



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION - SECOND MEETING

TUESDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2023



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 7TH SITTING - SECOND MEETING

Tuesday, 17 October 2023

Parliament met at 2.17 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker, Mr Thomas Tayebwa, in the Chair.)

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome you. It is free sitting, so, please, feel comfortable to sit wherever you can but respect the Front Bench on both sides. That is the only place with a limitation, so that ministers have where to sit. - Can I have order? I need silence in the House.

Honourable colleagues, after I adjourned the House on Thursday, I saw many commentators on different media houses giving their opinions. Some of you called me over the weekend while others came to me physically. Some were saying Parliament has not achieved much - I saw a senior commentator who asked: "What has Parliament achieved? What do we know?"

I would like to reassure you that you are doing a great job and you have achieved a lot. *(Applause)* When you look at what we have done - we had a bipartisan approach to the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) Bill. I remember I was the Government Chief Whip at the time. The Government team spent three nights working with a team from the Leader

of the Opposition who had worked on the minority report. We would leave Parliament at around 2.00 a.m. and we were able to process the issue of our oil.

Honourable members, you remember the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) Bill that we processed here. Ugandans are now accessing midterm funds and many people are celebrating that.

In addition, a private Member brought here the Markets Bill and we processed it. It is actually bringing order in the markets. At least, now the minister has a legal framework on which to handle issues of markets.

The Succession (Amendment) Bill has addressed issues, which the women in this country have been raising, and has brought order in terms of accessing estates of the deceased. There is also the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, the Anti-Homosexuality Bill and very many other laws. Therefore, I would like to reassure you, honourable colleagues, that you are doing a great job.

The thing I have learnt from our commentators is that if you do not perform roles that are political in nature, some people will feel you are not doing much for the country. I remember when the Attorney-General came here and Uganda was about to be blacklisted over money laundering and sponsorship of terrorism. In two weeks, you processed seven laws that protected businesses in our country. The business community would not have

done much without that. In fact, we would be blacklisted. Therefore, you are doing a great job.

Honourable members, this should remind you that people out there watch what we do. Even if the glass is 90 per cent full, they will look at it as half empty and not half full. Therefore, our conduct here is very critical.

Over the weekend, I engaged many of you with regard to the issues we had. I would like to thank the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline who has told me that they have already started on the process and within 14 days, they will have finished.

I would like to remind you, honourable members, that as a presiding officer, on such matters, I cannot do anything beyond what is provided for in the Rules of Procedure. I want that to go on record. I only stop with rules that give me authority.

I would like to also remind the public and honourable colleagues that we have solved very many issues outside here. The other day, Hon. Okupa and Hon. Nabakooba had to come to my rescue to reconcile Members. I had a Member who was furious against a minister. I called the minister and the Member and together, we handled the issue. In fact, most of these should not tantamount to character assassination. We are judged harshly. Therefore, as a House, I request you, honourable members, to protect and respect each other.

If you come to my constituency and say, "People of Ruhinda North, our political ideology does not meet with that of the Rt Hon. Tayebwa, your representative. He belongs to the wrong political side—" - you can call it wrong - "and we shall deploy a candidate against him." That is very okay.

Honourable colleagues, I urge us to limit ourselves to issues that do not border on character assassination of each other. In the end, we are honourable colleagues in the House and we will face the same voters who will torture us, come election time.

Honourable colleagues, I also told you that today, we will adopt the accountability committee reports. The chairpersons of the accountability committees reached out to me and I am glad we have reports that are ready. All reports that are ready will be given space on the Order Paper.

This week, we shall handle accountability committee reports to ensure that we finish this critical business of the House. Thereafter, the finance minister can go and take action on the recommendations of the Auditor-General and the House.

Honourable colleagues, I received a petition from students of Makerere University who hail from Rakai, under their association, regarding the treatment of Hon. Kinyamatama. I have also referred that to the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline, which will use it as part of the evidence. Otherwise, here, we will follow the rules the way they are provided for.

I am not going to handle matters of national importance; we shall push them to Thursday so that this very urgent business we have - On Thursday, I will give you two hours to handle those matters.

2.27

MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi): Mr Speaker, I would not like to debate your communication but when we say "urgent matters", they are really urgent. There may be issues that cannot wait. I beg that you allow the Members to raise the urgent matters first.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, these matters are not provided for in our rules. Instead, rule 26(4) states that every Thursday, time should be allotted for those issues. These are the rules that you made and you should have provided for them clearly. The time I have is limited and there is very urgent business to process. Let us go straight to the business. Moreover, we lost time last Thursday.

Today, I will not entertain reactions to my communication because they are under my communication. I would like us to go straight to the business. Next item.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE LAW REFORM (MISCELLANEOUS
AMENDMENTS) BILL, 2023

2.28

MR ASUMAN BASALIRWA (JEEMA, Bugiri Municipality, Bugiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. When I sought leave of this House to introduce the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill, 2023, I contacted the Office of the Clerk and I have information that the Bill has not yet been gazetted.

Therefore, it is my humble submission that the matter be deferred because there is no way the matter can proceed when I do not have a gazetted Bill to lay on the Table. I hope the process will be expedited.

I have also received rather strange communication from the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to the effect that there are consultations being made. Since it is on record and I have a copy, I will reach out to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Minister of Education and Sports and the Attorney-General to understand the issues being raised in the letter.

In the circumstances, Mr Speaker, I pray that the matter be deferred until I get the information.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Basalirwa. Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON
INCIDENTS INVOLVING SECURITY
OFFICIALS, THE NATIONAL UNITY
PLATFORM (NUP) PRESIDENT AND
SOME NUP MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
IN KAMPALA METROPOLITAN AND
KAYUNGA ON 5 AND 9 OCTOBER 2023

2.31

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Mr Speaker, this is a ministerial statement about incidents involving security officials, the National Unity Platform (NUP) President and some NUP Members of Parliament in the Kampala Metropolitan Police Area and Kayunga on 5 and 9 October 2023.

Introduction

Mr Speaker, you directed that a statement be made by the Government in response to the incidents of Thursday, 5 October 2023 in Entebbe and in Kampala, as well as on Independence Day, Monday, 9 October 2023 in Kampala Metropolitan Police Area and Kayunga District, involving NUP party leaders and some party supporters respectively.

Background

In the months of August and September 2023, we witnessed nationwide mobilisation tours, and opening of party offices by the NUP party president in the various parts of the country. These tours were punctuated with some incidents of public disorder, damage to property, fatal and serious traffic incidents, as was the case in Hoima on 11 September 2023, as well as inciting violence and uttering defamatory statements against the person of the President of the Republic of Uganda.

Our country is governed under the law that creates rights and obligations for all manner of people including the citizens as well as the law enforcement agencies. That is why, consequent to the stated infractions, the police sought a commitment from the NUP organisers of these activities to avoid the repetition of these breaches and to ensure orderly and regulated conduct going forward.

Article 212 of the Constitution of Uganda stipulates the functions of the Uganda Police Force. In a similar vein, Article 43 gives general limitations on the fundamental human rights and freedoms. In keeping with the above provisions of our cardinal law as well as the relevant provisions of the Police Act, the police took appropriate action to keep, preserve and maintain law and order in the country during the cited incidents as will be elaborated.

A recap of the incidents and attendant police action is as follows:

The return of Hon. Robert Kyagulanyi from abroad on 5 October 2023

By 30 September 2023, the NUP party president, Hon. Ssentamu Robert Kyagulanyi *alias* Bobi Wine, through social media platforms, announced his return from his political mobilisation tour in Canada and South Africa back to Uganda. His supporters mobilised people countrywide to turn up in big numbers and go to Entebbe International Airport to welcome him in a march dubbed “The one million march” with the proclaimed intention to march to State House, Entebbe.

The “one million march” was intended to incite civil disobedience. In order to avert the lawlessness that would result from this, the police, together with other security forces, deployed proactively to prevent the mobilisation of the illegal procession and anticipated associated mischief. Some of the planners and organisers were arrested in areas of Kampala Metropolitan Police Area, arraigned in the courts of law, and later released on bond.

As mentioned earlier, Government has the duty, through the Uganda Police, to keep law and order and to ensure the safety of all persons within its borders, not least Very Important People (VIPs) like Hon. Kyagulanyi Ssentamu.

The day of his return from abroad, Thursday, 5 October 2023 started on a calm note and also ended on a calm note, thanks to the precautionary measures taken by the police to escort him to the safety of his home.

This was not and most likely will not be the last time that Hon. Kyagulanyi is travelling in and out of the country; he has travelled numerous times before. He possesses a valid Ugandan passport, which is the property of the Government. His movements are, therefore, not inhibited in any way. He can go and return peacefully as he wishes.

The President of this country, who is the first citizen, Head of State and Commander-in-Chief goes out of the country and returns without causing stampede and processions to the detriment of other citizens. That is how it should be. The same applies to other dignitaries of very high standing in society as well as other Ugandans who also go out of the country and return peacefully and quietly without causing undue inconvenience to others.

Therefore, there is nothing exceptionally exciting about the movement of Hon. Kyagulanyi in and out of the country. In any case, whether official or private, anybody’s travel should not be a matter of public concern, unless, of course, it is done in ways that are likely to result in breaches to the law as well as threats to public order and safety.

The airport is a very delicate and busy place, so are the roads and streets, which are shared by other users. Therefore, when security received information, most of it fortunately published on social media and, therefore, in the public domain, with accompanying calls for processions and many insurrectionist insinuations, this could not be taken lightly. Preventative measures had to be taken; this country has a Government and is governed by and according to the law and therefore, anarchy cannot be permitted.

Hon. Kyagulanyi Ssentamu was, therefore, escorted to his home and within the confines of his home, he has the unrestricted right to do anything that he pleases, which is lawful, including hosting his friends and supporters who may wish to visit him or welcome him back home. Nobody is above the law, whatever our social standing.

On 9 October 2023, NUP leaders and supporters arranged to have a parallel Independence Day celebration in Kampala at Kamwokya. They intended, thereafter, to make a disruptive illegal procession from there in order to depict the national celebrations in Kitgum as a sham. They also intended to announce their next course of action during this function. Part of the mobilisation was under the guise of holding prayers for their alleged fallen comrades and those in prison.

As a result of their proclaimed aims and anticipated consequences, security intervened and disrupted their intended illegal activities. Consequently, 14 of their leaders were arrested, detained at Kira Road Police station, charged and later released on police bond the same day.

There is a prescribed way of doing everything appropriately in all civilised societies. There are also designated places for particular activities, including, by analogy, the activities of this honourable House and holding prayers. Where they are to be conducted in places that are not ordinarily where they are usually conducted, there is an official process of designating such other chosen places for these functions, as and when this is desirable or required.

The Kayunga incident of 9 October 2023, involving the area MP and others, was dubbed, “Black Independence” - *Ennaku Y'enfuufu* celebration that was organised by Hon. Charles Tebandeke, Member of Parliament for Bbaale County in Kayunga District. He and others mobilised to hold demonstrations purportedly over the delayed tarmacking of the Kayunga-Bbaale-Galiraya Road on Independence Day, 9 October 2023.

He had written to the Inspector General of Police notifying him about the intended activity and was advised by police to raise the said grievances in Parliament, where he is a representative of his people. The timing of this planned activity was also intended to tarnish the National Independence Day celebrations. The honourable MP and some of his supporters, however, chose to defiantly continue with their intended unlawful activities.

Some of the groups that had been mobilised started burning tyres in the areas of Gayaza trading centre and Bbaale County in Kayunga district, which vindicated the advice given to him by the police to call off the planned activities, having anticipated riotous intentions by the organisers, as it eventually happened before they were dispersed by law enforcement and calm was restored.

Two individuals were arrested and charged with inciting violence vide Bbaale SD REF: 16/10/2023, and these were: Mr Ronald Kawuzi, male adult aged 23, resident of Gayaza village and Mr Moses Dwaya, male adult aged 29 of Gayaza village in Bbaale Subcounty. Their case file is with the Resident State Attorney for perusal and sanctioning.

From the foregoing, the incidents and the response of law enforcement arose from the intent and activities to cause public disorder and breach of peace in the stated places. The Police will and should fulfil their mandate and utilise their authority and powers given by the law to keep law and order and to maintain public order and peace for the common good of all.

The repeal of Section 32 of the Police Act (CAP 303) and the Public Order Management Act did not remove the mandate of the police to keep law and order, as provided for under Article 212 of the Constitution, as well as the relevant provisions of the Police Act. Where there is a breach or the police detects a likelihood of breach of the law or threat to public order and safety, action should and will be taken.

It is also reasonable, in some instances, to act pre-emptively where a breach is imminent, relying on available and credible intelligence, rather than waiting to react, which may be very disruptive and expensive. The law enforcement agencies, depending on the circumstances of different scenarios, will always strive to ensure that law and order, as well as public peace and safety, are safeguarded.

In conclusion, the Government shall, at all times, promote human rights and the rule of

law and enable all Ugandans to freely enjoy their rights without intimidation from any one. All political and non-political actors are hereby called upon to be law abiding in order to facilitate peaceful processes, and the enjoyment of their respective rights and freedoms.

I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Leader of the Opposition -

2.43

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga): Most obliged, Rt Hon. Speaker. I should, from the onset, say that I miss the person and character of the signatory to this statement, Gen. Kahinda Otafiire. I would have loved to look at his demeanour, reading this statement bearing his signature.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not his signature.

MR MPUUGA: This is not in any way to berate the character of Gen. Muhoozi, a person I immensely respect. However, I refer to Gen. Otafiire tongue in cheek because as a person who has been at this for quite a while, he has the best understanding and probably, the best appreciation of the depth and magnitude – (*Interruption*)

MS AMERO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Is the Leader of the Opposition in order to begin asking for Gen. Otafiire to come and make a report as though the minister who presented it on the Floor of this House is incompetent?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, the Leader of the Opposition had not yet concluded that point for me to make a fair judgement. Honourable Leader of the Opposition, you have five minutes and I request that we focus on the content of the statement.

MR MPUUGA: I thank you for the five minutes. If I have, in history and record, five minutes to sort out the mess that this country is in, I would gladly use the five minutes and take leave of this space.

I made a request to your honourable Office that you permit the playing of a short video to this House and essentially, once that video is played, I will speak for less than three minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Leader of the Opposition, you asked for around 20 minutes for the videos and yet the rules limit me – Rule 52(2) of the Rules of Procedure state that the debate should not exceed one hour.

Therefore, if we could use 10 minutes for the videos, it would be a win-win situation. I allow the video – there are two videos – Clerk, play it for 10 minutes, maximum. That is what I have offered. Let us hear from Hon. Isaac as our ICT Department prepares to play the video.

MR OTIMGIW: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am not against the video being played but I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition submitted the certificate of authenticity of the video we are about to view here because technology has advanced. We need to know the authenticity of some of these videos before they are played in the House. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I do not know what is exciting you because I can see that you are excited. (*Laughter*) I am trying to – honourable colleagues, the other day, we allowed a video of Hon. Kyinyamatama to be played without a certificate or anything. So, for us to be fair, as a House, once we allow something, then let us maintain it. We have a precedent, so, let us maintain it.

Honourable colleagues, if you may know, we are already in the one hour – I marked the time. So, ICT Department, play the video.

MR ALIONI: Thank You, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. All the Members in this august House have issues related to the request of the Leader of the Opposition to have this video played.

On the matter of Hon. Kyinyamatama and Hon. Zaake, the two are Members of this House, but the matter at hand is between a Member in this House and a non-Member.

Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, let the Member finish speaking. Hon. Alioni, what is your procedural matter?

MR ALIONI: Is it procedurally right to play a video concerning conflict between a non-member and a Member in this House?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the Member has raised the matter; so, allow the Speaker to rule. Hon. Alioni, you have raised the matter – allow it to be ruled upon. - I want order.

Honourable colleagues, this is a House where all of us can accommodate each other in terms of our ideas and issues. If a video concerns a national matter – this is not a conflict – and by the way, why should we behave as if there is anything to hide? There is nothing for us to hide; it is in the open - Please, let us play the video.

Please, ICT Department, play the video.

Attorney-General, I have not allowed you to speak. I just called you here for consultation. Thank you.

Honourable colleagues, I have just spoken to the Clerk – Please, listen. - The Clerk is sorting out a technical challenge. Leader of the Opposition, you can make your submission, as the Clerk sorts out the technical challenge.

MR ZAAKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker - *(Interruptions)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us listen to the honourable member.

MR ZAAKE: Mr Speaker, I beg for your protection -*(Interjections)*- you see, that is what happened last week and the House was adjourned prematurely.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, every Member should be listened to in silence.

MR ZAAKE: Mr Speaker, I beg for your protection from these rowdy Members. My procedural matter -*(Interjections)*- Mr Speaker, I beg for your protection because the Members are not listening –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Zaake, first take your seat. Honourable colleagues, I do not know when words started hurting that much. - I want to give guidance. Honourable colleagues, listen. As a presiding officer, the action I can take is only limited by the rules. I cannot do much even if you demand me to do anything outside the rules; I use the rules that you gave me.

For the Members who have an issue with Hon. Zaake, I referred the matter to the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline and that is where my powers stop. - Listen, Hon. Zaake is still a Member of Parliament, according to our rules. So, that is why I request you, honourable colleagues, that we do not allow the public to judge us. Let us listen to him so that he can make his point and we go on.

Hon. Kimosho, do you want to say something?

2.57

MR DAN KIMOSHO (NRM, Kazo County, Kazo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appeal to all of us and you, Mr Speaker, that if it requires you to be harsh, but maintain the sanity and dignity of all of us – it is very important.

We get a lot of public backlash. We cannot keep in this hullabaloo. I beg of you, if it requires suspending most of us, please, do. The dignity of Parliament must be maintained.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable member. Of course, I take long time to be pushed into such a line; I usually want us to build consensus. However, what I know is that the best way is to respond to someone. If a Member has stood up on a point of procedure, I must listen and give him an opportunity. That is what the rules you made require me to do; these are your rules, I am not applying my own rules.

Therefore, honourable colleagues, I request that we have sanity. And if you are not satisfied, I will request you not to disorganise the House that I am chairing. Otherwise, I am being pushed into listing names and using my authority as a presiding officer. Today, I want to assure you that I am not going to adjourn the House prematurely because of your behaviour. I will use my powers under the Rules of Procedure and law; I will not adjourn the House prematurely. I, therefore, expect each one of us to behave. Hon. Zaake, raise your procedural matter.

MR ZAAKE: Mr Speaker, I thank you, for your indulgence. My procedural matter is one: Yesterday, when a section of the Members requested for a video to be played –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On Thursday.

MR ZAAKE: On Thursday. Thank you, for the correction. It played instantly, without any kind of help, yet the Member rose on a procedural matter that day. Therefore, is it procedurally right, today, to delay our video as a section of –(Interjections)– yes, it has been delayed. Is it procedurally right to delay the video that is in question, right now?

Last time it played instantly. Therefore, for purposes of fairness, just like you have requested that the video should be played, is it procedurally right to delay that video? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, the power of the Speaker only and only stops on granting. I am not a machine operator.

Also, to remind you, if I am to get out of this seat and sit on that computer, I must suspend the House.

Therefore, can we say the Speaker suspends the House and operates a machine? I cannot. It is a technical glitch, which they are sorting, and I have requested the Leader of the Opposition to make a presentation and maybe, by the time he finishes, they will have sorted it out.

Leader of the Opposition, please – and I am very sure that the words of the Leader of the Opposition are very critical in terms of responding to the statement. Procedure, Hon. Sseggon -

MR LUBEGA-SSEGGONA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I very much respect your ruling. I am only seeking your guidance because I come from a background where somebody can only make a submission after submitting evidence.

My understanding of the request by the Leader of the Opposition is to have the video played as evidence, and then he makes a submission, which is a summary, referring to the video played and the content therein.

May I seek your guidance and indulgence that you give the necessary time to matters of governance in this country? I can perfectly understand how hard it is for you to sit in that chair, especially when you are being pressed against time.

I only invite you to give utmost caution, especially when we are dealing with matters that relate –(Interjections)– that is my procedural request, and Mr Speaker, I want to assure you that I have no problem even when I receive disruption from a person as respectable as my honourable brother.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Sseggon, I understand where you are coming from, but like I told you much earlier, I am limited by Rule 52(2), which says, “*A statement made by a minister may be debated provided that such a debate shall not exceed one hour.*”

Where the Leader of the Opposition feels that the debate is not enough – and the rules catered for the Leader of the Opposition in a special way – where he feels that the debate has not been enough, the Leader of the Opposition can bring any statement under rule 53, which will also have its day and he completes whatever he wants to complete.

For now, maybe he can guide me on how he would want to proceed, but my thinking is that he can submit and then we come later with the video. I am left with only 30 minutes on this item.

3.02

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga): Mr Speaker, I understand the limitation of time, but it took five years and over a million lives lost, to reclaim this country from the abyss.

This Parliament is a House of record. It is not a House of rumour-mongering and any other considerations. My request to you, to have the video played, is to enable this House to debate on record. Without the video, I am constrained to assist the House to debate appropriately.

With your indulgence, I kindly request that you allow my technical team – they can help the technical team of Parliament, to activate this video. We have the technical back stopping to play that video, Mr Speaker. Otherwise, right now, I am constrained.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Leader of the Opposition, I have a problem; the gadgets that come here are gadgets of Parliament, not of political groupings. They are not for the NRM and not for the Opposition. They are gadgets of Parliament, of which you and I are leaders. Therefore, I really do not want to question my Parliament staff, until I follow the right procedure of questioning them. I cannot judge them here.

I have even seen national functions having glitches. You ask yourself; is this technical officer also sabotaging the President? It has ever happened. Thank you.

For now, I am going on because the debate is not only with the Leader of the Opposition, but I had wanted the Leader of the Opposition to give the first response. For now, maybe I will open up to Members. Leader of the Opposition?

MR MPUUGA: Mr Speaker, we have to agree that we are leaders in this country and that we

are deliberate in what we want to do. I act and work meticulously, I have cross-checked in the technical room and the person who is supposed to run the video has run away from the room.

We are checking – we do not simply act out of the blue. The person in charge of running the video has disappeared. That speaks to deliberate sabotage and we cannot accept that, as Members from this side.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, please, let us restrain ourselves. Let me first consult the Leader of the Opposition for a minute. Hon. Zaake, please, take your seat.

I have just been informed by the Leader of the Opposition that the technical room where they play the videos is not even here; it is in the basement.

Honourable colleagues, I would like to make a request – listen, honourable members. First, we are in time for debate. Secondly, I have tried to be as accommodative as possible, but I have a limit.

MR BASALIRWA: Mr Speaker, I rise on a procedural issue, following the revelation by the Leader of the Opposition that a person supposed to play the video has disappeared. This is a very big issue.

Are we proceeding right, to allow such abdication of responsibility from a technical officer who is supposed to serve this Parliament, and proceed as if everything is normal? Shouldn't that officer be brought to book?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, my ruling on this is simple. I have received a complaint from the Leader of the Opposition that a staff member has not performed their duties. I hereby direct the Clerk to Parliament to investigate this and inform us, as the leadership, on the next action to be taken.

Most of you are lawyers; do you want me to judge and condemn someone and adjourn

the House over someone? I have received a complaint. If there is misconduct here in Parliament and members of staff break the rules, we have very clear procedures on handling them.

The good thing is that the Leader of the Opposition is part of the Parliamentary Commission. We are going to handle this matter administratively since this is an administrative officer. This is not a Member of Parliament whom we can handle here.

MR MPUUGA: Mr Speaker, it is unfortunate that we have been at this for quite some time. I can understand technical glitches and sabotage – I can distinguish and decipher them properly. This video was pre-tested in the system several times and authenticated. The bearer and duty officer even tried to play the video while we were here but you were communicating. The same person disappeared at the instant.

The matter is –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, please, conclude.

MR MPUUGA: Mr Speaker, I understand that Members of this House may want to downplay what we are doing here. I think they believe that this matter simply relates to the title of the report –(Interruption)

MR LUBEGA SSEGGONA: Mr Speaker, I am very constrained to raise the matter of procedure, especially when my leader is on the Floor. I am only persuaded by my conscience to ask this question.

My understanding, as a senior member of this House, is that when a gadget of this nature is brought or before it is brought here, as the Leader of the Opposition guided, it is brought to your attention and you authorise. The gadget that is missing is actually missing in your hands, as the Speaker of this House.

Mr Speaker, you know how much respect I give to institutions and I have a duty to protect the integrity of this institution. Is this not a

matter where you must summon all the forces at hand?

Before you proceed with this matter, find out where your gadget is, where your officer is and tell us the technical glitch –(Interjection)- Mr Speaker, I am okay with him because even in my constituency, I have people like the honourable member and I respect them. (Laughter)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I used my prerogative as the presiding officer to allow the video to be played because it is not provided for in the rules. I told you that we have to be fair to each other. We are now reducing the entire debate of a statement, which I was told is very critical, to playing a video.

Secondly, beside the Leader of the Opposition, I have Members on both sides who are going to submit. This is not a matter for the Opposition or NRM; it is a matter that affects all Members. Please, let us continue with the debate. If there is a Member who does not want to debate, I will not force you.

However, what I told you is very simple - please, I have already directed the Clerk to do his work. - I cannot do the work of the Clerk. Debate starts now. - Honourable colleagues, do not access the microphone without my permission.

MR MPUUGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Technology has evolved and it can allow plug and play. May we seek your indulgence and we plug and play the video if the officer of Parliament has played a disappearing act?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, as a presiding officer, issues that are administrative and technical are handled by the Clerk. I do not want to go beyond my limits. Leader of the Opposition, you are a leader here; the complaint made is on an administrative staff.

I have demanded that a political leader must be listened to before we judge them; so, my

request to you, as a leader in this House - [Hon. Zaake: "Point of procedure."]

Hon. Zaake, please, take your seat. My request to you is that we hold a debate. However, if you feel that we cannot have the debate, let me know.

MR MPUUGA: Mr Speaker, in my preamble, I said that once the video is played, I do not even need three minutes; the video, actually, is my debate and without it, I have nothing to submit on the subject matter.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, I am going to suspend the House for 10 minutes. However, when I come back, I will take some action, as the presiding officer of this House.

(The House was suspended at 3.20 p.m.)

(On resumption at 4.06 p.m., the Deputy Speaker presiding_)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I hope we have settled now. I might have given you a break to charge instead of cooling down. Anyway, honourable colleagues, I allowed this video to be played under Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure that spell out my general authority. I thought I was helping the House but in the end, I have created more problems. Otherwise, I was only trying to be as liberal as possible.

Therefore, I am assigning this matter concerning videos being played in the House to the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline to assess the admissibility of technical evidence of that nature, so we can incorporate it in our rules.

This means that my generosity on those issues has stopped today because I have noticed that people are now using it against me. I do not know where the LOP is - I talked to the LOP and we agreed that he can use his technical people. He can provide the video and we see how to proceed. Leader of the Opposition, have we made progress? Are they plugging in? Yes, Hon. Jonathan Odur.

MR ODUR: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for granting me the opportunity to raise this matter of privilege. I have been in this Parliament in the past - during the short break, I saw people who are not Members of Parliament carrying firearms.

This brings to my memory what happened during the age limit Bill debate. I know there were concerns but would you, Mr Speaker, guide that whoever is carrying a pistol or any gun leaves the lobbies and retreats so that Members can freely exercise their rights? I met a number of them and perhaps, they are in here too. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, Sergeant-At-Arms, if there is any - because I have not said that I have failed to manage the House and so, I need support from the security operatives. Please, Sergeant-at-Arms, ensure - honourable colleagues, let us not judge people - Hon. Jonathan Odur has raised the point properly in a civil way. So, Sergeant-At-Arms, ensure that there is no security beyond our usual security here. Thank you.

MR OTINGIW: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the way you have handled and mitigated the situation. I know that you have clearly allowed the Leader of the Opposition to use his technical team to play the video. However, last week, on Thursday, we had the same incident in the House. Mr Speaker, you even suspended the House and upon resumption, you accepted the House to vote on whether the video could be played or not.

Mr Speaker, we find ourselves in the same dilemma today. Therefore, wouldn't it be procedurally right that you put the question so that the House can decide whether that video should be played or not? I am saying this because it is about precedence and that is the point they are saying. They are saying that last Thursday, you accepted the video to be played yet it was played after a vote. So, can we do the same? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: As long as the matter is here - I have not yet ruled; allow me

to rule. Hon. Joyce, do not mind. When you are in my seat, that is what you go through. You try to be as accommodative as possible.

On Thursday, we voted to allow the video to be played. I have remembered that I put the question - listen to me, honourable colleagues. If I set a precedence, then we must follow that precedent to the letter. *(Applause)*

4.12

MR MUHAMMAD MUWANGA-KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala): Mr Speaker, the circumstances of Thursday speak for themselves. On Thursday, you made a ruling that referred the matter to the committee. However, a rebellion ensued from women Members of Parliament, which forced you to change your decision. Now, there was a decision and a ruling made by you. That is different.

This matter of whether the video should be played or not is not controversial like the one of last Thursday. That matter was controversial and your ruling was contested. If you are to stick to your levels of consistency, then stick to the position you took earlier. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, I have a problem because even the senior Members who know that once a procedural matter is raised, I have to first make a ruling before they are allowed to speak, are rising.

Anyway, honourable colleagues, I have observed sincerity on both sides – because we set a precedent and the precedent is that we subjected - when I raised it, this side refused. Then, I said that for fairness purposes, this would not be my decision alone and so, I put the question, and that is what we did.

Honourable colleagues, first of all, you will recall that even those rules of challenging the decision of the Speaker were raised but I was very clear that we had to be fair. Honourable colleagues, you need to recall that this is a matter where I have to use my authority.

I wanted to get all your opinions, but now, without going any further, I put the question to the House to vote whether the video should be played. *(Members rose_)* Members, let us be orderly.

(Question put and consensus not attained.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, can I have clear lights? *(Members rose_)* When they put the question – which Member has a gun? Honourable members, there is a way we work here. - Hon. Zaake and Hon. Nambooze, please, take your seats. What would be so bad about a vote? Why would you fear a vote? I am here chairing the House; I am not outside. *(Members rose_)*

I put the question, again, that the video be played. You are voting by show of hands. - Clerk, please, count and tally.

(Question put and negatived.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I invoke my powers, under Rule 89(4) of the Rules of Procedure, to suspend the following Members for three days.

1. Hon. Betty Nambooze;
2. Hon. Francis Zaake;
3. Hon. Frank Kabuye;
4. Hon. Joyce Bagala; and
5. Hon. Derrick Nyeko.

Those are the Members. I, therefore, adjourn the House until tomorrow at 2 o'clock.

(The House rose at 4.18 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 18 October 2023 at 2.00 p.m.)