chief Whip and you asked whether the motion was seconded and it was seconded.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No.

THE SPEAKER: I did not. *[Hon. Nankabirwa: It was seconded.]* No. Doctor, I said the statement of the Prime Minister supersedes what was presented in the report. Just give us the timeline.

MS NABBANJA: Madam Speaker and honourable members, I want Members to believe in Government. One of the reasons being that the team that brought a petition here already met the President, like I said. On the 28th of October, the President briefed the Cabinet and guided, and the ministry is acting on the issues. I am now giving a time frame.

Madam Speaker, I beg that the Government be given two months to act on this.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Keep giving us updates on how far. Next item?

STATEMENT ON GOVERNMENT
BUSINESS FOR THE SUCCEEDING
WEEK, 3RD TO 5TH DECEMBER 2024
PURSUANT TO RULE 28 OF THE RULES
OF PROCEDURE

4.48

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Madam Speaker and honourable members, I move under Rule 28 of our Rules of Procedure that requires me as Leader of Government Business to make a statement in this House regarding the business of the succeeding week. Below is the business of the succeeding week from 3rd to 5th December, 2024;

1. The Public Service Pension Fund Bill, 2023;
2. The UPDF (Amendment) Bill, 2024;
3. Statement by the Minister of Internal Affairs on expired Ugandan National Identity Cards;
4. The Minister of Gender, Labour, and Social Development will present a comprehensive report regarding key issues on Growth Opportunities and Productivity for Women Enterprises (GROW) project in the country;
5. The Minister of Energy and Mineral Development will present a statement updating the House on the prepaid YAKA Meter upgrade;
6. A statement by the Minister of Education and Sports on the new A-Level curriculum;
7. A statement will be presented by the Minister of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), on the drainage status of Jugula drainage channel, which feeds into Nakivubo channel, which caused massive flooding on St. Balikuddembe Market (Owino).

Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Next item?

PRIME MINISTER'S TIME.

4.51

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):

Madam Speaker, as usual, I received a question from Hon. Hellen Kahunde, District Woman Representative, Kiryandongo, on e-waste management. According to her, it is a crucial component of development and environmental protection. It involves the safe disposal and re-use of electronic products such as computers, cell phones, printers, and other digital devices that are no longer in use.

Her prayer is: what are Government's e-waste disposal and management interventions in Uganda?

Madam Speaker and colleagues, my response is that the Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance coordinates –(Interjection)- Madam Speaker, I beg for your protection. The Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance coordinates the implementation of the E-Waste Management Policy supported by the E-Waste Steering Committee, which includes the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) and Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA). These institutions collaborate to ensure sustainable management of e-waste. The E-Waste Management Policy, 2012 provides an overarching framework for e-waste management.

Madam Speaker, this is augmented by the Strategy for Electronic Waste Management, 2013 and Guidelines for E-Waste Management in Uganda, 2016.

The revised National Environment Act, 2019 established a legal framework for waste management and provides for aspects of e-waste management schemes, including Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and equipment return to vendor (take back) schemes.

The National Environment (Waste Management) Regulations, 2020 further include specific provisions on the management of e-waste separate from hazardous waste.

Madam Speaker, the Government through the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and National Enterprise Corporation (NEC), in collaboration with other stakeholders, launched the E-Waste Management Collection Centre located at plot 66, 6th Street Industrial Area in Kampala in June 2021. The centre carries out rudimentary management of e-waste including collection, sorting, and dismantling.

Additionally, private e-waste management handlers, such as BIN it, Nabugabo Updeal Joint Venture, Meridian Waste Uganda Limited, have been licensed by NEMA to handle various aspects of e-waste management including collecting, sorting, dismantling and disposal.

Cognisant that the country's e-waste management infrastructure is still rudimentary and insufficient, the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, with funding from the World Bank, is undertaking a project to establish a central e-waste management centre and regional collection to facilitate effective and sustainable e-waste collection. Plans include subsequently progressing to refurbishment and recycling of e-waste in the long term.

Madam Speaker, the Government is currently undertaking the following measures due to the increased need to address e-waste management;

- i) Review of the E-Waste Policy, 2012;
- ii) Needs and readiness assessment of e-waste collection centres;
- iii) Infrastructure and process requirements evaluation for e-waste management facilities;
- iv) Capacity building of handlers on e-waste management;
- v) Training of stakeholders on e-waste management;
- vi) Assessment of the operations and capacity of stakeholders and the e-waste collection

- centre to collect, store, re-purpose, and recycle e-waste in Uganda;
- vii) Engagements with international computer refurbishing/ e-waste management firms to establish a plant in this country;
 - viii) Coordination of regional e-waste management initiatives under the East African Communications Organisation (EACO);
 - ix) Development of a central and regional e-waste collection and management facilities with the support of partners such as the World Bank.

Madam Speaker and honourable members, e-waste management is emerging as a challenge due to the increased use of electronics and technology that is ever evolving. New devices are becoming more sophisticated and are manufactured from varying proportions of materials such as metals, glass, and plastics, and therefore disposal after requires a robust approach.

The Government is therefore ready to devise and implement sustainable strategies to ensure sufficient funding for e-waste management, including utilisation of extended producer responsibility schemes and the setting up of an e-waste management fund.

The second question came from Hon. Arinaitwe Rauben, MP, Isingiro West. In his question, he gave a narrative that in fulfilment of one of the Presidential pledges for the people of Isingiro, the Government of Uganda secured financial support from the World Bank to a tune of about \$169 million to support the irrigation for climate resilience project for Kabuyanda Irrigation Scheme.

That this irrigation project has a command area of 3,300 hectares targeting 7,000 households in the areas of Kabuyanda Sub-County and Kabuyanda Town Council in Isingiro West Constituency plus Kikagata Subcounty in Isingiro-South Constituency.

M/s Inyatsi Construction Ltd from Eswatini of Southern Africa was awarded a three-year contract with effect from May 2023 for the

construction of the Kabuyanda Earth Dam Project.

The project was launched by both Hon. Aisha Ssekindi, the State Minister of Water and Environment and Hon. Bright Rwamirama, the Minister of State for Animal Husbandry in August 2023.

Since then, according to the honourable member, the operations of this project have been so opaque to the extent that both the local leadership, even the area MPs, were left in the darkness as far as the operations are concerned.

That the honourable Minister of State for Water and Environment has on two occasions quietly visited the project site without the knowledge of the local leadership and that the area MPs are not even having a courtesy of briefing them on the purpose or findings of her visit.

To their surprise, on 2 September 2024, that the contractor M/s Inyatsi Construction Ltd prematurely terminated their contract with the Ministry of Water and Environment, reason being delayed payment of Shs 2.343 billion.

However, some reliable sources indicate, according to him, that the performance of the project was at 20.93 per cent out of the target. This has left the whole project in a mess and confusion. The project site that has deep barrow pits, deep trenches and all types of excavations are a danger to animals and people, especially during these rains. Below are his prayers:

1. The people of Isingiro would like to be updated on the next course of action as far as the construction of Kabuyanda Irrigation Scheme is concerned;
2. The Contractor M/s Inyatsi Construction Ltd should, with immediate effect, clear all outstanding payments for both workers that have been laid off and all service providers;
3. The dam site should be secured and protected to avoid accidents and disasters, especially during these rains; and

4. An investigation should be carried out on the operations of all these irrigations for climate resilient projects.

Madam Speaker, my response is that the Ministry of Water and Environment executed a contract for the construction of Kabuyanda Earth Dam in Isingiro District with Inyatsi Construction Limited at a contract price of Shs 84,574,952,685.

The contract was signed on 23 November 2022 and commenced on 11 May 2023. Physical progress stood at 21 per cent as of September 2024.

The ministry received High Court Judgement on 30 August 2024. Among the High Court Orders issued in the judgement are the following which directly affect the ministry and performance of the contract:

1. That Inyatsi Construction Ltd, Inyatsi Group Holdings Ltd and ABSA Bank (U) Ltd are restrained from discharging the Bank Guarantee in respect of the construction works of the Kabuyanda Earth Dam in Isingiro District, pending the hearing and final determination of the dispute before the International Chamber of Commerce, Paris in France;
2. That the Government of Uganda represented by the Ministry of Water and Environment is hereby ordered to withhold the payment of Shs 21,221,615,641 to the First Respondent, pending the hearing and final determination of the dispute between the Parties before the International Chamber of Commerce;

Arising out of the above High Court Judgement, Inyatsi Construction Limited breached the contract by illegally sub-contracting the works for the construction of Kabuyanda Earth Dam in Isingiro District to Plinth Consultancy Services Limited without consent from the ministry.

Madam Speaker, following the High Court judgement of 30 August 2024, the Ministry

of Water and Environment received notice from Inyatsi Construction Limited dated 2 September 2024 purporting to terminate the contract citing non-payment.

Thereafter, the contractor commenced with demobilisation activities from the site. Upon review of the contractor's purported termination notice, we observed the contractor's Notice of Termination was defective, since the contractor's right to terminate had not accrued under the contract.

The contractor's actions of intentionally refusing to remedy its breach by failing to resume work persistently exude its unwillingness to proceed with the works in accordance with the Contract. The Government, in accordance with the relevant clauses of the contract, therefore, terminated the contract on 1st October this year.

The Government has sought the intervention of the Attorney-General to counter the High Court orders restraining discharge of the Bank Guarantees in respect of the construction works for Kabuyanda Earth Dam. This will enable the Government to cash the advance payment guarantee and the performance guarantee.

The Government, with the support of the World Bank – that is the funder - has commenced the process of procuring another contractor to complete the works for the construction of Kabuyanda Earth Dam. A new contractor is expected on site by February 2025.

The third question, Madam Speaker, came from Dr Florence Asiimwe, District Woman Representative, Masindi District. She said that every session, we present a legislative agenda indicating the Bills the Executive will present to Parliament and that we have passed many Bills that have become Acts.

Her prayer is; when is Parliament receiving regulations accompanying these Acts for proper operationalisation?

My response is that regulations are a form of statutory instruments made under the authority of an Act of Parliament or under

the Constitution. Other forms of statutory instruments include rules, orders, ordinances and by-laws.

In the process of making the principal legislation or an Act of Parliament, Parliament may confer or delegate its legislative power to another person who may be the President, a minister or any other authority, like a Board or Council.

This delegation is expressly conferred by the Act of Parliament and there should be a specific provision in the Act that provides for the making of regulations that states;

The minister may by statutory instrument, make regulations for the better carrying out of, or giving effect, to the provisions of this Act.

The power given to the minister by an Act of Parliament to make regulations is discretionary, hence the use of the word "may".

Where the minister is constrained to implement the Act as a result of the nature of the Act, the minister may go ahead and make regulations to implement the Act.

However, there are other instances where the Act is self-implementing and may not require regulations. In this case, the minister may not necessarily make regulations.

Section 14 of the Interpretation Act, Cap 2 gives Parliament powers to confer its law-making power on another person or body, thus enabling that person or body to make laws.

This process is the delegation of Parliament's legislative power and resulting laws are known as statutory instruments which include regulations, rules, orders, ordinances and by-laws.

As a general rule, such delegation needs to be expressed by an Act of Parliament as required under the Constitution in Article 79(2). For regulations to be brought to Parliament, the Act of Parliament must specifically provide either that;

- i. the regulation be laid before Parliament;
- ii. a resolution of Parliament is required; or
- iii. the regulation be made with the approval of Parliament.

There is consequently no legal obligation for all regulations to be brought to Parliament except where the Act of Parliament provides for it.

Question 4 is from Hon. Peter Okeyoh, Member of Parliament for Bukooli Island, Namayingo District. His prayer is; what plans does the Government have for constructing a secondary school per subcounty, especially in the hard-to-reach areas like the islands of Namayingo?

My response is that the Government of Uganda, as you all know, has a policy to ensure that each subcounty has at least one secondary school. This is part of the broader goal to improve access to education, especially in remote and hard-to-reach areas, including island districts like Namayingo.

The focus is on constructing schools in underserved regions to enhance education equity across the country. Namayingo has 11 subcounties out of which 5 subcounties have public secondary schools.

It has three islands out of which one, Sigulu has a public secondary school leaving out Bukana and Lolwe islands that will be planned for in the medium term.

In addition, the Government has already completed and operationalised Mwema Seed Secondary School in Mutumba Subcounty under the first phase of the Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers (UgIFT) programme.

The construction of Buhemba Seed School under the second phase is also underway under the same programme.

Madam Speaker, Namayingo Town Council has also been earmarked for a seed secondary school under the Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project (USEEP).

I want to answer his second by saying that the Government has plans to construct boarding schools for both primary and secondary schools in the Karamoja subregion. According to him, why can't this same programme be extended to the equally disadvantaged islands?

My response is that the Government's initiative to build boarding schools in Karamoja is based on the unique challenges in that region, such as insecurity, nomadic lifestyles and the need to stabilise the education system for the vulnerable communities of Karamoja.

Karamoja has historically faced challenges linked to pastoralism and cattle raiding also known as cattle rustling, making it difficult for children to access education without boarding facilities.

The Government under the Karamoja Primary Education Programme indeed upgraded 21 primary schools in all seven districts in the Karamoja subregion. The project was funded by the Irish Aid and it was concluded in 2017.

The construction of seed secondary schools across the country, supported by the World Bank does not include boarding facilities, as the focus is on the provision of day schools under the UNIVERSAL Secondary Education (USE) programme.

However, the Government recognises the need for boarding facilities in island districts and hard-to-reach areas and plans to address these issues by incorporating such provisions once resources are available.

Prayer number three is; what plans are in place to retain teachers in hard-to-reach areas like islands.

My response is that the Government has put in place the following measures to retain teachers in hard-to-reach areas.

i. Hardship allowance

As you are aware, teachers in remote and difficult locations often receive additional

compensation through hardship allowances to offset the challenges of working in such environments.

The Minister of Education and Sports has been liaising with the Ministry of Public Service to include island schools among the hard-to-reach spots so that they receive top-up allowances.

ii. Staff accommodation

All seed secondary schools being constructed have staff accommodation. Plans are also underway to improve housing for teachers in remote areas to encourage them to stay. For instance, the construction of teachers' houses near schools is a priority in many rural and island districts.

Question number five is from Hon. Alex Brandon Kintu, Member of Parliament, Kagoma North County, Jinja District.

According to him, many agro-processing machines face power challenges, hence affecting agro-processing projects across the country, such as the coffee factory in Myanzi, Kassanda district, which was established under the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP) programme and is currently hindered by lack of a transformer.

His prayer is: can the Government prioritise the provision of adequate power supply to these vital projects?

My response is that the Agricultural Cluster Development Project has facilitated the establishment of numerous agro-processing machines across the country. However, many of these projects are located in areas without an existing electric supply line.

To tackle this challenge, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development is taking a two-fold approach.

i) Framework contracts for power supply

The ministry is finalising procurement framework contracts for the bulk supply of

power line construction materials, as well as labour and transport, under the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Framework Priority Projects.

Subject to availability of funds, this initiative will enable the ministry to quickly and efficiently install transformers, whenever needed, to support the agricultural production and value addition.

ii) Electrification of agricultural processing facilities

In the Financial Year 2023/2024, with technical support from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries electrified 21 agricultural processing facilities despite budget constraints.

Additionally, 95 more agricultural processing centres have been identified and submitted to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development for inclusion in the upcoming projects.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development is collaborating with the ministry for agriculture to develop a targeted plan for the electrification of agricultural value addition and production centres across the country, including irrigation schemes. Specific to the Myanzi coffee factory in Kassanda, the Government, through the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, will provide a transformer.

6. Hon. Faith Nakut (Napak District)

She said that in 2016 when the Government rolled out the upgrade of health facilities and construction of health infrastructure in Uganda, Karamoja district local governments were poised to wait for the Italian loan and, therefore, were omitted from Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfer Project (UgIFT) loan. It is reported that, to date, the Government has upgraded over 340 health facilities in the country while Karamoja and, especially Napak District, awaits the Italian loan which is closing 10 years in the offing.

A number of people have passed on due to shortages and absence of health facilities.

Her prayer is: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when will Napak District health sector be served with health infrastructure?

Madam Speaker, my response is that the €10 million Italian loan was delayed due to negotiation bottlenecks between the two governments. However, the Italian government has dispatched the funds and we have them in the Bank of Uganda on a special project account. The procurement process for the works has been finalised and a valuation report sent to the Italian government for a "No Objection", as per the financing agreement.

Once the Government of Uganda receives the no objection, works will begin immediately. The Attorney-General has already approved all the nine contracts for the nine districts of Karamoja.

Works will begin this financial year. The Government is also exploring other funding modalities for Karamoja and is also co-financing the Italian support, with Shs 9 billion.

7. Hon. Nakut, Napak district

She, again, said that in July 2022, at the Golden Jubilee celebrations in the Kangole Girls S.S., the Vice-President of the Republic of Uganda promised that the Cabinet would consider prioritising the construction of a girls' dormitory to support girl child education in Karamoja.

Her prayer is: in which financial year will the estimate for the girls' dormitory appear in the national budget?

Madam Speaker, Kangole Girls S.S. has been prioritised and is on the list of traditional schools to benefit from the U-LEARN project. This project will rehabilitate and provide infrastructure for traditional secondary schools, among which is the Kangole Girls Senior Secondary School.

The project is pending approval by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

8. Hon. Mapenduzi Ojara (Bardege-Layibi Division, Gulu City)

According to him, the Government promised to provide updates on the progress of Northern Uganda Social Action Fund IV, (NUSAF IV) but it has taken several months with no feedback.

His prayer is that I update Ugandans on the progress of NUSAF IV.

My response

The Cabinet, in its meeting of 24 January 2024, authorised my office to design the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund IV projects - that is NUSAF IV – with the support of World Bank to address the high poverty levels in the greater northern Uganda.

Noting the satisfactory performance of the previous NUSAF III project, where 3,031,690 poor and vulnerable persons from 606,338 households benefited from the project funds in 5,299 villages, 1,536 parishes in the 67 participating districts, the proposed NUSAF IV will provide effective income support to build the resilience of poor and vulnerable households in northern Uganda.

The project design and consultations have been concluded by the project design team, consisting of my office, National Planning Authority, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Ministry of Health, Inspectorate of Government, and other relevant ministries, departments and agencies.

National Planning Authority has issued clearance for the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to make arrangements for negotiations with the World Bank and proceed with financing.

The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has notified the World Bank and negotiations on the project are still ongoing. The project shall also require approval of the World Bank and Parliament before commencement, which is anticipated in January 2025.

9. Hon. Julius Acon Bua (MP, Otuke East County)

His prayer is for me to inform the people of northern Uganda on the steps the Government plans to take for them to tap into the global demands for shea nuts?

My response is that shea nut is a tree wildly growing in eastern and northern Uganda. Currently, efforts have been mainly at community and local government, on conservation of these naturally growing trees in the wild not to be taken up by the charcoal business.

However, as Government, we note the economic importance and nutritional value of these trees and will look into the measures to propagate them.

The Government is currently engaging with development partners to incorporate additional oilseed crops including shea nut, cashew nut, macadamia and Hass avocado into the national oilseed project, supported by oilseed crops.

Government is confident that integrating these priority crops will lead to focused efforts to enhance their contributions to the oilseed and vegetable oil value chain in both regional and international markets.

Madam Speaker, farmers also have the option of selecting shea nuts as an enterprise to undertake the parish development model.

10. That can I update this house- it came from Hon. Lagen David, Agago County. His prayer is that, can I update this House on the status of implementation of national oil seeds in Northern Uganda? That there are no signs of any impact of this project.

My response

That the National Oil Seeds Project is the -

MR OTIMGIW: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: He has a procedural issue. Why don't you allow the Prime Minister to finish?

MR OTIMGIW: Thank you, Madam speaker, for allowing me to raise the procedure matter. I raise under Rule 41(8)(a) for the Prime Minister's time. I thank the Prime Minister for being patient with us that we commenced her time a bit late.

It says 40 minutes will be provided for responding to written questions and 20 minutes for responding to oral questions so that we also have time to give our oral questions. I was just wondering if-

THE SPEAKER: We are the ones who spent her time, so let us allow her to finish. I will only give about three or four people to ask oral questions.

MS NABBANJA: Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I want members to-

THE SPEAKER: Actually, you have taken five minutes now.

MS NABBANJA: Appreciate that these questions come from members. So, I try to make sure that we answer them and give answers satisfactorily. Thank you so much.

My response is that the National Seeds Project (NOSP) is a seven-year initiative that started in 2021 to 2028, jointly implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Local Government.

Building on the successes of the Vegetable Oil Development Project (VODP) Phase 2 that started in 2010-2020, NOSP operates in 81 districts, clustered into hubs, that is West Nile, Northern, Eastern, Mid-Western and Karamoja.

In Northern Uganda, the project is active in 17 districts including Lamwo, Pader, Kitgum, Gulu, Amuru, Nwoya, Omoro, Agago, Kwanja, Otuke, Lira, Alebtong, Amolatar, Apac, Oyam Dokolo and Kole.

The project aims to address the shortfall in domestic oil seed production and increase the local output of vegetable oil and related by-products.

Its primary development objective is to accelerate commercialisation in the key oil-seed value chain, thereby improving livelihoods and resilience of smallholders involved in oil-seed production and marketing.

Actual implementation of the project activities commenced in the financial year 2023/2024. The following have so far been carried out:

i) The National Oil Seed Project has provided inputs such as soybean foundation seed and fertilisers to 48 clusters in the region for multiplication to ensure availability of quality declared seed closer to the farmers.

This in turn supports farmer groups in growing the seed as grain to increase production and productivity, improve nutrition, and enhance backward and forward linkages within the region;

ii) Extension service. The project has provided refresher training for 273 district extension staff to support farmers in the implementing seed value chain activities and to enhance production and productivity.

iii) MAAIF, through the project, procured and distributed 162 motorcycles per district to ease mobility - two motorcycles per district- enhance service delivery, and boost the production and productivity of agricultural commodities;

iv) Clustering and formation of farmer groups to enhance oilseed production and productivity, contribute to crushing

material for value addition, and support the animal feed industry within the country.

These farmer groups facilitate aggregation and promote collective marketing across the regions. The project is currently working with 637 farmer groups, that is 380 in Acholi and 257 in Lango.

- v) Research and Development: With the funding from this project, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is supporting NaSARRI-NARO and Makerere University in conducting adaptive research to develop and improve the varieties of soybean, groundnuts, sesame and sunflower.

This research aims to facilitate farmer multiplication and increase the availability of quality seed on the market.

- vi) Initiated procurement for the construction of community access roads in the two sub-regions.

The procurement process for contractors for batch A, totaling 1,034 km across the entire project area, is ongoing.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for your patience. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much Prime Minister and thank you for your patience. As we leave the Prime Minister to rest a bit, can we hear from Hon. Kyofatogabye? As we give you five minutes to rest.

STATEMENT ON THE COMMEMORATION OF WORLD AIDS DAY.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Hon. Kyofatogabye-

5.35

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR KAMPALA CAPITAL CITY AND METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS (Mr Kyofatogabye Kabuye): Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a statement on the commemoration of the World AIDS Day which will be held on 1st December 2024, this Sunday.

Every year Uganda joins the rest of the world to commemorate World AIDS Day on 1st December. The commemoration is meant to raise awareness about the AIDS epidemic, show solidarity with those living with HIV, accelerate interventions in the fight against HIV and AIDS, and reflect on progress and challenges that inform strategies and efforts in the fight against the epidemic.

This event provides a powerful platform that is well aligned with the Presidential Fast-track Initiative for ending AIDS as a public health threat in Uganda by 2030 and mainstreaming HIV for epidemic control.

The initiative aims to ensure that nobody is left behind. It promotes increased focus on proven effective interventions of the HIV response, and addresses prevailing gaps in the coverage of key services in the country.

Currently, Madam Speaker, Uganda has an estimated 1.49 million people living with HIV, out of which 1.2 million are currently on treatment, according to Ministry of Health's annual estimates.

The national HIV prevalence in Uganda currently stands at 5.1 per cent among adults aged 15 to 49 years.

There are a lot of disparities, however, in the burden of HIV by demographic group and geographic area. For example, HIV prevalence is higher among women, standing at 6.5 per cent compared to men at 3.6 per cent.

Despite all that, Madam Speaker, there remain challenges the country is facing towards ending AIDS in Uganda by 2030.

The new HIV infections stand at about 38,000 annually, and about 19,000 deaths were recorded in 2023.

Infections among young people, 15 to 24 years, accounted for nearly 40 per cent of all the new HIV infections in the year 2023, with the new infections occurring, three times more among young girls compared to boys, in the same period. Men, take care.

Madam Speaker, the National World AIDS Day 2024 theme is; “Accelerating Interventions to End AIDS by 2030”, which aligns with the global theme; “Human Rights Are Essential to Ending AIDS as a Public Health Threat by 2030”. This, as well, aligns with the new global AIDS strategy of ending AIDS by 2030 and commitment to zero new HIV infections, zero AIDS-related deaths, and zero discrimination.

Madam Speaker, the objective is to inform and seek your support towards the commemoration of this day, which will be held on 1st December, like I said before.

The commemoration will be held in Buyende District, in Bukungu Town Council.

As a country, we always commemorate this day to take stock of achievements in the fight against HIV and AIDS, and re-dedicate our efforts to the fight against this epidemic.

It is therefore critical to have accelerated sensitisation of the public about the prevailing risk of new HIV infections, and what the community needs to do to mitigate the risks.

Commemoration of World AIDS Day provides us a strategic opportunity for engaging the public. In this regard, the Office of the President will provide oversight to the new AIDS Commission, to ensure that community sensitisation is intensified, as part of the commemoration activities.

As I conclude, Madam Speaker, I seek your indulgence to note the following key aspects:

1. To note that World AIDS Day will take place in Buyende District, Bukungu Town Council, at Bukungu Primary School.
 2. To inform you that the preparations for the commemoration of World AIDS Day 2024, have already commenced.
- To inform you that the World AIDS Day will be commemorated on 1 December 2024, under the theme, “Accelerating the Interventions for Ending AIDS by 2030.”
3. To inform you that all of you are requested to support the preparation for the commemoration of World AIDS Day, and relay HIV messages across the country as national leaders, to increase HIV awareness and advocacy.
 4. To inform you to wear the red ribbon, as a symbol of standing in solidarity with the people living with HIV and awareness creation.
 5. To also seek your participation in the commemoration of the World AIDS Day at Bukungu in Buyende District.

I beg to move, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. We are requested to support in the preparation. How do we support the preparation?

MR KYOFATOGABYE: Madam Speaker, the finances are budgeted for, but we need your mobilisation and your presence is very key, because that is the time when we must make a statement to the whole world that as a country, we are one in this battle.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. As we celebrate World AIDS Day, you should be aware that some people cannot get ARVs in hospitals, so that is one of the things that you should look at.

People on the islands are not able to access this medicine. There is a lot of stigma, people fear to speak about it.

Create that environment where people get freedom to speak about it, and know that it is something that can be handled. Can we go back? The Prime Minister has taken tea. Hon. Christine Kaaya?

5.44

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you, minister, for the statement.

We are ready to celebrate. Madam Speaker, I am representing the shadow minister for gender. This is the right time to reflect on responsible living, especially in terms of discipline of women and men. It is high time we emphasise the causes of HIV, and when we do that, we shall be able to bring out responsible living. That one should come out clearly.

Madam Speaker, this issue of over-emphasising the treatment other than the prevention –

THE SPEAKER: The cause.

MS KAAYA: Other than the cause. I mean the prevention other than the cause –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, as you go to the people –

MS KAAYA: This is a very important message on this day.

THE SPEAKER: - talk about prevention.

MS KAAYA: Yes. This message should be carried by us to the teenagers.

This morning, we were contemplating the causes of gender-based violence. Madam Speaker, it is very difficult for discordant couples to have harmony in their marriage. Even when the couple is both infected, it is difficult for such a marriage to be in harmony, especially when it is him or her who brought it to you. Therefore, working to reduce the scourge of HIV has also an implication on the welfare of marriages in Uganda.

I thank you, minister for the statement. I pray that we all take certain initiatives within our respective constituencies to commemorate the day, and to bring the population up-to-date with information on HIV-AIDS. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kabanda, the man, not the woman.

5.46

MR DAVID KABANDA (NRM, Kasambya County, Mubende): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the minister for his statement.

However, Madam Speaker, I would like to seek clarification from the minister because when we were choosing the theme of the day, it read as follows: The National World Aids Day 2024 theme is, “Accelerating Interventions to End AIDS by 2030.”

I am just seeking clarification from the minister. There are people who can live with HIV even for 30 years, and these are six years away from now. Therefore, when you say that your target is to end AIDS by 2030, are you looking forward to killing those who live with HIV? What are the -

MR OTINGIW: Thank you for giving way for information. I just want to give information to my honourable colleague. I am a Member of the Committee on Health and indeed we visited a number of health centres up and down the country.

Madam Speaker, the most amazing thing is that we have been told there is a decline in the number of patients who are actually going to get ARVs. The main reason for this is that there is no longer confidentiality in the health centres where some of these patients go to collect their ARVs. It has made most of them fail to go to the health centres to get the necessary treatment. Maybe that is an issue that can be put across.

THE SPEAKER: Doctor and then the chairperson of HIV/AIDS.

5.48

DR TWAHA KAGABO (NUP, Bukoto County South, Lwengo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The trait of this House is that when eloquent people come to speak about issues, you afford them enough time.

The question raised by Hon. David Kabanda was how you will end AIDS by 2030. There is a very big distinction between HIV and AIDS. By HIV, we are talking about the virus that infects people and runs into the DNA. The acquired immune deficiency syndrome is what phenotypes or comes out when your immunity has gone down. Therefore, it is possible that we can achieve that if we all put our hands on the deck to fight Armageddon. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

5.49

MS SARAH NETALISIRE (NRM, Woman Representative, Namisindwa): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Doctor for that clarification. To further answer Hon. David Kabanda, it is very possible for us, as a country, to end AIDS by 2030. That is why we are focusing on the presidential fast-track initiative and also implementing the 95-95-95.

What do we mean by that? We want to ensure that every Ugandan is tested. If we can test 95 percent or 99 percent of all the Ugandan population, we will ascertain those who are positive and those who are negative.

When we know those who are positive, then we enrol you in treatment. That is the second in 95 or 90-90 – *(Interjection)* - Can I finish? Please, I know he is a doctor. You will seek your clarification later -

THE SPEAKER: You are also a medic.

MS NETALISIRE: Yes, thank you. When we enrol those who have been found positive on treatment and then we go to the next 95 or 99 - and that is suppressing - We make sure that those who are on treatment stay on treatment and we suppress the viral load. Once we

suppress, the chances of you infecting another person comes down and it is very minimal.

That is why we are saying, all of us - you know with the law that we passed, we cannot force every Ugandan to go and test. The reason we are saying join hands together with us to mobilise people in our communities is so that they get to know their status, get enrolled on treatment. For those who are negative, we advise them and encourage them to stay safe. Those who are positive, we continue appealing to them to send a message that, “let it end with me” so that they do not infect another person.

Madam Speaker, as I conclude, I seek your indulgence. Honourable members, HIV/AIDS is still wearing a female face. When you listen to the minister’s statement, 6.5 per cent are women vis-a-vis the 3.8 per cent men.

When you go to the 58,000 new infections, three in each of that population are young girls between the age of 15 and 25. That is the worry, fear and the alarm that all of us should make. If we do not find, allocate resources and put them in prevention and we only focus on treatment, we are not going to achieve the goal of ending AIDS by 2030. This is because the new infections are on the rise and they are in the active age of the young girls.

I thank you, Madam Speaker. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Let me hear from the Member from Mwenge and then the Government Chief Whip.

5.53

MR DONALD KATALIHLWA (NRM, Mwenge South County, Kyenjojo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am not a medic. I beg the attention of the Government Chief Whip and Hon. David Kabanda.

Madam Speaker, I am not a medic, but I have been in the HIV sector for some time – *(Interjection)* - I do not mind whether I have been a Village Health Team (VHC) or not, but as long as I can raise my issue. *(Laughter)*

I thank the minister for the statement. Unfortunately, we are giving our input when the Minister of Health is not here. My concerns, the two of them, will go directly to the Minister of Health.

As we commemorate the World AIDS Day, we want the country, specifically the Minister of Health or the Prime Minister, to give us a pronouncement on the current issue that we are hearing about of Post-Exposure Prophylaxis, where somebody can get an injection - I have been hearing about it for two months - and you are not infected or you get tablets and you do not get infected.

Madam Speaker, my fear is this one may miss -

THE SPEAKER: It is called a PEP.

MR KATALIHWI: No, PEP is post - I told you I know some of these things. PEP is post-exposure – *(Interjection)* - Let me raise my issue. PREP is pre-exposure. That is the one I am talking about. You are talking about PEP, which is post-exposure. I told you I am a VHT who knows these things. *(Laughter)*

Madam Speaker, my fear now is when we talk about this thing of PREP, without giving our people enough information, sooner or later, condom use will be abandoned, people will get reckless and start having live sex, as they may say. Maybe, later on, if it is not working well, we shall have new infections.

Therefore, I want the Prime Minister or the Minister of Health to give us a clear statement about that because I heard they came and launched it in my district and other districts in the country. How is it going to impact the spread of HIV or control it? The chairperson here is telling me it does.

I have been seeing statistics, and of course, with the recent saga in the population census, you cannot believe in some of the statistics. There are statistics about HIV prevalence in different regions. I come from the Toro Subregion, specifically Fort Portal City, which is near my constituency. And it is the leading- the

Minister is emphasising that Fort Portal is the leading, apart from the statistics showing Fort Portal as the leading area in terms of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) prevalence, I have not seen any deliberate-

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR KATALIHWI: Specific effort by Government, Madam Speaker, apart from giving us statistics and causing fear, a specific deliberate effort by the Government to contain this prevalence rate of HIV in my region. I beg to submit, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The Government Chief Whip.

5.57

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Madam Speaker, we are discussing a very important subject matter that touches on the lives of the people of Uganda.

My first submission which I want to bring to the attention of this Parliament is that the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS is on the increase. Fort portal City leads with a prevalence rate of 14.7 per cent. Mbarara City follows with a prevalence rate of 14 per cent. Kyotera is number 3 with 13.7 per cent. Then in that sequence, Masaka City, Lira City, Soroti City, Arua City and others.

The point I want to raise to the Minister- I am bound by collective responsibility, but let me raise this. We seem to be emphasising more of cure than prevention. I recall when we were young kids in primary, there used to be the film of the late Philly Bongole Lutaaya; Alone and frightened. And I recall either in primary three or four when we watched it, seated on the ground, I can assure you the fear it caused up to now, is the reason I am safe and sound up to this moment. *(Laughter)*

But it also appears that our partners are not focusing on that. Our development partners are seemingly focusing on treatment. So, I think honourable minister, I have raised this time and a time and again, that time is up. For

us- you know, fear itself will make you move cautiously. Fear. That fear is no more. Our young people, especially like our young girls, they fear pregnancy more than getting infected with HIV/AIDS.

Honourable minister, we need to rethink our direction. In fact, the earlier we do it, the better. Because this prevalence rate is too much for us now with Fort Portal leading. But for me, my question is, why have we abandoned, going to these traditional schools, showing these young people the danger using the Philly Bongole Lutaaya film? We have only adopted his other song as the HIV/AIDS Anthem.

That film- when he flew back, he went to Gayaza, he greeted the people of- and said, God willing, I will go, I will return. And he did not return alive; we have abandoned that. That is the reason why young people now, longer fear. So, for me, I want to move that we introduce that for young people to continue watching.

Because now you hear people say, it is about stigmatisation and what have you, you see, AIDS of those days would make you look so thin. But that causes fear. That fear is one of our preventive strategies that we must go back to. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you. I had a visitor; Hon. Kevin Kinengo Katisya from Kenya. I think she has gone and Hon. David Manzi, sorry they have left.

6.00

MR WILSON KAJWENGYE, (NRM, Nyabushozi County, Kiruhura): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I welcome the statement from the Minister and I am happy the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister is here.

What Uganda is best known for in this generation of 30 years is that we are champions, we are leading the whole world in HIV and AIDS prevention; we should not let that go. I am happy and the Government Chief Whip has clearly elaborated it.

My point, Madam Speaker colleagues is, when it comes to care for our infected people, somehow the donor community came in, our development partners came in and took it away from Government.

I remember, Madam Speaker, after we had passed the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, what was being put in our face was that they were going to withdraw money for President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). These are 2 million Ugandans useful to our country. Then I was wondering, can't we- can't the Republic of Uganda that championed the fight against this, actually take care of our infected people? My answer is yes, we can. Thank you. Because, so that- and the more they encroach on that strategic part and take it in fact another research that needs to be done is whether these young people where the rate of infection is high is related to the new move of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ). So, that then we can link how come the development partners are so interested in encroaching on our success story. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable the members, you have heard all this, what has been said about HIV/AIDS. We are better off preventing than cure. Hon. Aisha.

6.03

MS AISHA KABANDA, (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you so much, Madam Speaker-

THE SPEAKER: Back to the Prime Minister.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. In 2022, the President appointed 16 judges in acting capacity who were forwarded to Parliament for approval and indeed it approved all of them. Two years later, the same names were returned for appointment in substantive capacity.

Madam Speaker, one of the 16 names was Lady Justice Bukirwa Faridah, who fortunately or unfortunately, was the only Muslim among the 16. To date, Lady Justice Bukirwa Faridah has

not received her instruments of appointment to fulfil her mandate, yet the President appointed her in substantive capacity and Parliament approved her appointment.

May I know, from the Prime Minister what went wrong to the appointment of Lady Justice Bukirwa Faridah? Who is standing in the way of her appointment and how do you help her as a fellow lady? Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: To a serious Prime Minister. *(Laughter)* Madam Speaker and honourable colleagues, I have taken note of the Members' question. I promise that I will liaise with the Judiciary, that is the Chief Justice, the Justice Commission and make sure that we handle that matter. And I will report back thereafter.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Madam Speaker, any timelines?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, maybe, as a Chairperson of Appointments Committee, we received 16 names for appointment of 16 judges. Then, they came for confirmation. We confirmed all of them.

We wrote a letter confirming all of them and in between, I think, there was a problem.

The Judicial Service Commission has been investigating the said judge. What the Prime Minister has to make a follow-up on is how far that report from the Judicial Service Commission has reached – with the President. We should be able to hear from the Prime Minister sooner than later.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Madam Speaker, that is much appreciated, but it casts doubt on the process. Before the President appoints someone, due diligence is done and, before Parliament approves a person, due diligence is done. When we approved her, there was nothing wrong with her record. When we say the Judiciary is investigating the person, it casts doubt on the whole process –

THE SPEAKER: Judicial Service Commission.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Yes, when we say that the Judicial Service Commission is investigating the person of the Lady Justice, it casts doubt on the whole process on whether the Government machinery or systems we use to investigate our people are reliable or not. This tells a lot about our systems.

THE SPEAKER: Let us give the Prime Minister the benefit of the doubt. I think I know that case a little more. One thing I am aware of is that she has been exonerated. The Prime Minister will get back to us on that issue – because it was not on matters judicial; it was matters political.

Yes, Hon. Abeja?

6.08

MS SUSAN ABEJA (Independent, Woman Representative, Otuke): Thank you – *(Interjection)*- this Hon. Obua here is a bully. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Obua, why are you looking at Hon. Abeja? *(Laughter)*

MS ABEJA: He knows my beauty. *(Laughter)*

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate you for giving me this opportunity. Our able Prime Minister and my brother are around.

Madam Speaker, my maiden speech on this Floor of Parliament was concerning education. My question to our Rt Hon. Prime minister is: what plans do you have for parishes without government-aided primary schools – *(Interjection)*- primary schools, first.

THE SPEAKER: No; Hon. Abeja wants primary schools, first.

MS ABEJA: We have vulnerable children. We submitted primary schools which are struggling, to be coded. I, kindly, beg you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. It is a real begging.

MS NABBANJA: Madam Speaker, the policy of the Government is that we have a public primary school per parish and a public secondary school per subcounty. We have been constructing these primary schools, equipping them and coding community primary schools.

Madam Speaker, we shall be handling this in a phased manner, funds permitting. I request her to liaise with my office and put this in writing, so that I can see how best we can – but the minister in charge is here; you come and carry your cross. *(Laughter)* No, let him come. Please, come and support me.

6.10

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (HIGHER EDUCATION) (Dr John Muyingo): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The Prime Minister is saying exactly what I should be saying.

The Government has plans to ensure that all parishes in this country have at least a primary school – not only primary schools, but every subcounty in the country will have a secondary school and, so, the story goes like that.

We want everybody to go to school and remain there until the cycle is complete.

THE SPEAKER: Are you answering Hon. Abeja's question? She is not asking for too much; she is only asking for a primary school.

DR MUYINGO: Hon. Abeja is my sister. I have been to her constituency and we are doing something about what is happening there.

THE SPEAKER: So, are you in touch with her?

DR MUYINGO: We are in touch; we are working together. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Abeja, kindly, go to the ministry and make a follow-up.

MR MACHO: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want Hon. Abeja to come and talk, so that it is on record and the minister can commit.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Abeja has told me that they are in touch, but she can –

MS ABEJA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The minister for education is my brother. However, there was a day when the junior minister for education came here and said that their money, which was allocated for coding these schools, has not been released.

Maybe the minister should get in touch with the minister for finance. If this money is there, let them release it and they go and code these schools.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Muyingo, get in touch with Hon. Abeja and the finance ministry and have these schools coded – and report back to the House. Actually, report back to the Prime Minister. We need a response in this House. Hon. Abeja, if they do not do it, you come back.

6.13

MS PASKA MENYA (Independent, Woman Representative, Pader): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, on several occasions, we have raised matters concerning ex-gratia for local leaders in about two or three districts in Acholi subregion, plus other districts. To date, these people have not yet been paid their money.

We do not have peace with our local leaders, especially the LCs I. At any functions or gatherings we go to, we must respond to such queries.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I request you to give a commitment towards paying the ex-gratia.

We pray for this today so that as we are going back, we can also give clear information to our leaders that the Rt Hon. Prime Minister promised that this money will be paid within this period. I request the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to make a commitment on this. Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Madam Speaker, the Pader Woman MP is my *mulamu* – my sister-in-law. I have been to Pader a number of times.

The issue of ex-gratia is not only in Pader or northern Uganda; it cuts across the country. In a report by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in Cabinet last week, it was observed that there was under-budgeting by some local governments. So, we are handling the matter, not only for Pader but also other parts of the country. We shall rectify the problem.

THE SPEAKER: Remember, we budgeted for that money. Hon. Grace Akifeza, you can choose any side - but since you are in yellow-

6.18

MS GRACE AKIFEZA (Independent, Woman Representative, Kisoro): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to greet everyone here and I want to appreciate everyone being my second day here.

I would like to raise my concern about our tourism roads in Kisoro. They are in a dire situation, and we want our voices to be heard because the roads are bad.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members-

MS AKIFEZA: We also have the issue of a bridge that overflowed. It damaged people's gardens and it needs immediate attention. We are also experiencing floods in Kisoro; heavy rains are destroying people's crops. Maybe they will have to give them some attention. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Akifeza, thank you so much. That is her maiden speech. It takes some people a year to make a maiden speech. Yes, there is another maiden speech here.

MR EDDIE KWIZERA: From me - (*Laughter*) - Madam Speaker and colleagues, I want to thank you very much for having welcomed our member of Parliament and for giving her time to speak on the maiden speech but I want to also appeal to the Prime Minister

that we are now a bit stronger because the MPs from Bukimbiri County where you visited and you found that tourism roads are really a problem. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: He is actually repeating what the Hon. Akifeza said.

MS NABBANJA: He is trying to emphasise. Madam Speaker, it is on this note that I felt I needed to inform you that there is a problem that happened last night in the district of Balambuli. So many people have died. As I went out, I got a call and they told me that in Bulambuli District, people had been covered by landslides. Many homes; I am told above 50 homes - so far they have retrieved 13 bodies.

The bridges were washed away by the heavy rains and floods. Our machinery is finding it difficult to reach the place to rescue them. I had a meeting this afternoon, and I believe they are having another meeting right now but I thought it was to inform the House.

THE SPEAKER: The prime minister, I had actually informed the House before you came.

MS NABBANJA: Okay. I wanted us to take note that we have that problem in the country. Let me talk about our roads from our sister. I want to congratulate you first of all and to thank you for raising this very pertinent question.

Madam Speaker, tourism roads are priority roads by the NRM government. A number of strategies have been put in place. So roads like this one of Bukimbiri, I still remember Bukimbiri and many others where our tourists will be going or go, will be worked on as a matter of priority. On Monday, we talked about this in the Cabinet, and the minister in charge of works, Hon. General Katumba Wamala, informed us that contracts have been awarded for some of the roads, and the President still directed that we prioritise other roads in your district, so that, our tourists find it easy. Of course, the upgrade of the airport also because our tourists do not need to go all a long distance, they will be flying there, and then they get vehicles and access our tourist sites. I want to thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: I wanted to conclude by informing you that we have got money from China and those roads will be worked on.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Afidra.

MR AFIDRA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The procedural issue I want to raise in regard to the Hon. Grace's submission, besides the tourism road and the status of the roads in this country and flooding, is that this is not only particularly to her constituency, Uganda and the region has been blessed. Everywhere, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, this country has been receiving rain, and the rains have flooded everywhere. This catastrophe has caused most bridges and national roads to be washed away. I remember a couple of weeks ago, the minister of works issued a statement in writing-

THE SPEAKER: What is the procedural matter you are raising?

MR AFIDRA: The procedural issue I am raising is, would it not be procedurally right for the Prime Minister to instruct the minister to come up with a comprehensive plan and strategy for the challenge of the different roads and bridges across the country that have been washed away? In reference to my constituency, Madi-Okolo, three UNRA roads have completely been cut off. From Pakwach to Arua, you cannot cross. From Arua to Madi-Okolo, you cannot cross. The information I can share is that the Ministry of Works and Transport said they cannot repair these roads until the rains are done, but people need to move. Emergencies need to be responded to. Would it be procedurally right for the Prime Minister to come up with a comprehensive measure to respond to all these challenges as far as the road sector in this country is concerned and we have it once and for all?

THE SPEAKER: I think the number of disasters in the country is really too great. Let us give the Prime Minister time to call all sector ministers, sit down, and agree on what should be done in the country, not even in one

specific area, because disasters are everywhere in the country.

MS NABBANJA: In line with how you have guided, Madam Speaker, in Cabinet on Monday, the President guided and said that we need to prioritise maintenance of our roads and bridges. We are doing exactly that. I will definitely bring the ministers here to come and inform you of our strategies because we already have a strategy in place.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. House adjourned to Tuesday at 2 o'clock.

(House rose at 6.24 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday 3 December 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)