



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FOURTH SESSION - FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 29 AUGUST 2024



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 14TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Thursday, 29 August 2024

*Parliament met at 9.02 a.m. at Kaunda
Grounds, Gulu City.*

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome you to this morning sitting. In a special way, I would like to commend all of you who were able to grace this sitting yesterday. It is a milestone for us. The impressive level of participation was, indeed, encouraging. I urge you to maintain the level of commitment to the execution of our mandate, as legislators.

Following the guidance yesterday, I hope the subregional groups met and deliberated upon the agreed critical road and transport infrastructure that had not been captured in the committee. If they did, we would make that an addendum and approve the report and, then, give the ministry a period to respond. As per rule 220, we need an action taken.

I was very impressed this morning when the minister was telling me that, as of now, he even has trucks which have gone on the roads and the weeds are being removed from the water. I would like to thank you. We will make sure that the area Members of Parliament of those

regions check and get back to us because we need action taken on what we have resolved.

Similarly, I hope the Sectoral Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries embraces the guidance that the House extended to it and the scope of its oversight undertaking so that we have a comprehensive report. We picked some ideas from what we talked about here – from the guidance that we gave – and we will transform those ideas into our communication to the President.

As northern Uganda, we have a lot of land. We will not go into a four-acre model. All we need is mechanisation, irrigation, agricultural enterprise selection and seeds. Much as we are saying that we want people to plant coffee in Gulu here, we need seedlings and dairy.

I was shown a milk coolant, which has been here for a long time without being used. We need value addition in agriculture. We have market for the products, but how does what we produce reach Sudan? We need the roads to be worked on for our goods to reach their destination.

Honourable members, yesterday, we spent a significant amount of time debating the report on physical infrastructure. This was expected to last a short time, but it became a catalyst to all that is going to be presented. On today's Order Paper, we still have a fairly significant volume of pending business, which we should handle as fast as possible.

I would, therefore, urge that, in the interest of time, greater efficiency and effectiveness, the committee chairpersons give us summaries of their reports. Now, you know what we need. The President will be arriving in the next one hour. We will give him a report of what we think should be done and what we have seen must be done in the greater North.

After here yesterday, we had meetings. We went on radio – and the honest feedback you can always get is from the public. The public was calling and saying: “I wish you could do A, B, C and D.” I think that is the best thing for us to do.

We shall be receiving the President in the next one hour or so. When he arrives, we will give our communication to him. You will allow me to amend the Order Paper to bring the motion that Hon. Kimosho was talking about yesterday. That motion is basically on the issue of security in this area.

I would like to, once more, thank you for keeping time and coming over. Have nice deliberations. *(Applause)*

MOTION SEEKING LEAVE OF
PARLIAMENT TO INTRODUCE THE
PRIVATE MEMBERS’ BILLS:

(I) THE ADMINISTRATION OF
PARLIAMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL,
2024

9.12

MR RICHARD LUMU (DP, Mityana County South, Mityana): I would like to thank you very much –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I was making some consultations. Article 94(4) (c) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995, and Rule 121 of the Rules of Procedure grant Members a right to move a Private member’s Bill.

It is that right that two Members seek to exercise today, that is, Hon. Lumu and Fr Charles Onen. Therefore, pursuant to Rule 122 (1) of the

Rules of Procedure, I now invite Hon. Lumu to move a motion seeking leave to introduce his Bill. He is basically seeking leave; it is not passing the Bill.

MR LUMU: I would like to thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. However, before I move my motion, I bring special greetings from the people of Mityana to the people of the greater north.

Madam Speaker, the constituency I am representing today was once represented by a person from northern Uganda called Ochieng. That is why there is Ochieng Zone in Nansana. Therefore, we have very great attachment to the people of northern Uganda in Mityana District.

My motion is seeking leave of the House to introduce a Private Member’s Bill entitled, “The Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Bill,” moved under rules 56, 121, and 122 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

“WHEREAS Article 79 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 empowers Parliament to make laws on any matter of the peace, order, development and good governance of Uganda;

AND WHEREAS Article 94(4)(b) of the Constitution and Rules 121 and 122 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament permits a Member of Parliament to move a Private Member’s Bill;

AWARE that Article 82A of the Constitution and Section 7 of the Administration of Parliament Act Cap. 272 provide for a Leader of the Opposition in Parliament under multi-party organisations;

NOTING that Section 8 of the Administration of Parliament Act Cap. 272 provides for the election of the Leader of the Opposition by the party in Opposition to the Government having the greatest numerical strength in Parliament;

FURTHER NOTING that Section 15 of the Administration of Parliament Act Cap. 272 provides for the appointment of the Chief

Opposition Whip by the party in Opposition to the Government having the greatest numeric strength in Parliament;

CONCERNED that the manner of election of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament excludes other Opposition political parties represented in Parliament, yet the Leader of the Opposition superintends over all Members of the Opposition in Parliament and appoints shadow cabinet ministers from Members of the Opposition in Parliament;

FURTHER CONCERNED that the current legal framework does not permit the participation of Members of the Opposition in Parliament in their governance through the election of their leader, the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament or the Chief Opposition Whip and as a result, it is important for Members of the Opposition in Parliament to hold the Leader of the Opposition or the Chief Whip accountable;

COGNISANT of the need to entrench democratic principles in electing a Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Chief Opposition Whip as representative of all Members of Opposition in Parliament;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that Parliament grants me leave to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled, "The Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Bill"—a draft, which is attached hereto on my motion. So, I pray.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Do you want to justify your motion?

MR LUMU: Yes, Madam Speaker. Thank you very much. An election is the epitome of democracy. Even the Pope – Madam Speaker welcome from the Holy Sea. I am a Catholic – there is an election of the Pope – the highest and most respected leader in the world. If there is an election there, there must be an election here.

In the Opposition, when we were elected, we came here. By that time, you were not the Speaker. We all selected you, Madam Speaker,

and that is the very reason you are sitting in that seat. We also elect the President. Every five years, there is an election in Uganda. Therefore, there is no reason when we come to Parliament, as Members of the Opposition, we do not elect our leader who is the Leader of the Opposition.

I would like to pray before you, Members of Parliament, that it is important that the pillar of democracy, which is elections, should be done by us, the Opposition who are actually about to take power.

I thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The justification is as clear as a writing on the wall. We need a clear election in the Opposition. Other than that –

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order.

MR OKIN: Madam Speaker, I feel very sad to put my very good friend, Hon. Lumu, to order. When you look at the practice and the framers and those who enacted the Administration of Parliament Act as it stands now, there are issues embedded as to why the current arrangement in Parliament is working appropriately.

When you look at the entire structure of Parliament, we have not had a situation in Uganda where the ruling Government elects their party chief whip and where we have the Prime Minister or the ministers being elected.

This motion he is trying to present to us, Members of Parliament, is actually very dangerous. Therefore, is the mover of the motion in order to even seek leave to do the obvious, which is actually the best practice done in Uganda, in East Africa and the rest of the world – to amend the Parliamentary Act?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the section of the Administration of Parliament Act that he is quoting is not entrenched. The honourable member is just seeking leave. The best we can do – if we are not in agreement with what the honourable member is saying – is to follow this to the committee and fail it at committee level or fail it in the House when it

comes for the second reading. Otherwise, we do not have the mandate to deny a Member to seek leave. Can we hear from the Attorney-General?

9.21

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Article 82A of the Constitution provides for the office of the Leader of the Opposition.

Clause 82A(1) provides, “*Under the multi organisations or form of democracy, there shall be, in Parliament, a Leader of the Opposition*”.

Clause 2 says, “*Parliament shall, by law, prescribe the following in respect to the Leader of the Opposition.*”

a. How he or she is chosen.”

I believe Hon. Lumu’s motion is on the basis of that. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much.

MR LUMU: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I do not know what would be the problem if there was an election in the Opposition. There is no problem at all, and my brother would not be scared, at this time. Defects in the existing legislation are what I want to talk about.

Madam Speaker, in July 2005, Uganda transitioned from the Movement political system to a multi-party political system, through a national referendum. The adoption of the multi-party system of governance saw the amendment of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda to create the Office of the Opposition in the Parliament. Subsequently, in 2006, the amendment of the Administration of Parliament Act, Cap. 272, which provided for the Office of the Leader of the Opposition, was enacted.

Section 8 of the Administration of Parliament Act, Cap. 272, provides for the election of the Leader of the Opposition, by the party in

Opposition to the Government, having the greatest numerical strength in Parliament.

The rules also say that other parties should be consulted. Madam Speaker, the Democratic Party (DP) has never been consulted on that, whenever there is a new Leader of the Opposition.

Section 15 of the Administration of Parliament Act, Cap. 272, provides for the appointment of the chief whip by the party in Opposition to the Government, having the greatest numerical strength in Parliament. This is another leader, Madam Speaker, who is very important on the Opposition side, who is also not elected.

My argument and prayer is that all those must be elected. I do not want to continue, I want to stop there, but I pray that this leave is granted. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Seconder?

9.25

MR MICHAEL KAKEMBO (NUP, Entebbe Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you, Madam Speaker. For the record, I am *Ssalongo* Michael Kakembo Mbwa-Tekamwa. I represent the people of Entebbe –

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Onekalit. Procedure.

MR ONEKALIT: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. This is a special regional sitting, and the first of its kind in the history of Uganda. The regional sitting began from the Northern region. As such, I request that it remains a special sitting for the Northern region.

Madam Speaker, I vividly see personal fights being embedded in the spirit which is well-deserving, a well-arranged sitting, and very peaceful. I would love us to proceed in that same spirit of a special sitting.

This motion can be raised when we are back at Parliament, not at a regional level. Is it procedurally right for us to proceed in this

manner, to bring personal vendettas in a special regional sitting? I submit.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ogwang –

MR OGWANG: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

While I appreciate the concern raised by my colleague, Madam Speaker, is it in order for a Member to initiate and to begin to think that the regional sitting is not a sitting of Parliament? Is he in order to deny Members participation in the deliberations which are prescribed in line with the Order Paper of the day?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, much as we are sitting in Gulu, this is a normal sitting. As I said, let us not act in anticipation. There is no fight. The law is not made for one person. Today, I am the Leader of the Opposition, tomorrow another person will be a leader. I do not see any fight in this, and you may reject it when it comes at the second reading. We should not deny a Member his right which is enshrined in the Constitution.

Yes, a brief one.

MR KAKEMBO: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Sarah Opendi, please sit. Let us first hear from the seconder.

MR KAKEMBO: Madam Speaker, you have guided well, and I thank you.

Before I give my small remarks, allow me to convey greetings from the people of Entebbe. One of –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, we need to move fast, so that we adopt the report on infrastructure.

MR KAKEMBO: Thank you, Madam Speaker. You have just told us that one of my voters and a resident of Entebbe, is joining us in an hour. Entebbe is a cosmopolitan area, with a number of people from the greater north.

I bring greetings from them, and I am here to represent the people of Entebbe who elected me.

I do not have any personal vendetta as far as this motion is concerned. I am convinced beyond reasonable doubt, Madam Speaker, that this move will unite us as the Opposition, and respect for each other. Let us vote for our leaders. What is wrong with that?

I stand to second this motion, Madam Speaker, in good faith. It will help us and build us more, because unity of the Opposition means the strength of the Opposition. What does respect for each other mean? I must participate in electing my leader as the Opposition. We have seen it many times in Parliament, where the Leader of the Opposition thinks that the entire Opposition belongs to his party.

It used to be the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), and the entire Opposition saw itself as FDC, yet it was not. This was because we did not participate in electing the Leader of the Opposition. Now, we see the National Unity Platform. Tomorrow, it will be another party –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Kakembo, we did not behave like that. I was in FDC.

MR KAKEMBO: Yes, I thank you that you did not, but I get so scared when I see the Opposition in quotes, as one party. I would like to bring each and everyone on board through this, come and vote for your leader. He will respect you, you will respect him and we shall not have any fight. He will unite us, and that will make us stronger in the Parliament of Uganda. I beg you to move.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, I put the question that Hon. Lumu is granted leave to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled, "The Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2024."

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted.

THE SPEAKER: Pursuant to Rules 121, 122, 123, 124 of the Rules of the Procedure, the Clerk is hereby instructed to accord the Member the requisite support, to ensure that the Bill is tabled for the first reading. Next item.

(II) MOTION SEEKING LEAVE OF PARLIAMENT TO INTRODUCE A PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL, "THE NATIONAL TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE BILL, 2024".

THE SPEAKER: Fr Onen, the National Transitional Justice Bill-

This is one of the Bills that came as a petition from the people of northern region. I am aware that the Government also has the same Bill. Therefore, Fr Onen can be granted permission and he works with the Government to process the Bill.

9.33

REV. FR CHARLES ONEN (Independent, Laroo-Pece Division, Gulu City): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for granting me this opportunity to move a private Member's Bill entitled, "The National Transitional Justice Bill, 2024", moved under Articles 76 and 94 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, and Rule 120 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The motion reads:

"WHEREAS Article 76 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda empowers Parliament to make laws on any matter for the peace, order, development, and good governance of Uganda;

AND WHEREAS Article 94(4)(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and Rule 121(1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament permit a Member of Parliament to introduce a private Member's Bill;

AND WHEREAS objective 3 of the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, enjoins all organs of state and people of Uganda to work towards the promotion of

national unity, peace and stability, and the state to establish and nurture institutions and procedures for the resolution of conflicts fairly and peacefully;

AWARE that since gaining Independence in 1962, Uganda has experienced cycles of violence, political instability, and gross human rights violations, especially during the brutal regimes of Idi Amin and Milton Obote, and during the protracted LRA insurgency in northern Uganda, among other conflicts;

FURTHER AWARE that the different episodes of political instability have left deep scars on the nation's fabric; arising from the severe violence that has claimed countless lives in the form of extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, loss of property and torture, perpetuating a legacy of fear, mistrust, and impunity;

RECOGNISING Uganda's history of political instability, conflict, and human rights violations, including episodes of violence, ethnic strife, and authoritarian governance. Recognising that the National Resistance Movement government has made a tremendous effort towards resolution of conflict and maintenance of peace and security within the country through attempts such as the Juba Peace Talks, the establishment of the International Crimes Division of the High Court, and the development of the transitional justice policy of 2019;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that the efforts of the Government to foster peaceful reconciliation in the country have been immense.

However, there is still a need to address the historical wrongs through measures that will embrace accountability, truth, reconciliation, reparation, institutional and legal reforms;

ACKNOWLEDGING the need to heal the wounds of the past and establish accountability for past injustices, and build a foundation for lasting peace, justice and reconciliation. Affirming Uganda's commitment to international human rights standards and the rule of law as enshrined in the Constitution

of the Republic of Uganda and international agreements to which Uganda is a party;

CONVINCED that there is need to enact a transitional justice law, to operationalise the National Transitional Justice Policy, and to address all facets of transitional justice and ensure accountability, truth-telling, reparations and reconciliation;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by Parliament that this House grants me leave to introduce a private Member's Bill to provide for transitional justice and a draft of which is attached here, and I will lay it on the Table. Do order the publication of the said Bill in preparation for its first reading."

I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Who is the seconder? It is seconded by the Minister of Northern Region, Hon. Acan, Prime Minister, Ibanda, Hon. Nakut, Hon. Gabriel, Hon. Lagen, Hon. Etubo, Member for Bunyoro affairs, member for labour, Hon. Anyakun, Dr Kaduchu, Hon. Ecweru, Hon. Ogwang, the problem is that you are all far away, I have seen Hon. Jane there, Hon. Muwuma, Hon. Achia, that is why it is good to sit in our House because where you sit is not far. I have seen Hon. Baka, Hon. Okot, Hon. P.P Ojara, Hon. Emmanuel and member for Nwoya. I have seen Hon. Alyek, Hon. Tom Bright, Hon. Okiror, Hon. Basil and Dr Bhoka. Can you justify your Bill?

REV. FR ONEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Enactment of a National Transitional Justice Law represents a significant opportunity for Uganda to have a holistic approach to confront its past and build a future grounded in justice, peace and reconciliation.

I, therefore, ask you and all the Members of Parliament and ministers, that we use our esteemed offices to advance this critical legislation. This law was badly needed yesterday, but better late than never.

Since Independence, as I stated in the motion, since 1962, our country has experienced

cycles of violence, political instability and gross human rights violations, especially as mentioned during the regimes of Idi Amin and Milton Obote, and worst of it all, during the protracted LRA insurgency in northern Uganda, among other conflicts.

The different episodes of political instability have left deep scars and trauma on the nation. Most of those who lost their lives have never been heard and justice has never been given to them.

Madam Speaker, a couple of weeks ago, the ICC convicted an LRA rebel commander, Dominic Ongwen. The victims of Dominic Ongwen are going to be compensated by the ICC. A few days ago in Gulu, another LRA commander, Kwoyelo, was convicted by a Ugandan court. However, these victims are not going to be compensated, this is a big contradiction.

We need this law so that victims of violence in the future may have an opportunity to be compensated, listened to, and this cycle of violence ends in this country. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much, Hon. Fr Onen. Please lay. Attorney-General –

9.42

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you, my senior colleague, Fr Charles Onen. The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs together with the Ministry of Internal Affairs have worked on the National Transitional Justice Bill.

We have prepared the policy, which we presented to the Cabinet, and the principles of the Bill. When the principles were presented to the Cabinet, there were a few things we agreed to correct and we returned them to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. I have just been in touch with the minister and I am meant to understand that they will be ready in three weeks' time, then they will be taken back to the Cabinet for approval. We shall then come back to Parliament.

This means that ideally, the Bill should be in Parliament in the next two to three months. Therefore, the ideal thing to do without necessarily objecting to Fr Onen's proposal because it may be carrying very good issues, he could wait, once we go to the committee, we can consider his proposals and embed them with those of the Executive and have one good law. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Avur –

MS PACUTO: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to thank Fr Charles Onen. Madam Speaker, if you so wish, you could allow Fr Onen to further explain the gap in the current legal framework as far as transitional justice is. I am failing to comprehend and I think many other people could be falling suit where there is a gap; why is he calling for a law? Can't the current law suffice?

I beg that Fr Onen explains to us what is lacking in the current legal framework. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Avur, even the Cabinet wants, meaning that it is something that is wanted by both the Cabinet and Fr Onen. So, there would not be a need. The best we can do is to make sure that we attend the committee and understand what it is. Hon. Remigio –

9.45

MR REMIGIO ACHIA (NRM, Pian County, Nabilatuk): Thank you, Madam Speaker. This Transitional Justice Bill is actually very critical. Our President has been talking about why we ignore our traditional justice systems. Why do we ignore those traditional justice systems that work like *mato oput*? This Bill will help us to bring those cultures that are positive and are in consonant with the Constitution, so that the burden of backlog in the courts of Uganda is resolved.

The issue of bargaining and the visibility of the victims as it is always in our traditional justice systems, that the victim participates in the resolution of conflict because our African tradition is that when there is a conflict, you

must make good for that conflict. You must restore justice because you are going to stay with your neighbour.

The foundation of this Bill is on restorative justice. In the case of Karamoja, this Bill is long overdue because we are disposing thousands of cases in the villages without even the need of the courts. That is why some of the courts in Moroto are redundant. I need this Bill, the people of Uganda need this Bill, and the people of Karamojong need this Bill. I support it.

THE SPEAKER: Attorney-General, we could allow the private Member to bring his Bill and you take it over when yours is ready; just like we did with the Sports Bill. The private Member introduced and when the Government was ready, it took over but they worked together on the Bill. You know, these private Members help in shaking the Executive when they bring their Bills that is when you also work very hard to bring yours.

MR KAFUZI: Madam Speaker, I appreciate. However, the procedure is such that once the Bill comes, it will go to the committee, and the committee then calls for input from other interested parties, including the private Member.

So, allowing a private Member to bring a Bill which the Government is already processing, is just double work because he can present his views and the views of all other people before the committee. I have given timelines that within three months, if this Bill is not presented -

THE SPEAKER: Three months?

MR KAFUZI: Yes, Madam Speaker. I said the principles will be ready within three weeks and that within three months, we should already be in Parliament, because we have to prepare the Bill, bring it for first reading, and then appear before the committee.

Madam Speaker, if we do not do that within three months, the private Member can be allowed to proceed. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Nakut –

MS NAKUT: Madam Speaker, everyone has said that this Bill is long overdue and the minister says that they have been working on it. If indeed they have been working on it, why then would he need three months? If they have been working on it, then they can use two weeks to harmonise and introduce the Bill.

Madam Speaker, this Bill should get the attention it deserves.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Dan, then Hon. Richard –

9.49

MR DAN ATWIJUKIRE (NRM, Kazo County, Kazo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. While I hear the plea of my senior, the honourable minister, this matter ought to have happened on average 10 years back for this law to have come up.

Now that he has given us three months, and he has a volunteer who can do it in one month, I would beg that the honourable minister, like the National Resistance Movement (NRM), encourages volunteers, in the spirit of NRM, takes it in, and you allow the Bill to proceed. We shall be with him in Parliament, where he wants to have an input, we shall all listen and wait for his input.

Madam Speaker, I beg that the minister concedes to allow the Bill to continue. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Richard –

9.51

MR RICHARD GAFABUSA (NRM, Bwamba County, Bundibugyo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand here to support my colleague, Hon. Fr Onen.

Issues of transitional justice affect all of us. The communities we represent have suffered various cycles of violence, and this is an issue that we should have handled many years ago. While I agree with the minister that they are

working on this Bill, the fact that a private Member has come up is an indication that the Government has not done what it ought to have done.

If the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs is interested in this matter the Ministry of Internal Affairs, let us allow the Member to bring his Bill and then they work at the pace of the private Member.

Madam Speaker, we have seen many instances before when the Government has promised to bring a Bill in two or three months, but it takes another two or three years.

We are in the fourth year of our term and time is running out. Tomorrow, the Government will come up with another excuse, meanwhile, time is going and Hon. Onen will be caught up by time. By the time we know it, the term would have ended.

Remember, the Bill will not take one week with the committee. So, I strongly support and plead with you, Madam Speaker, that we allow our colleague, Hon. Onen, to bring his Bill, and then the Government can come quickly to work with him.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, I am going to give the Government one month to come up with their input on the Bill. As of now, we are going to give Hon. Onen leave to introduce his Bill.

Honourable members, I put the question that Hon. Onen be granted leave to introduce a private Member's Bill, "The National Transitional Justice Bill, 2024".

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted.

THE SPEAKER: Pursuant to Rule 121(2), (3), and (4) of the Rules of Procedure, the Clerk is hereby instructed to accord the Member all the requisite support to ensure the tabling of the Bill for the first reading.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF
THE REPORT OF THE SECTORAL
COMMITTEE ON PHYSICAL
INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE STATE
OF TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE
(ROADS, BRIDGES, RAILWAYS AND
AIRFIELDS) IN NORTHERN UGANDA

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, we stood over this item yesterday because we needed an addendum from Karamoja region. I am reliably informed that the addendum is ready. Could we have the addendum presented to form part of the report and then we adopt the report with all the amendments that were captured yesterday?

I would also like to inform you that the President will be here in the next 30 minutes.

9.55

MR JOHN BOSCO NGOYA (NRM, Bokora County, Napak): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to present the addendum as per the Karamoja region; the discussions related to the infrastructure report of yesterday.

Karamoja region identified key roads that need to be included in the report as follows:

- i) Moroto-Kotido Kaabong-Karenga Road;
- ii) Soroti-Amuria-Abim-Kotido Road;
- iii) Nakapiripirit-Amudat-Alakas Road that is joining to Kenya;
- iv) Lokitanyala-Loroo-Amudat-Karita Road;
- v) Napak-Kapelebyong Road, opening the region to Teso;
- vi) Rehabilitation of Moroto-Soroti Road;
- vii) Moroto-Nakiloro-Nakabaat Road, opening the region to Kenya;
- viii) Kotido-Loyoro-Kaabong Road;
- ix) Kaabong-Timu-Loitanit Road, again opening the region to Kenya;
- x) Kaabong-Timu-Lokalapata-Nawountos;
- xi) Kalapata-Pire;
- xii) Karenga-Bira, opening the region to South Sudan;
- xiii) Abim-Napak via Turtuko is an internal road, but very important; and

- xiv) Kotido-Abim-Otuke-Alebtong-Lira.

The region also considered the security and trade roads as very important, namely:

- i) Kotido-Agago;
- ii) Kotido-Karenga;
- iii) Kotido-Nakitongo, that is opening the eastern part of Kenya;
- iv) Morunyang-Majimoto, again the eastern part of Kenya;
- v) Nabilatuk-Katakwi which is the Magoro Road;
- vi) Kaabong-Karenga;
- vii) Kaabong-Kitgum via Lolelia;
- viii) Lopelpep-Lokwakipi-Narengnya, that is a ring road around the mountain;
- ix) Namalu-Nabilatuk-Lokapel;
- x) Lotome-Korisae Nabwal-Magoro, that is the Teso side;
- xi) Amudat-Komerimeri;
- xii) Lokwanamoru-Amuria;
- xiii) Alerek-Okemer Road;
- xiv) Alerek-Kacheri-Karenga; and
- xv) Iriir-Nabwal-Natirae;

The key bridges that we propose to be included are:

- i) Lotome Bridge, that is between Napak and Nabilatuk;
- ii) Lolachat Bridge, that is between Nabilatuk and Moroto;
- iii) Lions Bridge, that is between Abim and Napak, which has been claiming many lives;
- iv) Nakonyen Bridge, between Moroto and Amudat;
- v) Okemer Bridge, between Abim and Kotido;
- vi) Nakirianget Bridge, between Mbale and Nakapiripirit;
- vii) Lodoket angisigiria, that is between Kaabong and Karenga;
- viii) Koberyo Bridge, that is between Kaabong and Karenga again;
- ix) Nataa bridges, that is between Nabilatuk and Moroto;
- x) Komatheniko Bridge, between Moroto and Kotido;

- xi) Napiananya, between Nakapiripirit and Mbale;
- xii) Kocomin/Nacommin Bridge, that is between Amudat and Nabilatuk;
- xiii) Karita Bridge, between Amudat and Kween;
- xiv) Dingdinga Bridge between Amudat and West Pokot, which is a part of Kenya;
- xv) Nabokotom Bridge between Amudat and West Pokot, which is at the URA border point; and
- xvi) Dopeth Bridge between Kotido and Abim.

In terms of the aerodromes, the region considered:

- i) Nadunget Airfield in Moroto which needs to be upgraded;
- ii) Amudat Airstrip;
- iii) Morulem Airstrip in Abim; and
- iv) Kotido Airstrip.

This is the addendum that the region considered to be included in the infrastructure report. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Honourable minister – Yes, Member from Aruu – (*Hon. Santa Alum rose*) Hon. Santa are you from Aruu? Just hold on, and wait for the Member from Aruu to submit.

MR KOMAKECH: Madam Speaker, misinformation is disinformation. Yesterday, as the Committee on Physical Infrastructure presented on the Floor of this august House, it alluded to the fact that work was being undertaken on the Rwekunya-Apac-Lira-Acholibur-Puranga road. However, this is not true. The fact is that work is only taking place from Lira-Rwekunya and ending in Puranga. As the days go by, there is no work being done from Puranga to Acholibur.

The matter has it that the contract for works on Puranga to Acholibur was given to Roko Construction Limited, but up to this day, Roko has never set foot in Puranga. The people are mad.

Just as we came to the northern region, Madam Speaker, you alluded to the fact that Members who come to this sitting should be re-elected by their people. If this road is not worked on, I am scared that the simple me, Christopher Komakech - my people will have to vomit me.

Isn't it procedurally right that the same committee or the minister comes and articulates to the people of Pader why the Puranga-Acholibur Road is not being worked on, and why the contractor has never stepped on the site of duty?

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Santa and then the honourable minister.

Honourable members, all the roads that you mentioned yesterday form part of the amendments made today to the report. All of them are captured, and whatever is being recorded is captured on the *Hansard*. So, you do not need to repeat the same road like I know Hon. Santa is about to.

10.02

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Madam Speaker. As you guided yesterday as part of the addendum, the report did not include a very important part of Great North Road, which is completely destroyed at Oryemapat Bridge. It was a Presidential pledge and I feel that this road should be captured as part of the addendum and our recommendation. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. An amendment? I thought we did all the amendments yesterday.

10.03

MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago): Thank you, Madam Speaker, I am raising two issues. We have the roads that link to Agago North County. One of them comes from Kitgum Corner Alango, Kitgum Matidi Wol to Kalongo, and then it proceeds to Paimol.

Another road comes from Pader, Pajule-Pader to Kalongo. On the other hand, there is a road that comes from Otuke-Patongo to Kalongo.

As I speak, there is a big emergency; we are on murrum roads. There have been floods. All the roads have been cut off and yet we have the only missionary hospital in Kalango; Dr Ambrosoli Hospital, which serves the catchment area from Abim, Namakora, and Pader, everybody flocks to Dr Ambrosoli Hospital, to get medical services.

In Agago North, including Kalongo Town Council, there is no health centre III. Madam Speaker, I am presenting this so that, if the House deems it fit, we take it as an emergency on those roads. Ministry of Works and Transport and Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) should at least do some emergency work on those roads.

Finally, Madam Speaker, on Karuma Bridge, when the site was given to the contractor, I was there –

THE SPEAKER: Are you talking about Karuma? It was exhaustively discussed yesterday.

MR AMOS OKOT: The point I would like to make, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Please. Can we hear from the minister? We will talk about roads and not tire. Hon. Isaac, do you still have a road? Amendment to –

MR OTIMGIW: Thank you, for giving me way. Madam Speaker, yesterday we exhaustively covered the issue of national bridges, but one amendment I want to bring out, that was not captured was the position of the Ministry of Works and Transport, how they are going to help districts to fund those depleted bridges because we need goods to come from the villages to the national roads to be transported.

Some of these national bridges have lived their lifespan and the bridges in the districts have also over lived their lifespans. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Goli -

MR GOLI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to mention one major bridge which the late Hon. *Atat* was following up seriously and it is called Amodo. It connects to a tourism site which we have allocated resources to develop where Kabalega and Mwanga were arrested. I request that we include Amodo Bridge.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Peter Okot and Hon. Emmanuel Ongiertho – Hon. Feta you talked yesterday. The honourable member from Napak, you have been represented.

MR PETER OKOT: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Much as a number of roads were captured, there were a few national roads that were left out. One of the critical ones is the one that comes from Alokolum, Alero to Corner Nwoya.

The other ones which were not captured are the ones that come from Puranga, Pajule, Acholibur and Minakulu-Lii-Koch Goma, these are national roads that need to be captured in the addendum. Thank you.

10.07

MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Since yesterday, we are talking about several roads, but we know that the most important thing about these roads is the availability of funds. I am not hearing anyone, including the ministers, talk about the road fund.

We know for sure that for every litre of fuel taken, there is a tax which is supposed to accumulate into the road fund. Nobody is talking about it –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Emmanuel, the minister is here. You are taking a lot of his time. He is supposed to respond.

MR ONGIERTHO: I am not taking his time. I am telling him that whatever he has prepared, he should make mention of the road fund and we should have a commitment that the road fund will go strictly to the issues of roads. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Godfrey Onzima -

10.08

MR GODFREY ONZIMA (NRM, Aringa North County, Yumbe): Madam Speaker, I want to raise a – (*Hon. Nakut rose*)

THE SPEAKER: Let your senior raise something and then you bring your procedure.

MR ONZIMA: Madam Speaker, I want to raise an issue concerning a road from Yumbe town to a river called Ore, which is on the border with Yumbe and Terego.

In 2018, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Japanese Agency for Development, gave \$24.5 million to work on that 23.5 kilometres road.

However, since 2018, the Government has never committed any counterpart funding to pay project-affected persons. And yet this was a grant given in relation to the hosting of refugees.

Many times in Parliament, we apply for loans as Government, and some of these loans are got from commercial institutions at a very high interest rate. I am wondering why the Government cannot take advantage of a grant to work on this road.

When we had a meeting with JICA in June, they said that the money was depreciating. Instead of this money working on a 23.5 kilometres road, due to depreciation, the current money can only work on 14 kilometres. Sometimes we also wonder about Government decisions.

Secondly, the road between Koboko-Yumbe-Moyo has a lot of contradictions. The grant given by the World Bank was in 2020. Compensations started in 2021. These projects should have started by January 2023. It is supposed to be a three-year project that is 36 months.

However, due to contradictions in procurement, we lost 15 months. When we had a meeting with the World Bank, they said that the project spill over may be handled by the Government.

As we speak, other contradictions have come up that there are environmentally related challenges and yet on the 16th of April, we had a meeting with the World Bank team and they said that all the contradictions concerning that road were handled and there was no problem. However, we are now saying there is another challenge.

As of now, we have lost almost two years. We are left with just 17 months to work on this road, should the road not be completed within that project period, we are also worried that this same road will have a challenge. Therefore, we really need an explanation from the Government on these two areas – as to why these issues cannot be handled. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. There was a procedural matter. Honourable minister, take note of what Hon. Onzima is talking about.

MS NAKUT: Madam Speaker, the procedural matter is on the way we are proceeding in terms of debating this issue of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure.

Madam Speaker, yesterday when I stood here and raised a procedural issue requesting you to apportion time for each subregion, especially when a matter concerns all four subregions, you agreed that you would. Yesterday, we spent a better part of our time discussing this report. You accorded nearly 30 Members from West Nile, alone, to debate on infrastructure, yet the committee's report biases this House. The committee report actually misled this House to imagine that the report was for all the four subregions – (*Interjections*)

THE SPEAKER: It did not mislead.

MS NAKUT: The committee's report should have been specific on West Nile. Madam Speaker, are we proceeding right to assume that we are handling all the four subregions when we are handling only one?

THE SPEAKER: We are proceeding very well.

MS NAKUT: We are certainly not! (*Laughter*)

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Nakut, we are doing very well. The fact that we have got a report from Karamoja region, we are doing very well. I will now ask the minister to give us a response to that.

10.13

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Madam Speaker, good morning. My response is going to be fairly brief. It is not the kind of detailed response that I had come with yesterday.

I am going to structure the response in the following manner. To indicate to the Members what I have done since yesterday – working with the Clerk of Parliament and what we intend to do with the comprehensive report so far given to us and the most urgent things that must be done now.

Let me start with what we did yesterday. After capturing all the details that the honourable colleagues presented, I must confess that the report that I had come with necessitated tactical withdrawing. Knowing for sure that roads are enablers, my report would not have been very useful.

Against that background, I consulted my senior colleagues, including those who chair Cabinet and I have been directed as follows:

1. Work with the *Hansard* team, to capture all the issues that the honourable colleagues have raised, and bring them back to Cabinet for us to guide you on what can be done now and we indicate to the colleagues what may be done in a phased manner, given the limited resources available so that we include everything. We shall indicate how we are going to intervene, rationally, without causing any excitement.
2. The second one was that I should indicate what has been done now on matters that border emergency. For example, Karuma – I want to say that by the grace of God, we

did not witness a calamity at Karuma that could have befallen the country. By the time the engineers indicated to us how that bridge had failed, we just said it has been by the mercy of God that nothing very fatal had happened to the country, hence the closure of Karuma and allowing only light vehicles to pass.

I did hand over the bridge to China Railway Seventh Group and NEC Construction Works and Engineering Limited to do the rehabilitation. What is true is that for Karuma, the resources are available. Fortunately, Cabinet, in its wisdom, was kind to say that we could not wait, but we could just get the resources that were available in the emergency fund and Shs 6.8 billion was quickly mobilised for the repair of Karuma Bridge.

Honourable colleagues, what is being done at Karuma is that most of the structures that were holding the bridge underneath had given way. It was just a question of time. Right now, the team is working under the bridge. Sometimes, when we pass on top with our light vehicles, we may not be able to see them –(*Interjection*)– that is a fact.

What is also true is that in the next few days, the team will be working on the surface. I was directed to prepare the honourable colleagues that I am going to announce the permanent closure to even the light vehicles for a few weeks so that the surface of the road will also be done. Madam Speaker, what is happening is that we know for sure that this pronouncement will inconvenience our people, but we have chosen security and safety of our lives and property –(*Member rose*)

THE SPEAKER: The Chairperson, Committee on Physical Infrastructure wants to give you information.

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It is un-African to contest a statement of an elder. However, is the minister in order? At least, when the committee visited, there was no working underground. When did that start? Maybe, they are working in air, not underground –

THE SPEAKER: Maybe they are using a drone. *(Laughter)*

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Maybe.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, the chairperson of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure did not see the work being done. Honourable members, let us get the information and, then, you come up – wait - they want to give you information.

MR NELSON OKELLO: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to give you information as pertains to Karuma Bridge. Personally, I went under the bridge. Work is ongoing. The bridge was designed and is sitting on six spires. Out of those systems supporting the bridge, four have given way. We made an assessment. The old deck - the deck is a construction where the vehicle passes - is completely worn out with cracks.

Underneath the bridge, there is what we call a florescence – the white stuff, which indicates that the whole components of the bridge – the reinforcements – have already given way. We discovered that the team already constructed the platform, which necessitates movement under the bridge. Madam Speaker, about five of us from the committee went under the bridge - myself and my deputy chairperson. They promised that after two weeks, they would permanently close the bridge.

However, they told us that before they close, they have taken samples for testing which – *(Interjections)*- these are technical things. After the test results, they said they would permanently close the bridge.

Madam Speaker, the issue is: that before they permanently close the bridge, they should provide an alternative route. As I speak now, the alternative route which is Masindi Port Ferry has a very small ferry. If you go there right now, people spend five days without being crossed and animals are dying. So, we are demanding for an additional ferry at Masindi Port.

Also, the other route from Zengebe through Amolatar should be worked on because the whole access road from Nakasongola is completely submerged. The road needs to be raised and worked on so that accessibility is achieved.

Finally, as they improve the bridge, we propose that they also work on the approaches of the bridge at Karuma because as you enter from this side, the bridge is on the curve; as you enter from Nwoya, there is a long curve and the other side of the Karuma, there is also a long curve. So, we propose that they widen the curve and provide a pedestrian walkway because our people are at a risk. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, take that seriously. I have also been told that when they pass around the park, they are charged. Hon. Linos –

10.24

MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Earlier, the minister stated that soon, he will announce a permanent closure. However, in the project area where the dam has been constructed, there is an alternative bridge connecting the dam to Oyam and the bridge acts as gates to release and reduce water levels into River Nile. I request the minister to engage the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development so that before or after closing the main Karuma Bridge, the energy ministry should allow smaller lighter vehicles to use that alternative bridge which is within the project area. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister – honourable members, are we going to finish? Hon. Okin P.P –

MR OKIN: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for allowing me this opportunity once again. In the past few days, we have seen what I would term negligence from the Government in Kiteezi, where we have lost over 30 people in a situation that could have actually been addressed.

I call that one negligence of the highest order. The minister is praying to God that by the grace of God, no incident has ever happened in Karuma - by the grace of God! This is a technical issue that the minister who owns the docket should have been able to monitor.

Madam Speaker, the procedural issue I am raising is: is the minister proceeding right to continuously lament in a situation which he can actually address? Is he proceeding right to lament?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the minister is saying we are going to have that bridge closed and get alternative routes.

MR OKIN: *He should be arrested.*

THE SPEAKER: Withdraw your statement. What are you arresting him for? Hon. P.P., it is on record. Hon. P.P. Okin, what you said was on the microphone. I know it is a joke, but it was on a microphone.

MR OKIN: I apologise for that statement because he is my very good friend. For that matter, honourable minister, I apologise and I withdraw the statement, but also work very hard - (*Laughter*) - to make sure things are happening in the right direction. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, we really need to work on that. Let the Kiteezi scenario not come to Karuma and this one will be worse.

MR ECWERU: Madam Speaker, like I indicated - and I am very happy that the honourable colleague who is a technical person and very professional was able to confirm that work is ongoing and that rules out what the chairperson of the committee was putting me on order for.

The bridge is being worked on and two things will be happening at the same time. While we salvage the life of the old bridge, we are also working around the clock to get a new bridge which is properly aligned like the one we have

done in Jinja so that after a few years, we can release this old bridge from the kind of work. We are working in that direction together with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

THE SPEAKER: We need the timelines.

MR ECWERU: In my report which will be comprehensive, I will indicate to you, Madam Speaker and Parliament, when we are going to do what, at what time and what we have done so far even for the new bridge in Karuma because of the sensitive nature of that connectivity.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, when you are giving us your report, do not tell us, "We shall do". Tell us, "We are doing".

MR ECWERU: Thank you. The second one is Pakwach. Madam Speaker, Pakwach has a challenge that we have also identified. When we were doing the Tangi Road from Masindi, the engineering tampered with the topography of that place and for that reason, each time it rains, there is flooding around the bridge that is compounded by the floating island.

As we speak, the teams that are doing drenching have already arrived in Pakwach. They arrived two days ago but started work seriously yesterday. I do not want honourable colleagues to think that this work was started because the issues were raised here. It was already something that we had intended to do and it is being done to make sure that the floating island is removed so that the bridge does not give way. That will happen with the rest of the region.

The last one is Nebbi-Arua. While we are working on a permanent rehabilitation, we have also directed the company to do forward maintenance. I would like to assure my honourable colleagues that we will do some forward maintenance so that Nebbi-Arua becomes motorable. Right now, we acknowledge that it is bad, but I want to assure this Parliament that a comprehensive report will be presented to it so that we can capture all that has been stated, including issues of

Karamoja. I would like to also assure Hon. Nakut that we will not leave out what we have promised as a region. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, we need an action taken on the roads; we need to improve on the water transport for us to be able to have an alternative route. We need all the roads that we have given you to be handled.

Honourable members, I now put the question that the motion for adoption of the report of the sectoral Committee on Physical Infrastructure on the state of transport infrastructure (roads, bridges, railways and airfields) in northern Uganda with all the amendments and addendum from Karamoja Region be adopted by this august House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE SPEAKER: We will need a report from you in the House in two weeks' time on what has been done, where and when.

Honourable members, we will suspend the House for 10 minutes to receive the President and get back.

(The House was suspended at 10.32 a.m.)

(On resumption at 10.42 a.m., the Speaker presiding_)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, can we all stand up for the national anthem?

The National Anthem

The East African Community Anthem

THE SPEAKER: Please take your seats. Your Excellency, as Parliament of Uganda, we are immensely privileged to benefit from your presence in today's special sitting in the northern region and specifically in Gulu. This sitting is covering the issues, challenges and opportunities that are from West Nile, Acholi, Lango, and Karamoja.

Your Excellency, the sitting of Parliament in Gulu, northern region, in Uganda is a historic milestone in the legislative history of Uganda. As it is the first of its kind, it is the first sitting we are having at regional levels.

Your Excellency, the 11th Parliament appreciates your immense support for decisions to take Parliament to the people in regional settings. I remember we came and discussed this with you. I came with the Deputy Speaker and you okayed it. You welcomed the idea and it is really a very good idea. We thank you so much for that.

Embracing of regional sitting is in pursuit of the legislative vision of, "A transformed, independent, and people-centred Parliament."

Contrary to what the critics are raising, that the regional sittings of Parliament are costing us a lot, that is not true. The Parliament sitting is legally and procedurally grounded in Article 95(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 and Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament which empowers the Speaker to convene Parliament at such a place and time through a proclamation.

The regional sitting will exhaustively deliberate upon the most urgent matters that are intricate to the growth and development of a particular host area. For this case, it is the northern area.

Indeed, during yesterday's sitting, the House applauded your leadership in pacification, unification and development in northern region. Twenty years back, this region was not what it is today. You brought security to this region. A round of applause for His Excellency. *(Applause)*

Your Excellency, the northern region has witnessed remarkable transformation as witnessed in the urban infrastructural growth, especially under the Uganda Support to Municipalities Infrastructural Development (USMID), the establishment of the public universities in Gulu, Lira and Arua, the health sector infrastructural growth and the progressive growth of the private sector.

We also recognise and appreciate the decision to elevate three municipalities into cities. These are notably; Gulu, Lira, and Arua cities plus Moroto which is not yet operationalised, but it was passed. This elevation status has created immense opportunities for the region, which, if properly harnessed, will bolster the development of this area.

Your Excellency, we also recognise that northern Uganda is not a homogeneous society. The different subregions within northern Uganda have peculiar realities which impact on their growth and development. However, there are cross cutting realities notably; the post war recovery, the high level of poverty and ever growing youth population a fair number of which are unemployed, a large track of arable land, averse national resources, the high influx of refugees, environmental degradation, limited transport infrastructure, heavy reliance on subsistence agriculture, limited value addition to agricultural output, retrogressive cultural practices such as cattle rustling, and the subjection of women and girl child, the enormous water resources, lack of health facilities and lack of enough schools. For instance, if you look at Gulu, Gulu City does not have a Senior five, A-level school.

While we have a number of issues that affect each and every area that is; West Nile, Acholi, Lango and Karamoja. Then delayed compensation of war victims and lack of compensation for the land that was taken over during the insurgency.

Your Excellency, the sitting specifically took cognisance of the need for mindset change as a major catalyst for increased production and social-economic transformation in the northern region. In addition, the House recognised the need to embrace viable cash crops, livestock agriculture, agricultural mechanisation and value addition, and sustainable organic farming, among others.

The Sitting recognised the importance of reliable transport and communication infrastructure as an enabler of growth and development. To this end, Members raised the

need for the rehabilitation and development of strategic national roads infrastructure in the different regions notably; Moroto-Kotido-Kaabong-Karenga Road, Koboko-Yumbe-Moyo Road, Kitgum-Kidepo Road, Nebbi-Goli-Paidha-Zombo-Warr-Vurra Road. They are very many of them plus bridges and we shall hand it over to you. Including our famous Karuma Bridge that is about to give way.

Your Excellency, at the end of this Sitting, I will submit to you a memorandum detailing the specifics of the areas of concern that this House has passed, that the committees found on ground and need to be worked on in the northern region.

Members noted the need to work to ensure the success of the prevailing government development initiatives such as *Emyooga*. The 4-acre model may not be vital in this area because we have all the land. What we need is to do mechanisation, provide some funds in societies, create market for these products, identify the cash crops to be grown in this area to have a participatory approach to what is being done in this area and have a micro-credit scheme by adapting such programmes to local realities in order to achieve meaningful outcomes in the region.

Your Excellency, at the end of the Sitting, we will transmit these resolutions for your relevant action as the Chief Finance Minister of this country. All these relate to finances. Our work is to find out what is lacking but at the end of the day, it all comes back to the Chief Finance Minister who is none other than your good self.

As the leadership of the Legislature, we intend to have the regional sittings as a salient aspect of our legislative culture and vision of taking Parliament to the people. We, being a people-centred Parliament, we believe in evidence-based legislation and this can ably be done by our committees who go to the ground and find out what is happening there and report back to Parliament.

Your Excellency, I now take the singular honour to invite you to address the House and

by extension, Northern Region and Uganda on issues that are affecting this region. Just like you have told us that you have only one hour here, we had a small motion that will take about 20 minutes, if you can allow us. Then you will address the House. If you find it fitting, Your Excellency, you could allow it. Thank you very much. Hon. Kimosho –

10.57

MR DAN ATWIJUKIRE (NRM, Kazo County, Kazo): Madam Speaker, Your Excellency the President, honourable colleagues – I am now disorganising the protocol but allow me to continue.

This is a motion for a resolution of Parliament to pay tribute to H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni Tibuhaburwa, the Commander-In-Chief of the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces for the Visionary Leadership of the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces in Safeguarding the Peace and Security of Northern Region (Acholi, Lango, West Nile and Karamoja):

“WHEREAS Article 209(a) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides for the function of the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces as the preservation and defence of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Uganda;

AWARE that the Lord's Resistance Army caused conflict in the Northern Region between the period of 1986 to 2007 onwards making it one of Africa's longest conflicts occasioning humanitarian crisis and wide spread of human rights violations such as death of more than thousands of civilians, abductions of children, rape, mutilations, displacement of civilians, torture, slavery, use of child soldiers and mass destruction to property;

FURTHER AWARE that the West Nile Subregion further experienced insurgency from the Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF) II, the Lord's Resistance Army and Holy Spirit Movement led by Alice Lakwena who waged war against the National Resistance Movement Government in 1986 onwards leading to the loss of thousands of lives and property and gross abuse of human rights;

RECOGNISING that through H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni's visionary leadership, the Uganda People's Defence Forces has over the years successfully combated the activities of the rebel groups in northern Uganda, including disarmament in Karamoja which has resulted into liberation, pacification and guaranteeing peace and security in the region and the entire country;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that under the leadership and guidance of H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M) was entered into in 2006 with the purpose of assembling LRA forces in safety and security, calling on the parties to end propaganda between them and through it, there was a significant reduction of violence in northern Uganda, allowing many displaced people to return to their homes and begin rebuilding their lives;

APPRECIATING that H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni facilitated and supported initiatives aimed at the reintegration of former Lord's Resistance Army and other rebels, combatants and abductees into society through programmes for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration;

FURTHER APPRECIATING the tireless efforts of the leadership of the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces working under the guidance of H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni towards the continued peace and security in northern Uganda and Uganda generally;

COGNISANT of the fact that, H.E. the President has strongly championed peace and security within Uganda and neighbouring countries like South Sudan, Somalia and Democratic Republic of Congo, among others, by continuing to pursue the Lord's Resistance Army remnants and ensure regional security.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that Parliament appreciates:

- 1. His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Uganda, Gen. Yoweri Kaguta*

Museveni Tibuhaburwa, for his visionary, insightful, and decisive leadership in spearheading the deliberate efforts to restore peace and security in northern Uganda and Uganda at large.

2. *The Uganda People's Defence Forces for eliminating the rebel groups, fostering the security of lives and property, and providing a conducive environment in northern Uganda and Uganda generally, for economic and social transformation.*
3. *The religious leaders, cultural leaders, political leaders, and local community for their tireless contribution towards the peace-building efforts in dialogue, promotion of reconciliation and reintegration of former combatants and abductees into society."*

I beg to move, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Kimosho. Would you like to justify your motion? Is the motion seconded? (*Members rose*) It is seconded by Hon. Okin P.P., Hon. Anthony Akol, Hon. Okot, Hon. Lucy Akello, Hon. Gilbert - Gilbert, why are you sitting back? Hon. Ongiertho, I am looking at the team from the North who have felt this - by the whole House. Hon. Obua, Hon. Feta, Hon. Isaac Otimgiw, Hon. Tom Aza, Hon. Aogon, Hon. David Lagen, Hon. Omona, the minister, Hon. Amos Okot, Hon. Maneno, and Hon. Kaducu.

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Yesterday, when we started the first ever regional parliamentary meeting, while I was seated in the tent, I had a reflection on what was happening here. In my mind and heart, this is extraordinary, not because we are in Gulu and that Parliament has come here, but because of what used to be here, and what it has taken to put in place what is in northern Uganda and in Gulu in particular.

Madam Speaker, it has taken extraordinary effort of the visionary leadership of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, guiding the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF), a force that

has sacrificed over 20 years, trying to stabilise the northern region.

I reflected on a situation where they used to tell us that guns would sing in different tones; alto, bass, and soprano, from morning to evening; that there would never be a convergence of family in this place, because people were on the run; and on the pictures we used to see of people with padlocks on their lips.

Madam Speaker, it dawned on me that this cannot be taken for granted, and that this effort ought to be recognised and appreciated by Parliament and Uganda at large.

Yesterday, we had forces of less than a hundred UPDF and police combined, and everyone was secure. In the evening, we walked up to 10 kilometres on the streets of Gulu, for jogging and health fitness purposes. Everyone was enjoying themselves. The road is tarmacked and more exemplary than most of the towns in this country. You cannot imagine that, that happened naturally. This happened because there is purposeful and visionary leadership of both the nation, and UPDF as an institution of Government.

Finally, Madam Speaker, we need to appreciate the extraordinary, patriotic and the visionary spirit of the President. When some of us, Members of Parliament, and the other big rich men in town get money, we think of transferring their homes to those other countries. For the President to have fought for peace since the 1960s, integrated his son, who is a general, into the army, and who made the last assault on Kony in Garamba and delivered the tranquility that we see, it is worth thanking the President for.

Our appreciation goes to all the UPDF commanders, and Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, for the last assault and effort he made in Garamba. I beg to move, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Hon. Kimosho. We will have one seconder each from West Nile, Lango, Acholi, and Karamoja.

Let us start with the Hon. Lamwaka. You will bear with me; the President has only 30 minutes remaining, with us. He has other things to do, but because he loves northern Uganda, he has been able to come here.

Your Excellency, Gulu City is the cleanest city that you can talk of. These people moved the whole night. The place is so peaceful.

Hon. Lamwaka, just two minutes.

11.09

MS CATHERINE LAMWAKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Omoro): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda, the Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, the Rt Hon. Deputy Speaker, I rise to second the motion that Parliament pays tribute to H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the President of the Republic of Uganda, the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces, for the commendable leadership of the Uganda People's Defence Forces in safeguarding the security of this part of the region.

The visionary leadership of His Excellency the President, as we celebrate one of his greatest achievements in ensuring peace in this part of the region, has manifested itself in this sitting of Parliament.

Madam Speaker, I agree with the mover of the motion and second it because of the results of all that the President has done in ensuring peace in this part of the region. Those of you who have lived in a war-torn area will agree with me that life in a state of war is a life that you would never wish to live.

This part of the region was inaccessible for most of the Ugandans. However, today, because of the peace that has been ushered in, we celebrate President Yoweri Museveni. We also celebrate the contribution of the UPDF towards pacifying this part of the region and the whole country.

Madam Speaker, we also recognise key individuals who made heavy contributions in ensuring that we achieve peace in this part of the region. Notably, we recognise the late Paul Loketch, the late Gen. Oketta, the late Col Ochora are among children of the soil who contributed heavily in bringing peace to this part of the region and unfortunately, they are no more. We pray that the good Lord rests their souls in eternal peace.

Today, we also celebrate our very own Commander of the UPDF, Gen. Kainerugaba, for his heavy contribution. You are aware that at one point, he was also in operation in Garamba. This is something notable that cannot go unmentioned.

Honourable Members of Parliament, we celebrate the contribution of our religious leaders but also those who served in the UPDF and are still serving. Some of the good generals like the Lt Gen. Charles Otema Awany are among the people who come from this part of the region that we have to celebrate. *(Applause)* Madam Speaker, when you hear the celebration coming from the tent, definitely I want to believe that the Members do agree with me.

As I continue in appreciating the mover of the motion, it is important that today we also celebrate our religious leaders. I am aware that Archbishop Emeritus John Baptist Odama is here. We recognise his heavy contribution in bringing peace in this part of the region.

We recognise the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative and the cultural institutions of Acholi, Lango, West Nile for their heavy contribution in bringing peace.

As I conclude, the biggest problem that we have ahead now, as we celebrate the peace that has been ushered in, is managing the peace. As we celebrate -

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter. Honourable members - Yes, Hon. Akol -

MR AKOL: Madam Speaker, I rise on a procedural issue. I was very excited and happy when Hon. Dan came up with this motion and I stood up and seconded it. However, at the point when he was talking about how peaceful this area is, I thought the seconder would raise some of the issues that we have had in northern Uganda after the war which need to be addressed.

The fact that she is concluding without talking about the issue of compensation of the war affected people in northern Uganda; livestock compensation, the lives that were lost - We also have to talk about the conflict which is still ongoing in Apaa. I think we will be missing this particular session that I was happy about. Are we proceeding right?

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Akol, we are proceeding very well. If you heard my opening remarks, I talked about the post-war, the issue of compensation, land, and where I said I will hand over the memorandum to the President because these are issues that must be handled even after us achieving peace in this area.

When you see a woman defending what happened during that time – personally, I was in Gulu, you know it very well. Where you would go and sleep in Bobi here just for one week, you could not come back to Gulu nor proceed, you would be under siege. And I am allowing only women to second because women would be raped by you people. Yes, can you conclude?

MS CATHERINE LAMWAKA: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your wise ruling. As I conclude, yes, we have achieved peace but I want to state very clearly that we are in the process of managing the peace and there are salient challenges that, colleagues, you agree with me, need to be attended to.

For those of you who have been to the town of Gulu City, when you move late at night, in some other parts of the suburb of the city, we have so many young people; children and youth who are stranded and living in the streets. This is as a result of the armed conflict that has been in the region.

According to the statistics that you have got, Madam Speaker, so far, we have about 2,000 children and young people who are stranded on the streets, snatching women's handbags and grabbing money around the local markets. We are getting back to a state of where there is no actual peace in the real community where these women are living.

We need to deal with how to address the plight of these children who are living on the streets. I want to implore Parliament and Your Excellency the President, to ensure a special programme for these street children in Gulu and the neighbouring districts of Gulu City and to settle these children who are on the streets.

Secondly, there are special programmes of Government coming in the area but when you look at the impact and how they are being received by the community, there are a lot of gaps. This is because of a mindset problem. Many people have talked about mindset; this is as a result of the armed conflict. After the war, they brought in the programme of Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) but PRDP had a component of ensuring that we address the question of psycho-social support and this was not dealt with comprehensively.

For this reason, we rushed quickly to implement development programmes and left the aspect of psycho-social support. That is why, today, when we are living in our community, we have so many children who have returned from captivity, who were born in captivity but they have nowhere to belong and yet these are people who need to be attended to very closely psychologically.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS CATHERINE LAMWAKA: I pray that as we celebrate the achievement of peace today, it is very crucial that we provide support to the children who returned from captivity, to provide support as far as psycho-social development is concerned so that even the Government programmes that are coming, like Parish Development Model (PDM) and the others, could be appreciated by our people.

Once you do not address the mindset of the people, we may not be able to do a lot.

As I finally make my last statement, and as we celebrate the peace that has been ushered in by the President and the contribution of the Uganda Peoples' Defence Force (UPDF), it is very important that we look at the impact of the armed conflict that has been so devastating in the region and design special affirmative action programmes that can deal with it.

We have vast land; 10 to 15 acres of land per household landholding but usage is only three acres. There are capacity gaps in terms of utilisation of the land that we have. These are the results of the armed conflict.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS CATHERINE LAMWAKA: I pray that colleagues support the motion that has been raised by my honourable colleague and that we do appreciate the President and the UPDF for bringing peace to this part of the region. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Catherine Lamwaka. Your Excellency, we may need a presidential skilling hub in this region to help us with the youth and we need counselling for these children because some of them were born out of that situation - Hon. Alyek, one minute.

11.21

MS JUDITH ALYEK (NRM, Woman Representative, Kole): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I would like to thank the mover of the motion and pay great tribute to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda. I am seconding this motion and would like to thank His Excellency the President for safeguarding peace in northern Uganda. We are now enjoying peace in Lango subregion, Acholi subregion, West Nile, and Karamoja.

Madam Speaker, without peace, there is no development that can be brought in any region of this country or the world. We, first of all, want peace and that is the priority that we are talking about.

The Lango subregion was so affected by insurgency for more than 20 years that our people were in internally displaced people's camps. Madam Speaker, we now see this peace. We only need to fight poverty, increase household income, promote mechanised agriculture and do what it takes to bring money into the families and pockets of our people.

Madam Speaker, I would like to continue to say that His Excellency the President - he is here with us - made several developmental plans in this country. He put several developmental plans in his manifesto for Lango, Acholi and for northern Uganda as a whole.

Madam Speaker, I would like to interest His Excellency the President to consider fulfilling most of his pledges because there are others that have been overdue, including cattle compensation that is going on very slowly. We want him to, really, go back and say, this time around - before the elections of 2026. We are taking him back as the President of the Republic of Uganda, and we are saying, Your Excellency the President, we beg you to fulfill most of these pledges. You know them.

Your Excellency the President, we are really happy that you consider this Parliament as a very important Arm of Government and we are here to interact with you, although we shall listen to you in silence, according to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda. Your Excellency, you have done a great deal for this country. We wish you a long life as you continue to lead this country in the way you are doing because the steady progress that we are seeing is something that we have to appreciate -

THE SPEAKER: Can you wind up?

MS ALYEK: Long live, Madam Speaker, long live the Parliament of Uganda and long live all the Members of Parliament who are here deliberating on the issues of northern Uganda. Long live the Government of Uganda and long live everybody in this country. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us have Hon. Nakut and, then, Hon. Jesca. (*Members rose*) Honourable members, please sit. Let us use one minute each.

11.24

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Madam Speaker, I stand here to second the motion to pay tribute to the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and to the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) for the job well done in securing our country.

Madam Speaker, I was born and raised in Karamoja. I grew up hearing bullets. I grew up knowing that we had to hide and run for our lives and safety. I grew up knowing that bullets were a medium of exchange in our markets. I grew up seeing boys and men carrying guns on their shoulders and using them as their walking sticks, and they would use it against anyone who offended them. It was extremely insecure growing up in that part of the country.

Before my parents died, every evening, as they returned home alive, we celebrated because, at least, we knew that we were one day short of being orphans. That is the story for every child that has grown up in Karamoja. At that time, the guns in our region exceeded the number of guns in some of the East African countries.

It seemed impossible that insecurity would be solved and that guns would go silent at some point. It was until 2006, against all odds and against all the negative publicity, that the UPDF, under the leadership of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, took a bold step to disarm the people of Karamoja. It was not an easy task. I witnessed the disarmament process. I witnessed the soldiers and the commanders dying. I saw their bodies in parts of Karamoja. I am a witness to the level of sacrifice of the men in uniform; the UPDF.

At some point, I asked myself: what was the motivation? Up to today, I cannot find the answers. That spirit of sacrifice, the revolutionary spirit - I do not know how the Commander-in-Chief inculcated that

revolutionary spirit in the UPDF. It is a spirit that does not see impossibilities.

Madam Speaker, I want to emphasise that from 2010 up to 2017, for the first time in my life, I slept without hearing a bullet and it is the same for the people that lived in Karamoja. For seven consecutive years, the UPDF proved to us that it was possible to pacify that part of the country.

In 2018, we imagined that Karamoja was now peaceful and that the UPDF had to be deployed to secure some other parts of the country. As if these criminals knew that the people that had subdued them were now going, they came back – and that was the insecurity we were debating in this House when I seconded the motion of Hon. Anthony Esenu.

I want to thank this Parliament and the President of Uganda for listening to that motion, and ask that we do a second disarmament exercise. Otherwise, if they had not done that last year, maybe the Members of Parliament from Karamoja, who are here, would not even be here now. This is because the situation was bad, again.

The UPDF have mastered the art of dealing with the criminal elements in Karamoja, especially those who carry their guns and misuse it to destroy the peace of others. I want to stand here to support the cause of the UPDF and to support the idea that if a budget appears in this Parliament, the way it has been appearing, we just maintain it.

Madam Speaker, in the same revolutionary spirit that the NRM subdued the guns in Karamoja, I have the conviction that they can subdue the scourge of poverty in that region. It is a region that has continuously reduced the number of wealth creators in the country and that has spoilt the indicators of this country.

I have a strong belief that if we attack this menace with the same revolutionary spirit – and the UPDF can deliver it for us – we will be there with the rest of the country, on the same line.

Madam Speaker, it is my appeal that even as we celebrate these great achievements of the UPDF – not only in Karamoja but in the country as a whole – the transition from insecurity to sustainable peace does not get rushed. The withdrawal of the UPDF in Karamoja should not be rushed. Otherwise, the same criminal elements who came back in 2018, can come back fiercer and worse than they were in 2018 and they could harm our people the more. That is my appeal, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, my second appeal is that given the number of orphans that this war created in this belt of the country, not just in Karamoja but also in West Nile, Acholi, and Lango - the statistics indicate that over 60 per cent of our children are actually orphaned - Perhaps, that is the reason we are having a crisis of teenagers that we do not know how to deal with.

It is my appeal that the Government will consider a special fund to support the orphans that have come up as a result of the war. I submit, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: In education? You have a motion on education for the Karamoja Region. Hon. Jessica - Kindly, the President has other engagements.

11.32

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda, Madam Speaker, Rt Hon. Deputy Speaker and the entire House, I am seconding the motion to recognise, appreciate and celebrate the efforts by our Head-of-State and other patriots for the peace, security and sustainable governance that Uganda is enjoying.

I am a child of the soil so I want to first appreciate the peace at hand which we never had, the security at hand which we never had and good governance at hand which we never had.

Madam Speaker, we thank His Excellency, with the other patriots, so much for the work well done. Leadership is given by God in the

book of Psalms 13:14. Therefore, we want to thank God for the son, His Excellency, who has been ordained and given to this country so that we get liberated.

As West Nile, we were refugees in South Sudan and in Congo. The President did a very remarkable work. When he took over power, he requested us to come back to Uganda. If you did not do that, Your Excellency, probably, we would have changed our nationality and remained in Congo or South Sudan.

Your Excellency and the patriots of Uganda helped us to have peace which we did not have, security which we did not have, because we were in the hands of people who did not recognise human rights. We got tortured, we were massacred. We vividly remain indebted to you because we remember the Ombaci massacre, the Atiak massacre, and because of the peace, Madam Speaker, though with a lot of pain, we organised memorial services for the victims.

This region was labelled with a lot of negative names. As we are seated here, those who are in Gulu, in our region, have now changed mindsets. We were called *Anyanya* because this region was characterised with bloodshed. Here we are seated comfortably deliberating because of the fruits of His Excellency the President and other patriots of this country.

Your Excellency, allow me to say this: we leaders and people of West Nile have listened to you carefully for all these years. We are changed people. We have learned from you. We appreciate the systems you have put in place. We are requesting you and your team to help us to have economic liberation. We have learned; we are your ambassadors; we are your disciples. We are ready to lead our people.

I want to end by giving special appreciation to you and the entire Government because the compensation we are asking from you is not because of your bad deeds. You are acting fatherly to compensate people because of the bad deeds of other people. Therefore, Your Excellency, we plead with you to continue with

the good spirit to compensate us, especially West Nile because we have never seen any coin and so, people are labeling us negatively. We are your ambassadors.

I end by saying, may God continue to bless your family. May God continue to bless our son, MK. Your Excellency, we are here as your children. We are here as your disciples. Thank you so much, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, in the interest of time - First of all, we need to thank His Excellency for coming because he has a lot but because of the love he has for the northern region and the love he has for Parliament, he had to squeeze 30 minutes to be with us and the minutes have even elapsed. We really want to thank you for that.

Your Excellency, this team we have here is really very grateful for what you have done in the northern region. They really appreciate but there is still a little more to be done.

When you talk about *cente*, we need *cente* in the pockets of our people. We can only have the *cente* in the pockets once you bring what they have just mentioned. Even when you have the money - For those who do not know our language, *cente* is money. Even if we have the goods and we mechanise, we need the roads to be worked on for us to take the goods to the market. We need these roads to be worked on.

The honourable Minister of Works and Transport has information. We have given him all the roads that are supposed to be worked on so he will come and share them with you.

I now put the question that the motion for resolution of Parliament to pay tribute to His Excellency the President, Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the Commander-in-Chief of Uganda People's Defence Forces for the visionary leadership of Uganda People's Defence Forces in safeguarding the peace, security of the Northern Region (Acholi, Lango, West Nile, and Karamoja) be adopted by this honourable House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted.

THE SPEAKER: Your Excellency, we want to congratulate you so much and to thank the team that was able to come here. We want to thank Gen. Salim Saleh who is here; a resident of Gulu. Where is he? Gen. Salim Saleh, you are most welcome. We want to thank you so much for coming.

In our VIP gallery, we have:

1. Hon. Richard Todwong – When you are addressing, know the people who are here;
2. His Grace, the Archbishop Emeritus of Gulu, Rt Rev. John Baptist Odama; he has been very influential in this region;
3. Mr Obitre Stephen, LCV Chairperson, Maracha District;
4. Mr Atul Sam, Mayor, Lira City;
5. Mr Orach Emmanuel, LCV Chairperson, Nwoya District;
6. Mr Okwonga Alfred, Mayor, Gulu City;
7. Mr Opio Moses, Chief Administrative Officer, Abim District;
8. Mr Tolit James, Town Clerk, Laroo-Pece, Gulu City;
9. Mr Martin Okumu, Deputy Prime Minister, Ker Kwano Acholi;
10. Rev Fr Matthew Okun Lagoro, Project Manager of the Cassava Programme in northern Uganda, for value addition;
11. Mr Ojok Samuel Kitang, District Speaker, Agago District;
12. Mr Arwai Christopher Obor, LCV Chairperson, Kitgum District;
13. Mr Okwir Patrick, City Speaker, Lira City;
14. Mr Wadri Sam Nyakau, Mayor, Arua City;
15. Mr Lotee Paul, LCV Chairperson, Kotido District;
16. Ms Akello Alice Opio, RDC, Gulu District;
17. Mr Okello Francis, RDC, Amolotar;
18. Mr Okwir Semei, Gulu District, Retired RDC; and
19. Mr Otim Otto Denis, the Chief Administrative Officer, Lira.

We will continue announcing as they come. We have the RDC of Gulu, Ms Amongin, a 'yellow' girl.

Honourable members, following the extensive deliberations that we have had on the state of transport infrastructure in the northern region, the minister will hand over our issues to the President for onward action to be taken, especially on issues of the critical roads; national roads, bridges, waterways and the air drones in this region.

It is our plea, Your Excellency, that we work on this. As the Fountain of Honour, we know there is nothing impossible; you will handle it. We want to put the northern region at the level of other regions. We should be able to put - As the Parliament of Uganda, our focus is on the northern region. We want the northern region - Much as the peace has come, we want peace to be in the pockets there as well. We want to thank you.

I now take this singular honour to invite Your Excellency to speak to the Members of Parliament, to the people of northern region and by extension, to the country.

11.46

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA (Gen. (Rtd) Yoweri Kaguta Museveni): The Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament, all the distinguished persons who are here, I thank Parliament for passing a motion recognising the work of the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF) and the National Resistance Movement (NRM), in pacifying northern Uganda and the whole country.

What you need to know - it is important for you if you are going to make a useful contribution - is that the ability of the UPDF to do what has defied other Governments - because the security of Karamoja was not new at all. It had been there even in colonial times and only got worse after 1979 when the Matheniko, one of the tribes of Karamoja, looted arms in the Moroto barracks after the Amin soldiers ran away. They were able to get automatic weapons, which they did not have before. Otherwise, the security was there all the time, even in colonial times.

The reason we are able to do these tasks is because of three things, which, if you are interested, you could listen to:

Number one is ideology. Hon. Jesca Ababiku is telling you, which I do not hear many people talking about, that by 1986, 500,000 people from West Nile were in exile in South Sudan and Congo. Uganda was number four in the whole world in the export of refugees. It was competing with Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and I think Sudan. What had the West Nilers run away from? From ideological bankruptcy. You remember I was part of the group fighting Idi Amin. Nobody can say he fought Idi Amin more than I did.

As we were fighting Idi Amin, we always told our people and everybody, "Look here, do not blame the mistakes of Idi Amin on all the West Nilers" because of all these things Amin was doing, he did not consult the people in West Nile, the villagers. He was doing them with a small clique of idiots. So, do not blame the people of West Nile for this.

Even when we were fighting the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), it was the same. We told our cadres not to blame the people of northern Uganda: Acholi, and Lango, for the mistakes of Obote. Distinguish between the misleaders and the misled. This is the line of the NRM. Always make a distinction between the misleaders who are few, and the misled who are many, even if they are misled. In many cases, most of the masses are not even involved at all. It is small groups of people.

When we defeated Amin in 1979, we had formed the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF), which was like NRM. We were telling these people, "Please wait, you are UPC and you are Democratic Party (DP)" - Catholics for DP, Protestants for UPC. Please give us a holiday, let us have a united group; UNLF." but they would not listen. They took advantage of the fact that we had our Tanzanian brothers here who did not know our situation. They moved and they brought back the bankruptcy of the old politics of sectarianism.

Those massacres, those are the Ababikus, who must have been either children or in the womb - I do not think they were there. I think it was the wombs that were running away. (*Laughter*) The running started in 1980, not 1979. In 1979, when we were together with the Tanzanians and the UNRF, we had said, "Isolate Amin. Do not blame the people of West Nile for the mistakes they have made." However, when they brought back their Uganda People's Congress (UPC) and the Democratic Party (DPs), that is how the problem came up.

"You, West Nilers are relatives of Idi Amin so we kill you." Imagine being killed because of my relative. Bankruptcy. Therefore, if you say that you appreciate it, you had better understand. That is number one; ideology. We believe in individual responsibility. We cannot blame a group for the mistakes of one member of that group. We never believe in sectarianism.

Therefore, the first reason we were able to do what Hon. Nakut - I thought Hon. Nakut was a cadre. Now, I have discovered she is still a Karamajong - (*Laughter*) - she said, "I cannot understand why these people sacrifice so much." Yes, if you are convinced.

We are always celebrating Martyrs' Day in Namugongo on the 3rd of June; the young people who refused to denounce religion and were killed by Mwanga. On the 9th of May, we are always celebrating Heroes' Day. We are not just martyrs, we are heroes. We have martyrs but also heroes because martyrs die without resistance. With heroes, they can kill you if you are not careful, as you try to kill them.

On the 9th, we celebrate the Heroes' Day; people who stood because of conviction. If you are convicted of something, you will stand. The first reason we were able to do what these other groups failed to do is because of ideology.

Secondly, discipline. What Hon. Nakut said about how the cattle rustling came back in 2018, it was not just the removal of the troops. There were also some mistakes by our commanders - corruption. They stole the money of the Local Defence Units (LDUs). We had Karamajong

LDUs and they did not pay them. You know how confused the Karamajong groups are. They said, "Okay, if you are not paying us, we are going to raid." That is how it all started.

There was also another man, whose name I have forgotten. Was it Acucu? The one whose wife they took when he was in jail. When he came from jail, he said, "You had better replace my wife who was taken." They just looked at him. He went and raided cattle to buy another woman. That is how it all started again. It was the carelessness of our people - the corruption.

The third reason why we succeed is the Banyankole proverb, "*Okwomutwe guri, enshogyi nikwetegwa.*" You make the hairstyle according to the shape of the head. If you have got a head with big bones, the hairstyle will follow the shape of the head.

When we are budgeting - this is very important for you, fellows. How can we build such a powerful army with very little money? We plan according to our small budget. That is why when we are building the army, we do not start with the barracks. The barracks do not look so smart. We start with the personnel, the training and the weapons. Soldiers are staying in some "*Mama yingiya pole*", but the one in there can also kill you like the one coming from a *golofa*. That is how we have been managing.

If you look at the budget of Uganda, it was like \$500 million some years ago. You look at those of other African countries, they are billions. Therefore, because of budgeting according to the shape of the head, that is how we manage. Three things; ideology, discipline and realism in budgeting. Do not budget unrealistically.

I am glad you are having your conference here. I have been hearing what you have been saying but straight away, I can tell you that the things to do are very many. You cannot do all things at the same time. I take you back to the Bible. "*Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and His righteousness and the rest will be added unto you.*"

We have been telling you and everybody since the 1960s that whatever you do, if you want the people to develop, start with the homestead incomes. We are now talking of roads, what, and what. They are where roads are good. The road from Gulu to Kampala is good. The problem of the bridge is a recent one. It has just come now. Otherwise, the road was good all the way from Bibiya. It was tarmacked all the way to Kampala.

The one from Musingo-Kitgum all the way to Kampala, what are you selling along that road? I know there is some sim-sim from Kitgum, but what else?

From the 1960s, we have been telling all those who care to listen to us that, "Please, seek first the homestead incomes and the rest will be added unto you." In 2018, I made a country-wide tour, zone by zone. I give you this booklet where I talked of the four sectors and the seven ways for wealth and job creation.

I heard the Speaker – do not bring new confusion by saying that the four-acre model does not apply here. It does. I do not agree with that line.

In this booklet, I made it clear that the four-acre model was a rescue operation for the parts of the country that had already fragmented land. That is why I said, since you have very few acres, do not make sure the *cura* - I normally use our words here - the *cura*, the *aimar*, the *otita*, the *ekibaro* is correct. If you do not, you will never get out of poverty.

That is why I said that for the four acres and less, put seven enterprises:

- i) Coffee - one acre;
- ii) Fruits - one acre;
- iii) Pasture for dairy - one acre;
- iv) One acre for foodstuff like cassava; and
- v) In the backyard, you put poultry for eggs and piggery for pigs. If you are near a wetland, fish farming.

When you do that, you get millions of shillings, even if you are doing it on a very small scale.

We have given you the examples of the Nyakanas and so on. I call this, in this booklet, "Intensive agriculture".

Use intensive agriculture with high-value enterprises to get out of poverty using the small piece of land which you have; four acres or less. But, even if you have got more, there is no harm. Instead of having one acre of coffee, have four. What is the problem? You can still use the same even if you have bigger land.

The 10 acres you are talking about - because I want you to make the "*cura*" not just talk. No, I want the "*cura*" of the average landholding in the North. When I fly over, like this morning, that land - if you look at the gardens, especially from Lango, I am not so sure how many people - Lango, the southern side, the Maruzi and those areas near Akokoro, Amolatar.

The population seems to be heavy because, from the air, I can see garden after garden. You do not see much bush anymore. Even coming here, the areas of Minakulu, all the way coming here, the areas where I see some emptiness are the areas after Bardege going to Agago. Yes, I see some space there and some parts of Kapelebyong on the other side of Teso. But, like Teso - Serere, Ngora the population seems to be quite high. So, what "*cura*" are you using? Do not waste our time again by bringing confusion here no, please.

Even if you say 10 acres - because there are two strategies. Intensive agriculture is the four acres I am talking about. However, if you have 10, you can use the same for more land. You will be very rich.

The other one is extensive agriculture. When I was in Adjumani, my brother Gen. Moses Ali was talking about cotton. Then I said, "Okay, how much do I get from cotton in an acre?" They said, Shs 1 million without deducting costs. So, if it is true - and when you are discussing here, please go into those details. Do not just talk and pass a resolution and deceive yourselves. I am really no longer interested in that type of approach.

So, if you say, for cotton you will get Shs 1 million gross from one acre and even if you have got 12 acres, as you say - because somebody was saying that you have big land but 12 acres is not big land unless you get another word for big. If you are saying “*madit*” or “*madwong*”, 12 acres is not a lot. So, if you have 12 acres and two acres are for food, you remain with the 10 acres. If you get Shs 1 million from one acre, is Shs 10 million enough? So I want the real “*cura*” please, Madam Speaker, not just talking.

The ones I advised - the cotton group, they are people with big land. I have big land and there are other people. I said, “Register us, you who have got big land. Let us produce cotton for you”. I can put 100 acres of my land to cotton, out of patriotism. I do not need cotton but if the country needs cotton, I can grow it for them.

100 acres, even if I get Shs 1 million per acre, that is Shs 100 million – of course, Shs 100 million is not too much money for me, but I do not mind because I am doing it for the country.

Now, if you were to do 1,000 acres of cotton, you would get Shs 1 billion. So, it is true that you can get good money from a low-value crop like cotton, if you do it on a really big scale. But, 10 acres is not a big scale, so do not confuse our people with just new confusion. It is extensive agriculture versus intensive agriculture.

For me, anything less than 20 acres - this is the problem of Busoga because we told our Basoga people, “*ebikadho*”. How much are you getting from one acre? First of all, “*ebikadho*” do not mature for two years – for 18 months, the “*ebikadho*” is still growing. When you harvest it, “*omusoga aliluddawa*, Bwino Kyakulaga, *idha otukobere ekibaro ky’ ebikadho*. If I have one acre, what will I get from “*ebikadho*” after 18 months?

MR BWINO: Your Excellency, if you have one acre and you plant and wait for 18 months, at the current level of pricing, when you harvest, you will get about Shs 6 million gross and the cost involves first of all, the initial

preparation, and then buying the planting material. The planting material is expensive and after that, you have to look after the garden for 18 months. However, very often, those who do not have land, before they plant the cane, have to hire the land. So, the cost is very high.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Is it like 40 per cent?

MR BWINO: The cost is much higher than 40 per cent because it is labour intensive. More than half.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: More than half. Yes, so from now on - okay, let us get one of cotton - the one who knows cotton, who will tell us about the cotton and maize because in my seven activities here, I do not recommend cotton, maize, “*ebikadho*” and tea. People are crying with tea now.

MR BWINO: I can talk about the maize.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: How much would I get from one acre of maize in a year?

MR BWINO: For one acre of maize, you get about Shs 2 million a season, if you have used very good practices – (*Interjections*) – Yes, I talk out of experience because I grow maize myself. In the last season, I got Shs 2 million per acre. However, the cost of –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, can we have some silence?

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Per acre or season?

MR BWINO: Shs 2 million per acre per season, if you have very good practices.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: So, that is four –

MR BWINO: If you have very good practices including using good seeds, manure or fertilizers so that you get about –

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Shs 4 million a year?

- MR BWINO:** Yes, about Shs 4 million a year. to about Shs 60,000, Your Excellency.
- GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI:** And the costs? Now, when you multiply Shs 60,000 by 10 bags, that is about Shs 600,000 per acre, Your Excellency. We have to tell the truth here.
- MR BWINO:** The costs go to about Shs 3 million. **GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI:** Yes.
- GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI:** Out of the Shs 4 million? **MSALYEK:** Yes. Thank you, Your Excellency.
- MR BWINO:** Yes, out of the Shs 4 million. **GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI:** Therefore, please, I beg you - I do not want Gulu confusion; that Parliament met in Gulu and confused our people and said, "Forget the four acres. In northern Uganda, we have a lot of land." No, you do not. 10 acres is not a lot of land because if you are going to get Shs 1 million per acre for maize or cotton, even if you have got 10 acres, how much is that? You will not get out of poverty, but with the fruits, the return is very high. In some areas, it is much higher. You can get the figures.
- GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI:** So, Shs 1 million. Okay, *tyama. Oyo atyame. Owapamba*; the one of *pamba*. Who can tell us about *pamba*? There is a group at Kakooge - is it Kakooge? They have got a factory there for fruits and we are supporting them. You check with them how much they are earning from fruits per acre.
- MR OTIMGIW:** Thank you, Your Excellency. I am Isaac Otingiw from Nebbi District in West Nile, one of the areas that grow cotton. On average, an acre of cotton will produce between 600 to 800 kilograms. However, because of the unstable prices of cotton, whereby last year in the last season, prices went as low as Shs 1,500 per kilo - Cotton - because some of the areas in the North here can grow coffee. In the West Nile, they can grow coffee. Even some areas here can grow coffee so please, my document is here. God got a copy long ago. Please study it very carefully if you want the people to get out of poverty. This is my first point.
- GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI:** So, how much is that now? The roads – yes, but the roads which are there are not being used fully. Yes, I know the areas which do not have good roads because I always go there but even where the roads are good, they are not being used fully. So, please, seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven, seek ye first homestead incomes, and the rest will be added unto you.
- MR OTIMGIW:** You find that people are getting between Shs 900,000 to 1 million per acre. Now, secondly, this is for the political class. Yesterday, I was having a meeting with the religious faith, with *Mama Janet*, about the schools. One of the issues we were discussing with the foundation bodies is the school charges. The NRM, since 1996, has been pushing for
- GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI:** Per acre? **MS ALYEK:** Your Excellency, I am Judith Alyek, a Member of Parliament for Kole District in Lango Subregion. I am the Chairperson of the Lango Parliamentary Group.
- MR OTIMGIW:** Yes, per acre per year.
- GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI:** Per year. *Bed piny, bed piny*. Now, that leaves us with which one? What is the other one?
- Your Excellency, I would like to add my voice to the growing of maize in the Lango Subregion. As I talk, Your Excellency, an acre of maize can give you between 10 to 15 bags. The price of maize right now is about Shs 600 shillings a kilogram. So, a bag of maize right now is going

free education in government schools, but other people are pushing for charges for this one, for that. Please, if you want those children whom you say are street children - they are street children because many of them did not go to school. What is blocking them? School charges.

So, the political class, all the elite, please, if you say you care about your people, support my position on free education. If you do not want to support that, then keep quiet, and let the children suffer. Do not just talk. This is the second point. Seeking for homestead incomes and free education in Government schools.

We have been begging since 1990, it is almost 30 years now. UPE, they put charges. If there are unmet costs, bring them. You are Members of Parliament, I am President here, you are there, and we budget together. You come from those areas. Come and we budget. Let us block all these other expenditures and provide free education for the children in the Government schools.

Do not go and say, I am paying for children in my constituency. How many are you paying for? 10. How will 10 children in a constituency solve the problems apart from putting you in debt? You are killing yourself, you are killing the children, you are doing nothing. Listen to NRM. Just have free education in the Government schools. Those who have money to build private schools can go to private schools, the children of the rich.

I started my school in Okwang, near my village in Baralegi. I had calculated there that if I could give capitation grant of so much, there would be no other school costs that are not met. The capitation grant is set, but I think they still charge school fees.

I have got free schools in Kisozi. They do not pay any cost. They study. It can be done. So, free education, if we want our people to get out of poverty.

About the infrastructure, I agree, especially the railway. Have we not repaired the railway

line from Tororo to Gulu? Is it not repaired? They were repairing it. What happened? Works minister, Hon. Ecweru -

MR ECWERU: Your Excellency, as you guided in Cabinet, work on the Malaba-Soroti-Lira-Gulu Railway metre gauge is on. We have reached Kumi so far. There was a small technicality between us, the office, and the team working, which we have also resolved after consulting you and *Mzee* Matia Kasaija. So, they have resumed. The first phase will bring the metre gauge up to Gulu here. Then the second phase will be from Gulu to Pakwach.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Yes, so that for cargo, you use the railway - They are asking, when?

MR ECWERU: Just like I have indicated to my honourable colleagues.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: The estimated time, we call it ETA, estimated time of arrival. What is the estimated time of arrival?

MR ECWERU: To come up to Gulu, *Mzee*, it will take us a few more months. I do not have it readily available.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: You check and before you leave tomorrow, tell them.

MR ECWERU: I will do that.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: So, now, the other infrastructure which is crucial, which is already in place, is health. The way the National Resistance Movement (NRM) works, we use cost-effective solutions. We can provide security with a very small budget. With health, our strategy was to have a health centre III at the sub-county, *Jago* because most of the sicknesses can be dealt with there. Immunisation, midwifery, malaria, can be dealt with but instead of people concentrating - and you have seen how immunisation has helped public health. Polio and measles have disappeared. All those immunised - the cancer for the girls, if all the girls are immunised against the uterus cancer -

Immunisation has worked. The problem is on the drugs at the health centre IIIs being stolen and you all represent constituencies. A constituency may have about four sub-counties, which means you have got four health centre IIIs under you and maybe one health centre IV.

So, if you supervise these together with your network of NRM supporters, even the ones who are not NRM, why wouldn't the curative side work as well as the prevention side has worked? When we undertake preventive measures, things move. It is a revolution. The population of Uganda is now 46 million, from 14 million. What was happening before?

Ugandans were marrying many women, but where were the children going? They were all going down in the ground. That is why you get the Ottos. This name means, he followed the people who died, I think. Now, why are the children not dying? Because of immunisation. But there are other measures which can be taken to improve health like in malaria control, sleeping under the bed nets, and other anti-malarial measures that should be emphasised by the health managers of the district but they do not.

We were able to deal with the guinea worm here in the North. *Tye kwene* - where is the Guinea worm now? It is gone. Guinea worm went because of simple boreholes. It was coming from people drinking dirty swamp water. Bilharzia attacks people when they go to collect water from the river.

Just with immunisation alone, we have caused a revolution in population growth. What if we added other preventive measures? Safe water, so that waterborne diseases are eliminated. Nutrition, the food is there but the people do not know what to eat because the health officers at the district do not tell them.

The radios are there for abusing Museveni only. Nobody thinks of using the radios to say, "You people, you eat this and that. You will have..." Some of the diseases are from poor nutrition. The girls getting married before the age of 18 years - this is just sensitisation.

A child who is not yet 18 years old is not old enough to carry children. It will either cause problems for her or the child. All these preventive measures are there but we have used only immunisation and you see how much it has helped us. What if we added all the others?

So, while I note this - the budget, the infrastructure which you have is already good enough. Let it be fully used because you can be sure that many of the sicknesses will be eliminated. Then we will remain with the cancers, with the other diseases which are - but even the diseases of prosperity; obesity, heart disease, diabetes, the diseases of *jalonyo*.

When you are rich, you get all sorts of non-communicable diseases. They can also be stopped by exercise. Yes, we can spend more on the health infrastructure, but how about the strategy of health care, which is not just buildings and drugs? By the time you go to the drugs, you have already lost your health.

The other crucial infrastructure element which you should talk about is irrigation. We launched something here known as Tochi Irrigation Scheme. What is it about? What are we irrigating there? Can somebody tell us?

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Your Excellency. I am the Chairperson for the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and in the report that we presented -

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Who are you?

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you so much, Your Excellency. I am Auma Linda Agnes, the Woman Member of Parliament for Lira District.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Auma, *Nyara*.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you so much, Your Excellency. Tochi Irrigation Scheme was one of the projects that we did oversight on as the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries under water for production facilities.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: What is it irrigating?

MS LINDA AUMA: Tochi is irrigating rice.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Rice in the swamp or away from the swamp?

MS LINDA AUMA: Your Excellency, a scheme is always in the swamp, gazetted by the Government for rice production.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Oh, that is *marach*. Okay, *apwoyo*. I will not concentrate on that one so much.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you so much, Your Excellency.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: What is happening to Agoro Irrigation Scheme?

MS LINDA AUMA: Your Excellency, Agoro rice scheme was for the same purpose but it is no longer functioning well.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Is it also on rice?

MS LINDA AUMA: Yes.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Is there rice in Agoro?

MS LINDA AUMA: It was meant for rice and aquaculture but it is not functioning well.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: There is somebody who knows the area and can tell us.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you. He is the area Member of Parliament.

DR OKULLO: Thank you, Your Excellency. The rice scheme in Agoro is not doing well at all. My name is Maj. (Rtd) Dr Okullo Aabuka, MP Lamwo. I was there with the Chief Justice who had been to you to check on Agoro Rice Scheme and the irrigation scheme. We found out that the dam had a technical problem.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: But, if it was working well, what would happen?

DR OKULLO: Right now – Actually, the place is messed up by the dam. They wish that the dam was not there so that they could go back to the original situation.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Okay. Thank you very much.

DR OKULLO: You are welcome.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: That means that we need – *apwoyo*. That means the only good example of irrigation, that I can quote – the one I know – is Mubuku Irrigation Scheme. Who can tell us about Mubuku?

MR KATUSABE: Your Excellency, my name is Atkins Katusabe, the Member of Parliament for Bukonzo County West.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: But, Bukonzo County West is far away from Mubuku – but you know.

MR KATUSABE: Yes, Your Excellency. First of all, I want to appreciate the Government for its support. As you are aware, Mubuku Irrigation Scheme serves to facilitate two major crops: maize and cotton.

Mubuku has made Kasese to serve as a district basket in as far as food production is concerned. Your Excellency, on 29 April 2009, we were with you in Katoro. Katoro serves as a cotton growing area for cash production. I remember you advising your citizens in Katoro to diversify from cotton to other crops. You promised to give them a large or medium-scale water for production.

Your Excellency, your people in Katoro are still waiting for that promise from you to get delivered because it was a presidential pledge – in addition to clean and safe drinking water.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Thank you, Katusabe.

MR KATUSABE: Thank you, Mr President.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: *Wasingya busibo.*

MR KAMBALE: Your Excellency, I am called Ferigo Kambale. I am the Member of Parliament for Kasese Municipality, where Mubuku Irrigation Scheme is.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: How many homesteads are involved?

MR KAMBALE: Your Excellency, there are around 2,000 homesteads, but I would like to give the mathematics on how the production works.

Most of our people in Mubuku Irrigation Scheme are currently involved in rice production.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Rice?

MR KAMBALE: Yes. And, we have two seasons in a year. Because of irrigation, Your Excellency, one acre of land gives around 30 bags per season and one bag is 100 kilogrammes. At the moment, every kilogramme is at Shs 4,000. The price is a bit low. For 100kgs that is, Shs 400,000 X 30 – it is Shs 12 million a season. We have two seasons in a year and, so, that gives us Shs 24 million.

If you deduct operational costs, which is around Shs 7 million, someone can earn around Shs 14 million in a year. That is because of the irrigation scheme.

As Kasese Municipality, we are grateful for the scheme, Your Excellency.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Very good. The good thing about Mubuku is that it is not in the swamp. We get water from the swamp and irrigate crops on the land. Mubuku is a river, not a swamp.

This is what we need to do in the whole country. As I was coming here, I was seeing some people, especially in Lango – south-east of Kamdini – trying to go into the swamp to

grow crops there. This is a mistake. We need to irrigate – to take the water from the swamp to the dry land. If we do that, we shall get much more money than if we disturb the swamp.

Therefore, in my view, the issues to work on are very many. You cannot do all of them at a go. However, if we go systematically – you were asking how we, the UPDF and NRA, managed to do difficult things with scarce resources. *Mot mot*, you go far. *Acel acel*, you go far. *Mpola mpola okola ki? Bugu bugu siki? Kamu kamu gwe ki?* This is what we should really be clear about.

The voters know. They are not children. They know that you cannot – it took God seven days to create the world. You remember? God started on Monday and did something else on Tuesday, did something else on Wednesday and so on. Saturday is when he created us.

If it took God six days, who are you to do things in one day? The issue is to go, deliberately, stage by stage. I really appeal to the voters who are listening to you people: please start – how do we summarise it in Luo? *Lonyo pi dano i oot acel acel* – please, come and say it for me in proper Acholi.

MR JOHN OKOT: Thank you, Your Excellency. My name is John Amos Okot –

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: I know you. You are from Agago.

MR JOHN OKOT: Yes, Your Excellency. Your people in Agago appreciate you for bringing peace and restraining the cattle warriors. They are, however, suffering with one problem: the kraals are muddy and many cattle are dying. We know that one day, that problem shall be sorted out.

On what you have been talking about, it is “*lonyo pi oot acel acel*”. Thank you.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: This is really what we should insist on. How do we say it in Lugbara?

MR ADRIKO: Thank you very much, Your Excellency. My name is Yovan Adriko, MP for Vuura Constituency, Arua District. In Lugbara, we say: “*Were were.*” Thank you.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: What does that mean?

MR ADRIKO: That means “small small”.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: No, the household income per home.

MR ADRIKO: House income per home.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: The wealth for each home?

MR ADRIKO: In Lugbara, it means *loni aku’ari*.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: *Loni aku’ari*?

MR ADRIKO: Yes, *loni aku’ari*.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: *Aku –*

MR ADRIKO: *Aku’ari*.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: *Loni aku’ari*.

MR ADRIKO: Yes, *loni aku’ari*.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Lugbara people, you have heard it. (*Laughter*)

MR ADRIKO: Yes.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: The Karamojong, and Madi.

MR AZA: Thank you so much, Your Excellency. I am called Hon. Tom Aza Alero, MP West Moyo County.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Tom Aza is very well known.

MR AZA: Thank you very much. Your Excellency, what you are talking about is the alleviation of poverty at the household level. (Madi) *Elonyi kiru ga ga kotu oru.*

Your Excellency, this is a reminder. When we were in Kyankwanzi, about two years ago – we thank you very much – you promised all the MPs in northern Uganda tractors. We were taken to Namalere where we were given the tractors. However, the tractors were given to us without hoes. That is our request to you.

GEN. MUSEVENI: Agriculture, sort it out.

DR MORIKU: Your Excellency, in Madi, it is, *elonyi koti alu alu ni*. I thank you.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: *Elonyi –* Okay, we have heard it now.

MS AWAS: Thank you, Your Excellency, I am Hon. Sylvia Awas Vicky, Woman MP, Nabilatuk District. In Karimojong, it is *ebari angolol ere*.

Your Excellency, I would like to tell you something about Karamoja; water for production. If there is a place where dams have been constructed without water, it is Karamoja. Karamoja has dams that were completed and never handed over because of shoddy work. I need to be protected. Thank you.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: I will protect you. I will look for you. I know you.

MS AWAS: Awoyalet is one of them, which was constructed in Nabilatuk District, under the Karamoja Resilience Support Unit. The dam has been dry since it was constructed.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: I will look for you. We will go for the thieves.

MS CHELAIN: Your Excellency, thank you. I am Betty Chelain Louke, Member of Parliament representing the people of Amudat in Karamoja.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Oh yes! The Pokot?

MS CHELAIN: Yes. I am a Pokot, a small tribe in the Karamoja Subregion, which has different cultures. The translation of household income in Pokot is; *sokonot po ko.* (*Laughter*) Yes, it

sounds Italian, but you have to understand. The Pokot are from the Kalenjin tribe in Uganda.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: The Pokot have heard it. *(Laughter)*

MS CHELAIN: Thank you, Your Excellency. In Amudat, so many dams were constructed but they need desilting. The ministry needs to know. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, let the President finish his speech.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Thank you. Yes, who is that one? Somebody wanted to -

THE SPEAKER: That one is from Teso. Teso is not part of the northern region.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Teso is not part of the northern region?

THE SPEAKER: Yes, we are dealing with the northern region.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Here in northern Uganda, I thank – *(Interjection)* *(Hon. Koluo rose)* No, we are finished.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, when the President is speaking, he is heard in silence.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Here in northern Uganda, I have been working with *Mzee* Archbishop Odama on the issue of cassava. Cassava is very important. I had asked *Mzee* Archbishop Odama's team, when we met in Chobe, about the *cura* per acre, because I would like to start with that. I do not know whether *Mzee* Archbishop Odama's team, the other reverend - I do not want to make *Mzee* Odama stand here. The reverend who was handling the cassava, what was the *cura*, per acre? Come here to the centre where they can see you. *Bin kan.*

THE SPEAKER: Pass behind, this is a gallery. Father, can you pass behind this side?

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: No, here in front of the MPs. *Apwoyo*, I can see you now. What was the *cura* per acre when the prices were good?

[Text expunged.]

GEN. MUSEVENI: In a year?

[Text expunged.]

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Is that nine months?

[Text expunged.]

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Okay.

[Text expunged.]

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: *Apwoyo Matek.* For cassava, it is important for – the Presidential Principal Private Secretary, I want you to organise for me to meet *Mzee* Odama in the coming days. My Presidential Private Secretary (PPS), be in touch with His Grace.

Now, in our cassava project, we promoted a lot of cassava in northern Uganda, but also in Teso and the production is now very big. We are now beginning to get problems with processing but there was also a mistake which we did not know about, done by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, where apparently they put a tax on starch made in Uganda. They put a Value-Added Tax (VAT) of 18 per cent then they did not put a tax on imported starch.

Recently, when I was in the Bukedi area in Teso, I had gone to Teso initially for our daughter, Ms Among's function, then I went to Bukedi and I got this information. There is a factory there operated by an Indian, a very good factory, producing good starch for making pharmaceuticals and other things. They told me this.

In the Cabinet on Monday, I ordered the removal of the 18 per cent tax on locally produced starch and I ordered the imposition of a high import duty tax on imported starch.

When I met the Indians in that place called Ladot, they assured me that if I did that, they would be able to upscale the processing so that the problem would be addressed.

In the meantime, the reverend could tell me, what happened to our factory in Acholibur. We were also meant to have our factory here in Gulu. What happened to that factory?

[Text expunged.]

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Those UDCs work like a snail, actually. Are you satisfied with their speed or what?

[Text expunged.]

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: The issue of - somebody from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the one who looks after - is it UDC? UDC is under the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives.

THE SPEAKER: Your Excellency, maybe Hon. Akol could substantiate for the record because the *Hansard* will not capture what you –

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Oh, I am engaged in non-parliamentary practices.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, we are in the House.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: I am very sorry, I must apologise and I am almost dying. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Akol?

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: So, all the good things the priest said are not on record?

THE SPEAKER: Yes, all that the priest has said is not recorded. It is not on the *Hansard*.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: Oh, I am very sorry. You know I am from the village. Once you call villagers then you –

THE SPEAKER: It is okay, Your Excellency.

MR AKOL: Madam Speaker, concerning the Acholibur Cassava Project, one of the issues that were considered in the last budget process in the Budget Committee was money allocated for this particular project. Unfortunately, when the Appropriation Bill was returned, the money was removed. So, there is no budget for that particular factory now.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: That one, we can always get. Now, the priest, you sit down. Apparently, what you are saying is – Madam Speaker, can I kindly invite the minister of - the one to do with trade? What is the problem? Why is the *nani* so slow?

THE SPEAKER: Minister of Trade? Hon. Kasaija?

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: No, Hon. Kasaija would not know. Is there nobody from the trade ministry?

THE SPEAKER: Your Excellency, why Hon. Kasaija would know is because the money was appropriated for the same, but then that money was removed. So, I think that is –

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: I am the one who removed that one. *(Laughter)* But it does not answer why it has been delayed all this time. You get somebody from - the one who is answering for UDC to answer in the coming days when you are still here.

Now, I would like to appeal to my people in northern Uganda to get out of the hangover of the war because many parts of Uganda have gone through war. Masaka town was destroyed completely. There was not a single building left standing in Masaka during the war with Idi Amin and so was Mbarara; every building was knocked down.

In Luweero, we had a very bad and vicious war which lasted five years. Some of these members of the Cabinet were with me when we went to Ngoma, which was part of Luweero. It is now quite recovered.

Let all the political classes take up my message of the homestead incomes. I was in my village, Baralegi, Lango. I wanted to go back and when I took off in the helicopter, nothing was happening around where I was. I want to go back and discuss with those Baralegi people. When I called the people there, they told me part of the problem was water. I will go back and discuss with them how our village can join the effort of homestead incomes because that is where recovery will start from.

About the compensation, we have put in the money, but I have been hearing rumours that the money is not well used. It is taken by people who are not known or things like that. That is why I wanted to call a conference of elders from these areas and then we see how to move. We have agreed to pay this money, but who is getting the money? Our people in the Attorney-General's Chambers send money quietly to some people; they get the money, but the leaders do not know.

Hon. Kafuuzi, what is happening with that one? He was following that one. What was the issue there? There was some argument.

MR KAFUUZU: Thank you, Your Excellency. You set out to try and restore the local economy by encouraging the communities that were originally cattle-keeping to go back into the same. In the Financial Year 2021/2022, we were given Shs 50 billion. In FY 2022/2023, we had a budget of Shs 30 billion which did not come but in FY 2023/2024, we received Shs 80 billion.

We have so far received, on average, Shs 130 billion which we have paid out. The problem is the numbers keep increasing. Your Excellency, we had estimated, in our last paper to the Cabinet, that if we were to do this exercise at once, we would spend Shs 2 trillion and yet the initial pledge by the Government was Shs 150 billion. That is the equivalent of Shs 50 billion per subregion for the three subregions.

However, the complaints keep coming because fewer people receive money, and many more expect the money to be received.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: That is why I wanted us to have a dialogue and see what the issue was. I will call a meeting and we will discuss with the Members of Parliament from the area, plus the elders, so that you can tell us what is up because as hon. Kafuuzi said, the numbers keep changing. Lawyers initially took some of the money. So many problems, but we are resolved.

Now finally, on the issue of the skilling hub, we have skilling hubs in Gulu, Adjumani and Lira (Lango Subregion). Maybe what we can do is to - because what I do, my state house comptroller takes equal numbers from each district. Maybe we can increase the numbers who come from each district. *(Applause)*

We are moving - the only other issue, people, if you support me, the issue I had was that you train and give kits to go back with, instead of training and then you go back with empty hands. Therefore, we can fine-tune that. I thank you for coming and holding the meeting here and you have heard my views. I submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. We would also request that you declare the regional settings opened.

GEN. (RTD) MUSEVENI: The regional sitting is declared open.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Your Excellency, having addressed Parliament per Article 101(2) of the Constitution, we want to thank you so much for creating time to be here and giving us a clear and concise address.

It is always inspirational listening to your words of wisdom. In fact, besides being a fountain of honour, you are a fountain of knowledge too, because there are some things for which you are an encyclopaedia.

Your Excellency, while we appreciate the solution-oriented four-acre model for prosperity, we still reiterate we need mechanisation in the region. As one Member said, they were given tractors without hoes. We need mechanisation. We will continue preaching the prosperity

gospel for the transformation of our people and honourable members will act as lead members. We lead by example. We will do this.

Your Excellency, we do not have a demonstration farm between West Nile and Acholi. We also request a demonstration farm between Acholi and West Nile since we have one in Baralegi.

As St Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “Faith without action is dead.” Please, honourable members, let us lead by action. Your Excellency would appreciate your words of wisdom.

However, for the issue of free education, Parliament is always ready and willing to do what the Executive does. Kindly bring the instrument and we will work on it to ensure that we have free education. The memorandum that we are going to hand over to you, Your Excellency, is a document that has been worked on for the last two years by Gen. Salim Saleh and his team, and we want to thank him for the good work he has done while here. Once more, we want to thank you greatly for coming.

Can we stand for the National Anthems?

Honourable members, as we go for the signing of the visitor’s book and a group photo, we will suspend the House for 30 minutes as we go for lunch.

(The House was suspended at 1.08. p.m.)

(On resumption at 2.17 p.m., the Speaker presiding_)

THE SPEAKER: Government Chief Whip, can we start the House? Government Chief Whip – Honourable members, can we get back to the House? Honourable members, can we start our session? I welcome you from the lunch break. I appreciate your level of concentration that was exhibited while listening to His Excellency’s address while he was here. I will invoke Rule 25 of our Rules of Procedure and vary the Order Paper to accommodate a petition from the Local Government’s Association from the northern region. This will be presented by Hon. Ojara Mpenduzi.

After the sitting, we will host you for a dinner where you will enjoy all the cultural dances from the northern region. The dinner will be behind there; and you are most welcome.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

(I) PETITION ON THE STATUS OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Akol.

2.27

MR ANTHONY AKOL (FDC, Kilak North County, Amuru): Madam Speaker, this is a petition to the Speaker of Parliament of Uganda on service delivery in the local governments.

1. Provision of transport for top local government leaders at district, city and Municipality levels

Local government leaders do not have vehicles to ease mobility while executing and monitoring government programmes. This makes attending meetings within the local governments and Kampala, whenever called upon, very difficult.

We, therefore, petition your office to see to it that the Government procures vehicles for district chairpersons, city mayors, municipals, mayors, chief administrative officers, city town clerks, and municipal town clerks. The cost of vehicles for the above offices is estimated to be Shs 70,000,000 billion.

We additionally petition your office to see to it that the Government procures motorcycles for senior assistant secretaries and town council clerks, as the case was for political leaders at that level. This will require an estimated Shs 26.702,000 billion for about 2,053 technical managers at the lower local government level.

2. Salaries for political and technical leaders in local governments

Madam Speaker, we have full-time political leaders right from LC I to district and city

levels. These people render commendable services to this country, but their pay is so meagre. The table below shows salaries for full-time political leaders:

- i) District chairperson and city mayors - Shs 2.3 million;
- ii) District and city executive committee members - Shs 600,000 per month;
- iii) Municipal mayors - Shs 1.2 million per month;
- iv) Municipal divisions and subcounty Chairpersons - Shs 330,000 per month;
- v) Local Council II chairpersons - Shs 10,000 per month; and
- vi) Local Council I chairpersons - Shs 10,000 per month.

Similarly, the technical staff also get meagre salaries, which are not commensurate with the current economy. Their salaries vary depending on the salary scale, as per the staff structures. To mention a few, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), and the city town clerks get Shs 2,369,300 million while the municipal town clerk gets around Shs 1,800,000.

Madam Speaker, we therefore, petition you to see to it that salaries for all political leaders and all technical staff are increased by at least 100 per cent across the board, to help them execute their duties diligently and have a better standard of living.

3. Recruitment of staff

Local governments are the centre of service delivery, as per the decentralisation policy yet this requires, among many things, adequate staff to execute those duties. To the contrary, I wish to inform you that the local governments have very low staffing levels ranging from 30 to 60 per cent.

The newly created cities have not been able to recruit as much as they have approved staff structures. The district and other lower local governments, especially, subcounties and town councils do not have substantive staff as required. All this is because of the failure

to provide a sufficient wage Bill to carry out recruitment; this has crippled service delivery in the country.

We, therefore, petition you to prevail over the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and also the Ministry of Local Government and that of Public Service to provide services and a wage Bill to facilitate recruitment.

4. Solid waste management

The issue of solid waste management in all local governments is a matter that requires comprehensive and coordinated planning. Many local governments are highly concerned about the recent unfortunate happening at the Kiteezi Landfill, which left many lives lost and property destroyed.

Madam Speaker, we petition your office to ensure financing for sustainable solid waste management practices and investment in the different local government administrative units.

5. Provision of road equipment for cities and municipalities and their districts

Cities have greatly expanded in size and this has automatically increased the road network enormously. Secondly, cities are an equivalence to districts under the Local Government Act, and all districts have a complete set of road equipment. Thirdly, most of the municipal councils have a big road network and they require road equipment as well.

Madam Speaker, considering the vital role that roads play in stimulating local economic development, we pray that at least each of the 10 cities gets a full set of road equipment, and each of the 31 municipalities gets a motor grader, roller and five tippers and each town council gets a tractor to assist in garbage management.

6. Condition Grant to Physical Planning for districts, cities, municipalities and town councils

Madam Speaker, physical planning is key if we are to have a harmonious and integrated settlement in our towns. You are aware that “Housing and Sustainable Urban Development” is one of the compromises and principles of decentralisation, which requires fast delivery of services through prompt execution of their budgets.

Some time back, Parliament made a resolution constraining the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development from controlling Local Government Revenue, but this matter has never been implemented and local governments have continued to suffer without money for service delivery for some time.

As local governments, we have not realised any single benefit arising out of this system, other than unnecessary delays in returning the money, difficulty in approving supplementary budgets, and failure to return some of the monies at the end of the financial year.

In view of the above, we propose that the Public Finance Management Act be amended to allow local governments to collect money and utilise their local revenue as it was before, in accordance with the Local Government Act.

This petition is signed by the different local governments at the different levels and all their signatures are attached. I beg to move. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Akol.

MR AKOL: Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the petition and the signatures attached.

THE SPEAKER: Please, lay. Pursuant to Rule 30(6) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, the petition stands referred to the Minister of Local Government. Honourable minister, receive the petition, process it and give a response. Next item.

(II) PRESENTATION OF PETITION
ON THE NEED FOR REFORM
AND ENHANCEMENT OF YOUTH
EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES IN
NORTHERN UGANDA

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Okot Boniface.

2.36

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, this humble petition, which is signed by the youth of northern Uganda, is presented on their behalf, by I, Hon. Okot Boniface Henry, the Youth Representative, northern Uganda.

Showeth and states as follows:

“1. Your petitioners are youth from northern Uganda and they decry the ineffectiveness of current youth empowerment programmes in the northern region to drive a meaningful socioeconomic transformation;

2. *Your humble petitioners state thus:*

i) Northern Uganda has faced significant socioeconomic challenges, including the aftermath of prolonged conflict, poverty and underdevelopment. In response, various youth empowerment programmes have been launched with the intent to address these issues, provide skills and create opportunities for the youth;

ii) However, despite investments and initiatives aimed at uplifting the youth, many of these programmes have largely fallen short of delivering impactful, meaningful and sustainable results;

iii) Examples of these projects with amounts invested in the northern region are shown in Table 1 - you will see the programmes like the Youth Livelihood Programme (Shs 41.2 billion), Youth Venture Capital Fund (Shs 1.325 billion, which is only 5.3 per cent of the outreach by value to northern Uganda); the Parish Development Model

- (Shs 147.36 billion, 30 per cent); and Emyooga (Shs 33.3 billion). The figure for the Uganda Development Bank (UDB) Special Programme for Youth was unknown. Also, the figure for the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) for the northern Uganda female youth was unknown. Table 2 shows the monetary and multi-dimensional poverty still persistent in northern Uganda;
- iv) From the table, you will notice that based on poverty statistics, which are detailed, all the subregions of Northern Uganda still have higher multidimensional poverty rates than the national average;
 - v) The youth empowerment programmes:
 - a) Are mostly designed without adequate consideration of the local context, needs and aspirations of the youth, which has led to low youth participation rates and poor outcomes;
 - b) Are also not fully effected because of limited or even sometimes lack of necessary infrastructure; and
 - c) Also, frequently fail to cover remote and underserved areas, leaving a significant portion of the youth population without access to opportunities.
 - vi) There is noticeable absence of rigorous monitoring and evolution mechanisms to assess the effectiveness and the impact of these programmes, hence leading to the continuation of ineffective strategies;
 - vii) The design and implementation of these programmes frequently overlook the input and involvement of local communities, youth groups and other key stakeholders; and
 - viii) These programmes also ought to be audited and reviewed in order to enhance full effectiveness and implementation;
- NOW, THEREFORE, your humble petitioners pray that Parliament urges the Government to review existing youth empowerment programmes by:
- i) Tailoring the programmes to meet the specific needs and realities of the local context and incorporating the input from local communities and the youth themselves;
 - ii) Allocating adequate resources for the development of infrastructure for effective programme delivery;
 - iii) Developing strategies to extend the programmes to remote and underserved areas so as to ensure equitable access for all the youth;
 - iv) Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to regularly assess the impact of the programmes and make necessary adjustments;
 - v) Equipping the youth with practical skills and opportunities and support that they need to thrive, including increasing equipment, after practical studies in the presidential skilling centres;
 - vi) Increasing stakeholder engagement through fostering greater involvement of local communities, youth organisations; and stakeholders in the design, implementation and oversight of youth empowerment initiatives; and
 - vii) Comprehensively tackling multi-dimensional poverty among the youth of northern Uganda by ensuring that all social services of education and health are youth-responsive. In very specific terms:
 - a) the issue that they have raised on education is that they also request the Government to equitably distribute educational scholarships and student loan schemes given the high poverty rate in the region and prioritise offering seed funding to the universities in the northern region. Consider also deployment of our medical interns produced within our universities and also increase the capacity of the Law Development Centre for many students doing law that also appended their signatures here;

- b) *On health, they want the Government to deal with mental health because drug abuse is common among the youth and the nodding syndrome comprehensively; and*
- c) *That the government should urgently grant northern Uganda NUSAF IV and other affirmative empowerment programmes with terms that ensure impact and sustainability to meaningfully bridge the regional development gaps.*

Your humble petitioners are duly bound and will ever pray. Hereto, your humble petitioners have appended their signatures with all the relevant attachments.”

I beg to lay the petition and the signatures of the youth attached.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Boniface Okot. Honourable members, petitions are a vital avenue for citizen engagement with the Parliament. Based on Rule 30(6) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament and due to the urgency of the matter, I am referring the petition to the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, and report back to the House within two weeks.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION
OF PARLIAMENT URGING THE
GOVERNMENT TO PRIORITISE AND
INCREASE RESOURCE ALLOCATION
TO WEST NILE, ACHOLI, LANGO AND
KARAMOJA REGIONS FOR LIVESTOCK
FARMING TO ACCELERATE SOCIO-
ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, before we get the Member in front here, in the VIP gallery, we have Col. (Rtd) Obwoya Fearless Oyat, the LC V Chairperson for Pader District. You are most welcome. We also have Mr Patrick Eriku Patrick, the Clerk to Adjumani Town Council. You are most welcome. We also have Hon. Lawrence Mangapi from Adjumani Town Council. You are most welcome. *(Applause)*

Honourable members, as you may be aware, the country has been grappling with various challenges affecting the children in Karamoja. This motion is one of those that is aimed at devising a sustainable solution and improving the plight of the affected children - are we on education? Livestock! Because of the nature of the area, we need to increase the livestock, and, since we have been talking about livelihood - cente? In Akarimojong, it is *Isilinga*? We would like to see how best we can increase the livestock of Karamoja for us to be able to get sustainable income in the area. Yes, Hon. Nakut.

2.46

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The motion covers all the four subregions.

This is a motion for a Resolution of Parliament urging the Government to prioritise and increase resource allocation to West Nile, Acholi, Lango and Karamoja subregions for livestock farming to accelerate socio-economic transformation. It is moved under Rule 56 of our Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The motion reads: “*WHEREAS Article 32 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995, provides that the State shall take affirmative action in favour of groups marginalised on the basis of reason created by history for the purpose of redressing imbalances which exist against them;*

AND WHEREAS the northern region, particularly Karamoja, is the country’s most marginalised subregion, with a predominantly pastoralist population;

AWARE that livestock is a critical asset for the people of Uganda and in Karamoja it provides not only a primary source of income but also food security, cultural identity and social stability;

FURTHER AWARE that the Government has committed itself to supporting the socio-economic transformation of all Ugandans,

regardless of economic sectors and geographical location;

FURTHER AWARE that despite the interventions by the Government and other actors in promoting the livestock sector through the creation of animal breeding and fattening facilities, the establishment of the Dairy Development Authority and the opening of ranches, the performance of the livestock sector in northern Uganda remains dismal, despite being a region with adequate land suitable to sustain agricultural productivity;

CONCERNED that the larger part of northern Uganda faces significant challenges, including recurring droughts, limited access to veterinary services, inadequate infrastructure and insecurity, all of which have severely impacted livestock productivity and the livelihoods of the community;

FURTHER CONCERNED that the livestock and crop sector largely depend on nature and the increasing climate change cannot guarantee the required amounts of rainfall;

NOTING THAT increased funding to the livestock sector in the northern region and the Karamoja subregion, in particular, will boost food security, expand veterinary services, improve livestock infrastructure, strengthen livestock breeding programmes, address climate resilience, improve security and solve the conflict question;

RECOGNISING that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries envisions a competitive, profitable and sustainable agricultural sector that intends to achieve sustainable animal disease and vector control, market-oriented animal production for improved food security and household incomes;

NOW, THEREFORE, Parliament urges the Government:

1. To increase resource allocation to northern region for livestock farming to accelerate socio-economic transformation...

THE SPEAKER: Repeat number one.

MS NAKUT: “1. To increase resource allocation –

THE SPEAKER: To urge the Government...

MS NAKUT: “... to urge the Government to increase resource allocation to northern region for livestock farming to accelerate socio-economic transformation;

2. To urge the Government to strengthen market access by linking livestock farmers in the Karamoja subregion to international meat markets, including the opportunities offered by the Africa Continental Free Trade Area and other international partnerships with the Middle East;
3. To strengthen the scope and functionality of the Nwoya animal breeding and fattening facility and open at least one more such facility in the Karamoja subregion;
4. To introduce a livestock breeding, fattening and management skilling course in the existing industrial hubs in the four subregions of West Nile, Lango, Acholi and Karamoja to enhance the skill of youth in the livestock sector; and
5. To support the growth of beef production in northern Uganda by functionalising Aswa Ranch in Kitgum and Iriiri Ranch in Napak district, plus opening similar ranches in West Nile and Lango subregions to complement the strides attained in dairy production in Western Uganda.”

I submit, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Nakut Faith. Is the motion seconded? (*Members rose*) Okay, it is seconded by Hon. Isaac, the Member for Zombo – by the whole House, including the Minister for Northern Uganda. Thank you. Yes, Hon. Akol.

2.56

MR ANTHONY AKOL (FDC, Kilak North County, Amuru): Madam Speaker, I rise to second the motion for a resolution of Parliament urging the Government to prioritise

the increased resource allocation to West Nile, Acholi, Lango and Karamoja subregions for livestock farming to accelerate socio-economic transformation.

Madam Speaker, when you listen carefully to the State-of-Nation Address last financial year – not this particular financial year – the President of the Republic of Uganda told the country about areas that have really accelerated growth in the country. I still remember that number one was coffee, number two was dairy cattle or dairy farming and number three was about beef. That shows you that this sector of livestock is very key for the development of these areas.

Madam Speaker, these areas – West Nile, Acholi, Lango and Karamoja – have been doing very well in livestock. In particular, some of these areas lost the cows or livestock because of the war. However, you realise that in the planning and budgeting for the country, more resources, in terms of livestock, have not been given to these particular subregions of West Nile, Acholi, Lango and Karamoja.

As a result, even the existing ranches like Aswa Ranch, which is located in Pader – not in Kitgum – has not been receiving the resources needed to make sure that they do their work to prioritise so that the farmers in these areas go back to their original way of farming.

Madam Speaker, when we talk about poverty in the country, you will notice that the contributors to poverty in this country have been in these four subregions, and it is very dangerous for our local community to contribute to poverty in the country other than contributing to its development.

You all realise that when we talk about the poverty levels in the country, the levels in the Acholi Subregion went up, from 68 per cent in the recent Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) figures, to 70 per cent. While Karamoja is stagnating at around 65 per cent, West Nile at around 35, Lango - so basically, if the Government wants to achieve development in this country - this particular part of the country

is not doing well because they have not been prioritising the issue of livestock farming and perennial crops, yet these are key to the development of this country.

Therefore, I second this motion and think that the Government must take serious actions to make sure these particular subregions receive the necessary budget, which is the only way through which we can take our people out of poverty.

When you look at the problems in the country now - the prices of the crops that the people produce - soybeans and maize - keep fluctuating daily. While the prices of milk and meat keep increasing. As I talk, a kilogramme of goat's meat, for example, is about Shs 18,000 in Gulu yet a person who cultivated maize will sell a kilogramme at about Shs 400 or Sh500. How many kilogrammes of maize does one need to sell for them to buy a kilogramme of meat to eat with their family?

These are some of the challenges that our local people have been facing because they have been engaged in crops that one has to work for three or four months and they have to go back.

I was surprised yesterday when a Member of Parliament, my colleague, Hon. Dr Abed Bwanika, told us that the leaders of this subregion have not been guiding the community well. This is not the case. The Government has not prioritised livestock farming in northern Uganda while at the same time, the people who come with animals from other regions are grazing the animals here, getting a lot of milk, and also getting a lot of meat from this subregion. I beg to move and thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order, but the Member is already off the microphone. Hon. Anthony Akol, we cannot say that the Government has not contributed much to the restocking of this area because we have just passed a loan of \$354 million under the Agricultural Transformation Project Fund and this money is going to revamp Aswa Ranch. It is not totally that it has been left out.

Much as the Government has tried its best, we need more. Yes, Hon. Dr Abed? (*Hon. Tinkasiimire rose*) Hon. Tinkasiimire, do you want to speak? Okay, let me first hear from Hon. Dr Abed.

DR BWANIKA: Madam Speaker, the seconder of this motion has insinuated that yesterday, I alluded to the fact that Members of Parliament from this area are not guiding the people very well. I never said that. We should capture - we are on the *Hansard*. We are on record. What I said was very clear. I encouraged our honourable members to call for those agricultural enterprises that are key for this area. I did not say what you said I said.

THE SPEAKER: Exactly that is what you said. We need a stakeholders' meeting with the leaders to guide the leaders on what should be done best. Thank you so much. Hon. Ababiku, let me first have the seconds, then I come over. I will have Hon. Tinkasiimire. Now, northerners, you also need to be helped by outsiders.

2.59

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I support this motion because livestock farming has a lot of benefits. As of now, according to the statistics and the 2021 Census, livestock farming provides 4 per cent of our GDP.

Madam Speaker, culturally, northern Uganda has a very strong attachment to animals, especially cows, goats, and so forth. Therefore, northern Uganda, Karamoja –

THE SPEAKER: When you talk about animals, we imagine you are talking about those animals in the game park. For cattle keepers, they mention the real thing. The cows, the goats, the –

MS ABABIKU: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Allow me to concentrate more on the cows and goats. We have a lot of attachment to these. Domestically, they support us economically and socially. We also want to contribute to the GDP of this country.

An increment in resources will facilitate this region. First, to make sure that all the subregions in this region are supported, especially in the areas of establishment of breeding and fattening centres.

I do not support that breeding and fattening centres should be in only a few areas of Lango and Acholi. I propose that they should be in Madi Subregion, in the greater part of the West Nile, Lango Subregion and so forth.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, this will support artificial insemination in areas where farmers do not have cows. The increment will help us to support small-scale farmers by giving them at least two cows and a bull. That will ensure that we all participate.

Madam Speaker, we have a big challenge of knowledge. Many of us are keeping animals the traditional way. If the Government increases our funding through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, our farmers will get well-organised so that they can keep animals well, get increased income, be linked to markets, have improved livelihood and they can contribute to the GDP of this country. I beg to submit. Thank you so much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Hon. Mrs Engola from Lango. Yes, I am talking about Mrs Betty Engola who is holding –

3.02

MS BETTY ENGOLA (NRM, Woman Representative, Apac): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also support this motion because livestock farming and breeding are very important to the development of this region and the country.

Madam Speaker, in Apac District, we have a breeding centre but it is not doing a lot. Lango Subregion is not extending their services to all those districts, which should be a fact. This centre should do a lot to let the farmers know what they are doing. We find livestock farming very important because it provides beef, milk, hides and skins, and others. And all that is income to our people.

Therefore, I support this motion and the Government should, through the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, increase farms so that our people can benefit. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Hon. Tinkasiimire?

3.04

MR BARNABAS TINKASIIMIRE (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, we are also trying to help non-northerners. They have also asked to support you in discussing this so long as we are discussing greater northern Uganda. I do not expect Hon. Tinkasiimire to start saying he wants cows in his constituency. We are talking about the Greater North.

MR TINKASIIMIRE: Madam Speaker, you are right to say that we should have a national spirit. Look at the development in the North and its people squarely. They have visited very many places in Uganda and they have admired what is happening in places like Mbarara, and Bushenyi. They see that if this is done here with the type of land that they have, it could be a big milestone.

I have been privileged, Madam Speaker, to visit all these regions: Karamoja, West Nile, Lango and Acholi. Indeed, livestock farming is viable and the movers of this motion are right to request this for the people that they lead. It is the reason that I stand to support them.

Madam Speaker, I will be quick to add that when I was in Karamoja, I discovered that it is normally hit with heavy drought. Other than having to increase resources for livestock farming, the Government must intentionally move to have this region access sustainable water sources.

[Text expunged.]

Madam Speaker, I want to see something tangible. When we talk about livestock

farming, we are not talking about one cow in each household. What type of cow? We are talking about, maybe, five to 20 heifers, which if possible, can be zero-grazed such that these people can be engaged in heavy milk production, which they can sell to get the money that can help in increase capacities of these households so that they can have decent housing, educate the children they produce in their homes and have the capacity, in case they are invaded by any form of sickness, to treat themselves.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR TINKASIIMIRE: Madam Speaker, I want to thank you - because I had not submitted on the Floor of the House - and your team, for having thought about these regional settings. I had an interaction with people from northern Uganda in the evening, particularly from Gulu. A number of them were very appreciative of this initiative. I am looking forward to when this will be in my sub-region, Bunyoro. Certainly, our demands are very clear, and we expect that the people from northern Uganda will also support us. May God bless you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Tinkasiimire, we have an international obligation with Egypt, and the diversion of water from the Nile would be declaring war. We also have nearby waters in the area apart from the Nile. Therefore, your contribution on the diversion of the water from the Nile should be removed from the *Hansard*.

Otherwise, water can be diverted from any other source.

Can I have Dr Lulume, then Hon. Okia? After that, I will have Hon. Okia and Hon. Lillian.

3.10

DR LULUME BAYIGGA (DP, Buikwe County South, Buikwe): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I thank the mover of this motion, which I would like to support wholeheartedly. We have been hearing a lot of stories that the North, before the war, had a lot of livestock. After the war, there have

been efforts to restock the livestock. We want to cause an evaluation of the restocking of the livestock in northern Uganda.

There are certain pictures, which I see usually, of the President looking after his cattle; thousands of them and they are usually local breeds. So, somebody would wonder, why would the President look after local breeds? We need to interrogate that and the President would be the right person to advise.

In many areas of this country, including the region I come from, livestock has always been given to people.

These are exotic breeds, Madam Speaker, yet it is very difficult to trace how many people have expanded their herds after being given those exotic breeds. Somehow it becomes very difficult for them to sustain such projects even if it is one cow because of the expenses involved in looking after them.

Therefore, the mover of the motion needed to also be specific on what kind of livestock would suit this region so that people can sustainably look after them.

It will necessitate the ministry to carry out an elaborate kind of research together with the people of northern Uganda because generations have changed. The previous generations had time for their herds. In today's generation, people may not have a lot of time for herds of cattle, in case you want to restock the way it was.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, while I support this motion, I would like the mover to do the needful; social engagements within the region to ensure that if an investment is going to be directly made to improve livestock in this area with vast land and grasslands, the types of breeds and the ability to sustain the project, even if it is one cow, can be sustained. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Is Hon. Bwino, the Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries here? The essence is that when you give us Friesian cows, the grass

in our area may not be suitable for them and they may not be able to live long.

You may think that is what will give us milk and we sell it but the honourable member's argument is one: you need to do a stakeholders meeting to find out which animals fit best in that area. You will respond to those issues.

Yes, information and then –

DR BWANIKA: Madam Speaker, this acting LOP is a veterinary doctor by profession. Karamoja has a breed called the Zebu Cattle, small but very good for that area. What we need to do is to bring a breed to crossbreed so that we can improve the growth rate and size. Those breeds are there. There is the Boran from the neighbourhood in Kenya and everywhere else. That is what we need to do.

In western Uganda, they have improved the local Ankole breed by crossing with Friesian because they are looking for milk. Here, we do not need to look for milk. For instance, in Karamoja, we are looking for beef.

These are issues that I know our ministry is well able to handle because they are vets that have gone to school and are well trained and they can give us a good programme.

The idea that the Government focuses on this region with abundant land and pastures is an idea that must be given priority and we must implement it.

Lastly, one of the Members has ably articulated the issue of water for production. For Karamoja, you cannot talk about animal production unless you also talk about water for production. We do not need to divert water from any river. We need to lay pipes up to Karamoja. Karamoja is not in Sahel, it is just near here. We can pump water and they can do production. We can have those feeder roads and we can have those feeding centres. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Before the next person comes, we have Mr Sebastian Oguti, the Deputy Dean of RDCs and RCCs

in Uganda and he is also the Deputy RDC, Lamwo District. We also have Mr Godfrey Otim, Division Mayor, Laror Pacer. This is the second time. We have Mr James Kidega, the RDC for Agago and Hon. Jenipher Nantume Egunyu, the CAO for Nwoya District. She was with us in the 10th Parliament. Honourable, you are welcome.

3.18

MS JOANNE ANIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand to support the motion that the Government should prioritise resource allocation for livestock farming to the Northern Region.

The “*cura*” that His Excellency was talking about in the seven enterprises, which the Government has already done for us, livestock is one of them. Livestock farming is one of the biggest producers of revenue especially when it is done at zero grazing level.

His Excellency has always said that he does the local animals because he has vast land. In northern Uganda, I can give the example of Madi-Okollo District, each household has access to about four acres and above but some households have access to over 100 acres. A lot of this land has lots of tall grass and bushes. This has attracted what people are calling the Balalo to our region. The Balalo have seen that their animals have thrived in this area.

Therefore, we would really support it if the Government could help even the local people because the people have been saying, “Let the Balalo go” but that does not solve the issue. How about if the local people were empowered and taught to do what the cattle grazers are also doing?

Madi-Okollo District is very good for goat rearing. A small pilot project has been done in the parish to which I belong, and I can tell you people have prospered. The goats multiply at a very fast rate. This is something that can be looked at because someone receives three indigenous goats and then maybe a male hybrid goat. Then the population can expand.

If this could be rolled out into all the other areas, I believe we would see the social economic transformation that we are looking for.

THE SPEAKER: The Government can buy cows from those Balalo, the neighbours, so that you co-exist because those animals are already used to being there; they will not die. Hon. Lilian and then Hon. Joyce Acan.

3.20

MS LILIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand to second this motion. The people of West Nile have been keeping animals but for our local breeds, the best you can do –

THE SPEAKER: Which animals? Leopards?

MS PAPARU: The cows and goats – the best our local breed cows can do is weigh about 80 or 90 kilogrammes. That is the best they can do. When you milk, the best you can get is one and a half litres of milk.

Most of the people of West Nile attached a little meaning to the animals. They will keep a few to marry and of course, they do not pay many. Four or five cows and you can marry a woman.

However, this has changed. With the intervention of NAADS and Operation Wealth Creation, the Government has tried. They took some animals to West Nile. Unfortunately, as my colleagues have said, the breeds that were taken there could not easily be managed by the locals. This is because they graze their animals at will. They do not invest in treating them.

The animals that were brought needed to be planned for, treated and kept well. Most of them died. That has been the challenge there.

I am happy that the motion is echoing that we must invest in capacity development. We must invest in other areas such that these animals can be kept well. Those animals can be kept in West Nile because other people are already keeping them there and getting good money out of them.

THE SPEAKER: Let me allow someone who has animals that do not die anyhow anywhere. Hon. Kasaija, can you give advice on cows? You know, not all cows die anywhere. When you look at the Boran that Hon. Kasaija has – he is the best farmer I know. Yes, Hon Acan.

3.23

MS JOYCE ACAN (NRM, PWD Representative): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also support the motion on increasing resource allocation to northern Uganda. I would like to bring your attention to the National Special Grant that is being given to people with disabilities every year. This grant has helped people with disabilities to purchase animals.

When we visited the groups in Palaro, Atiak, and Namukora in Kitgum, we realised that they were doing very well. However, as their hopes were increasing to add on more livestock, the money for the National Special Grant in the budget was reduced, and the money given to them now, is so meagre. We pray that this money is increased.

Madam Speaker, they also aim at getting Parish Development Model (PDM) funds to get more livestock. However, when they fill the forms to access PDM money, they are chased away because they have funds from the National Special Grant. I, therefore, request that when this money is disbursed to northern Uganda, people with disabilities should also be considered. I submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ndyomugenyi. After him, we shall have Hon. Lokii.

3.24

MR ROLAND NDYOMUGYENYI (Independent, Rukiga County, Rukiga): Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I support the motion urging the Government to increase resources and funding to northern Uganda, simply because; number one, historically, northern Uganda, as a region, has been left behind in terms of development. There are certain agencies like the National Animal Genetic Resources Centre and Data Bank

(NAGRC&DB), which is doing reproduction for animals, should have a branch here so that they do more production.

Madam Speaker, in addition to that, the infrastructure in northern Uganda needs to be improved, because with all this, you cannot do much. As it was said earlier, there is a need to increase the education facilities to skill the youth. The President earlier said, if you do not have household income, and that household income must come from education, and agriculture, then the people may not have good health, and money in their pockets.

Madam Speaker, I stand here to support the notion that northern Uganda gets more resources for it to move in tandem with other regions. I thank you.

3.27

MR JOHN BAPTIST LOKII (NRM, Matheniko County, Moroto): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to join my colleagues in supporting the motion urging the Government to increase funding to boost livestock farming in the various parts of northern Uganda.

Madam Speaker, this motion is premised on the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries carried out agricultural zoning of this country and identified the potential of each region in the country to see what they can produce best and can also export it.

Madam Speaker, livestock is one way of empowering the rural masses economically, if only we have political will, and can enhance the budget to support the livestock subsector.

Madam Speaker, you realise that in our budgetary allocations, year in, year out, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries' livestock subsector gets peanuts in allocations. How do you expect a subsector, which is given little money to produce much? It is only when the Government allocates money to this subsector that the cattle-keeping communities will be able to produce what to export and contribute to the GDP.

Madam Speaker, the Government had programmes for restocking various parts of northern Uganda, but without giving farmers basic knowledge in livestock disease control. These animals are given to the farmers. The farmers are clueless in terms of diseases that are common there, and how they can prevent those diseases, and so, the animals end up dying without giving farmers what they should have got.

This is worsened by livestock disease control decentralisation. There are some diseases, which the Ministry for Agriculture has decentralised to the farmers. When you decentralise a disease like Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP), which is a lung disease, caused by ticks, to livestock farmers, they have no capacity. Farmers do not have the capacity to control diseases. Why is the Government running away from the technical responsibility of controlling diseases in the countryside, especially among the people who are keeping animals?

Madam Speaker, I passionately support this motion, which urges the Government to increase money. I take the information. (*Hon. Ochero rose*)

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ochero came to see my cows and he said “This cow looked like mine.” (*Laughter*)

MR OCHERO: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for giving me a chance to give information. I equally support this motion.

Madam Speaker, I do not need to repeat the fact that adding funding to northern Uganda, for this sector, is important. Many have talked about it. I want to digress the debate a bit.

Madam Speaker, the Government has already been putting some effort into restocking this country, in many sectors. For example, let us talk about the animals in northern Uganda. There has been a restocking programme in northern Uganda, but on many occasions, the resources do not go to the right people. I want us to discuss this very carefully.

Parliament has appropriated money to buy things for people, but these things have not reached the people who deserve them. When are we going to discuss that? Let us be very careful because the Government has been giving back. Those who implement them down there - when you want to benefit, you have to bribe the parish chief to be on the list. When will the poor bribe to benefit from these things that we are discussing? This is a very healthy debate. People actually becoming more –

THE SPEAKER: There is a scenario where cows were taken to a particular district, and they were given to only family members.

MR JOHN BAPTIST LOKII: Thank you. Finally, Madam Speaker - let me conclude - we can ask the Government, through this motion, and in a bid to demonstrate seriousness, to develop the livestock subsector in Uganda. We have to pass a Rangeland and Management Policy because it is in it that all the policies, with the deliberate steps to develop the livestock subsector, are defined. I urge the Minister for Agriculture to Table the Rangeland and Management Policy in the House so that it is passed with funding. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, let us hear from Hon. Mourine Osoru. Honourable members, if you have spoken, kindly give others a chance. After Hon. Osoru, I will move to Hon. Okori-Moe.

3.32

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Madam Speaker, thank you very much. I support the motion urging the Government to increase the allocation of resources to the Northern.

Madam Speaker, before Arua became a city, there were Friesian cows, which were brought and dumped there. Knowing how expensive it is to manage Friesian cows are - they just call, “to whom it may concern” to pick them. Once you pick them - first of all, our people do not have any knowledge of raising Friesian cows. We do have extension workers, but these people do not do anything on the ground when

it comes to that. That means all those Friesian cows that were taken to Arua died. We can now imagine how much it has cost the Government.

As we request the Government to increase funding to the northern region, they should also think about those that are down there; the extension workers. Going forward before they venture into bringing any cow, in whatever form, let them first train and change our people's mindset because they are still attached to the traditional ways of doing things.

For instance, if you go to Arua City today and see the way we keep our animals; goats and cows, it is just for marriage purposes, which is not good. So, Madam Speaker, some of those things should be taken into consideration as we request for more funding be sent or given to the northern region. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Okori-Moe?

3.35

MS JANET OKORI-MOE (NRM, Woman Representative, Abim): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I support the motion urging the Government to prioritise and increase resource allocation for livestock farming in northern Uganda.

Recently, the Government secured a market in Nigeria for milk and milk products worth \$500 million annually. Therefore, it would be a good thing for northern Uganda to also take the opportunity and benefit from that market, which the country has secured.

One thing that has to be done is to improve the breeds of animals in northern Uganda. For example, Karamoja has the largest number of cattle, but it does not produce milk. When you check the records of the Dairy Development Authority, you will notice that no milk comes from Karamoja, just because of the poor breed of animals. I know when money is invested in this sector, the breeds will improve and therefore we can also benefit from the market that the Government has secured.

Recently, the Woman Member of Parliament for Terego informed Parliament about the type of cows that are in West Nile. She said the cows in Terego look like goats. It means they are so poor that they cannot even give any economic benefits.

Take a look at the ranches in this country. For instance, in northern Uganda, we have Aswa Ranch, which is intended to benefit the communities and improve the breeds; it is in Pader. When you come to Lango, there is Maruzi Ranch, which also has challenges, but has not been attracting any money. In Karamoja, it is empty. There is no ranch. In West Nile, we have Got-Apwoyo, but it has also been having challenges.

So, it would really be good for this Parliament and for the Government to make a deliberate effort to ensure that more money is put into these ranches and also in other areas that are deserving, like Karamoja, so that the animal population is improved. Otherwise, I thank the movers and I know we are on the right path. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Jennifer – point of order on what? Information from who? Who is informing - I am asking.

3.38

MS JENNIFER DRIWARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Maracha): I thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, what is the problem? Do you want to give information? Let Hon. Jennifer conclude and then you give information.

MS DRIWARU: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I do not take this opportunity for granted. I stand to support the motion urging the Government to prioritise and increase resource allocation to the West Nile, Acholi, Lango, and Karamoja regions for livestock farming.

Madam Speaker, in fact, this would have been yesterday - our people have been left behind

for so long. Our people were deceived to grow tobacco, where farmers, up to now, have not been compensated. After that, our people went into -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Jennifer, you passed money for tobacco compensation and it is available. Let us not misguide the population out there.

MS DRIWARU: Thank you, for this clarification but I am saying this because our people have waited for a long time. If this is the information, we are glad and we pray that it is implemented.

Our people - after being deceived into growing tobacco - some of our farmers in West Nile went into mairungi growing, which has been prohibited; they have been left with no alternative. If this is to give an alternative for the livelihood of our people in West Nile, Karamoja, Lango, and Acholi, so be it, and let it be implemented.

Secondly, the hybrid programme that is always centrally procured has issues. However, we pray that if this programme is implemented, let it be done well so that the procurement challenges that are centrally caused, as it has been, are addressed, as well as the sensitisation of our people be upheld. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: There was information from either the Member for Amuru or Hon. Feta.

MR FETA: Madam Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity. I wish to inform my honourable colleague, Hon. Okori-Moe, that the demonstration farm she spoke about and said is in West Nile, Got-Apwoyo, is not in West Nile. That demonstration farm is in Nwoya District in the Acholi Subregion.

Nonetheless, Madam Speaker, I support the motion. You see me here but I am a product of cattle farming. My father used to breed bulls to pay school fees, and those bulls were the ones from which money was got by our parents to send us back to school. In December, it would be slaughtered and it would pay school fees for the first term; again in the second and third

terms. That is how we have come here. We were able to access socio-economic transformation of household income because, from primary four, I used to sell milk and go to school with the money.

Therefore, cattle breeding – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, where is hon. Oulanya Andrew? Give Hon. Andrew the microphone. The other day, I looked at Hon. Andrew's cows and they looked like goats. When we get cows, they must be treated like babies. They must be looked after very well.

3.43

MR ANDREW OJOK (NRM, OMORO COUNTY, OMORO): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to support the motion because this is something that we have all been doing for a long time -

THE SPEAKER: But you remember I complained.

MR OJOK: Yes, you did complain and it is part of why I want to support this motion though on condition that it is not just about giving cows to the people; it should be one that is looking at the whole ecosystem from the feeds, medication and to the professional services. For example, if you look at Omoro, we have one extension service provider per 3,000 plus farmers.

Therefore, unless we address the whole ecosystem, we are basically beating around the bush. I want to request that it should be a holistic approach. I thank you, very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us hear from Hon. Apolot, Hon. Koluo and Hon. Paska, then Hon. Baatom.

3.44

MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity -

THE SPEAKER: But be brief.

MS APOLOT: I rise to support the motion that the Government should prioritise and give resources to support livestock farming, aware that livestock is a source of food and income.

Madam Speaker, for us in Teso, you are one of the model cattle keepers and I want to agree with the funding to North because they have land, just like our case. The population is so high but you are aware that we have areas where people can keep livestock.

I want this to be put right because as per now, even His Excellency, the President committed that maybe we will increase the number of people who are going to benefit from compensation.

How can the Government put it right that this allocation is for compensation and this is separate for the same economic activity? I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. There was somebody who said that we need a serious talk about restocking visa-vie compensation, and agree on the best thing that benefits everybody, hence the urge for equity in this country. This is because if you are compensating only ten people in my village yet all of us need restocking and income - we need to agree on how this can be handled. Yes, Hon. Paska.

3.46

MS PASKA MENYA (Independent, Woman Representative, Pader): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am here to strongly support the motion for the Government to send more resources to the region because we are really doing bad.

It is so painful that those who come to graze their animals hire land and then take it back. The cow that they could have bought at only Shs 500,000, after grazing it in the land of Nwoya, they will sell it at Shs 2 million.

So, this is one of my justification and the confirmation that we must all, as northern

Uganda, stand up for livestock farming.

Pader District has Aswa Ranch. We have the National Animal Genetic Resources Centre and Data Bank (NAGRC and DB) in Aswa Ranch. I am so happy you said that there is money, which is going to be sent to Aswa Ranch, to the tune of around USD 355 million.

I pray that the Government doesn't make this money to only benefit the investors who are in Aswa ranch. This money should be prioritised to the community.

NARGC-DB, which is in Aswa Ranch is a Government entity but they are not doing anything to support the community to stand on their own. If we could identify out-growers and NAGRC-DB directly supports them, we would fight poverty in Acholi Sub-region and no longer remain the same. So, I hereby strongly support the motion.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. If I could ask, from all of you here, who leads by example? How many of you have cows? I know Museveni has them. We should lead by example and make sure our people learn from us.

Yes, I had given Hon. Baatom, Hon. Abrahams, and then Hon. Esther. (*Hon. Koluo rose*) Yes, Hon. Kolou, I forgot about you. It is because you are not a cattle keeper. I will come to you.

3.49

MR BEN BAATOM KORYANG (NRM, Dodoth West County, Karenga): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity.

THE SPEAKER: Let us try to limit the time.

MR BAATOM: I support the motion urging the Government to increase funding for livestock production in the northern region. Colleagues have spoken about a number of factors but I would like to focus on Karamoja.

Karamoja's livestock population can support the growth and increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Karamoja in terms of processing and export of organic beef in that

case. This is because Karamoja's livestock is bred on natural grass. Therefore, the beef from Karamoja is actually in high demand across the globe; we just need to improve on the quality.

However, there are a few factors that make it very difficult. A number of colleagues have already alluded to them. One, is diseases, pasture and water. Given that the droughts are long in Karamoja; it leads to less grass during the dry periods in which the rains are not able to support the growth of pasture.

Water bulking and transfer would be a very good solution. Yesterday, when the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries made their presentation. They did not talk about issue of water for production in Karamoja; targeting water bulking and transfer.

A colleague had talked about getting water from the Nile or Lake Kyoga to take to Karamoja, but that may not be a solution given the international issues.

However, Karamoja has rains that are flush and have a lot of water. There are three sub catchments in Karamoja that can support water bulking, storage and transfer.

One of them is Lokere, which supports the northern districts of Karamoja. It is called the Pager sub catchment. The middle is the Loko and then the southern one is the Awoja. So, if we invested money in this areas -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable -

MR BAATOM: Yes.

THE SPEAKER: Let us first talk about getting the animals before we look for a source of food and water. The water is available.

MR BAATOM: Yes, I am looking at water that can support pasture growth and/or provide enough pasture for the animals.

THE SPEAKER: We can even give you water from Awoja? Next.

3.52

MR PETER LOKII (NRM, Jie County, Kotido): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to support the motion to increase resources to northern Uganda. History has it that the Soroti Beef Factory at one point was proposed to be in Karamoja in the 1960s, and because of the number of livestock.

At that time, the word poverty did not exist in Karamoja as it is today, but after a lot of conflicts, livestock diseases and counterfeit drugs for livestock in the market, the livestock population has come down. That, therefore, warrants additional resources to be given to the North.

There is a Member who talked about the Aswa Ranch, and it tickled my mind a bit. It is important, as Ugandans, that this Parliament rises to the occasion to question the role of investors. I am not saying that investors have no role but if all money is going to be pumped into investors, how shall we fight poverty?

It is assumed that investors already have their own money. If they come to Aswa Ranch to invest but the Government has to give them more money, as the population is watching them in poverty, then what exactly shall we be doing? So, I would like to appeal that the resources that will be added to the north to support livestock production should focus on the local people.

I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, just clarification: the meat factory in Soroti is private.

MR ABRAHAMS LOKII: I am talking about history, Madam Speaker. In the 1960s -

THE SPEAKER: Also in history, there were so many cows in Teso –actually, now they even beat Karamoja. *(Laughter)*

MR ABRAHAMS LOKII: Incidentally, nobody is going to take those cows away, but what we are saying is: revamp us with more

resources so that we can have our own. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: We are now happy that you have assured us that the uncles will not come for them. *(Laughter)*

3.54

MS ESTHER AFOYOCHAN (NRM, Woman Representative, Zombo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to support this motion because of the following reasons.

Madam Speaker, lately, I have been taking a lot of time to study how livestock can change the life of a rural person. I got very interested in this study and carried out a lot of research on the Kenyan market, and I realised that these things are doable.

This motion comes at the right time. However, I want to urge the Members of Parliament – the leaders of northern Uganda – that while we process this motion, let us take time and lead by example, the way Madam Speaker is saying. Let us act or become mini-demonstration farms for our people.

I have realised that you do not need to have a lot of land to benefit from livestock. I have also realised that animals, especially dairy animals, feed on daily things that every northern Ugandan home has - sweet potato leaves, banana leaves – everything that we have. That means that what we need is knowledge only, to make sure that we turn this knowledge into a profitable venture for the women that we are leading.

Madam Speaker, I can promise you that I am not going to lead just for the sake, but that I am going to lead from the front. I am going to get my people to understand that these things are actually possible.

I want to say that there is an aspect to this as well: we have the biogas that comes out of cows –

THE SPEAKER: Cow dung.

MS AFOYOCHAN: Yes, cow dung. Northern Uganda is currently affected by deforestation. All a family needs is one cow, to have biogas and clean cooking in their homes. This would be very good, and I would love us to inspire our people in that direction. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. *(Members rose)* I had given Hon. Migadde.

3.56

MR ROBERT MIGADDE (NRM, Buvuma Islands County, Buvuma): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I stand to support the motion.

Madam Speaker, we must believe that cattle rearing is not a political activity; it is an economic activity. Every other month, the Bank of Uganda publishes export volumes, and you see coffee, meat, beef and milk. If we are to reduce poverty in the different parts of the country, we should be measuring different regions as per their contributions to those different export volumes.

Many years ago, the President launched one of the biggest beef-processing facilities in the country, owned by the Egyptians. It is in Bombo, on Kampala-Gulu Road. It requires 400 heads of cattle per day. But it is producing far below capacity. It is only important - and the duty of the Government to facilitate northern Uganda to join livestock farming, because it is one way of helping this factory, which is not far from northern Uganda, to produce at half capacity or full capacity.

Madam Speaker, it is disturbing to see animals being moved from different parts of the country, coming to Bombo on Kampala-Gulu Road, when there are no animals, which can come from Gulu to Bombo as well.

At the same time, Madam Speaker, cows can thrive anywhere. I cannot mention that they can also thrive in the islands because I am in northern Uganda; that will be for another day. However, we must accept that there may be reasons why certain areas are where they are

in terms of development, and for some, it is basically because of cattle rearing. Thank you very, much Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. OB, cattle rearing may not be a political activity, but it also affects the political economy in terms of taxes, investment, decisions and the laws that are available. *(Members rose)* Member for Nwoya – Hon. Okello? Hon. Koluo, I will give you a chance.

4.00

MR GEOFFREY OKELLO (DP, Nwoya East County, Nwoya): Thank you, Madam Speaker. This House has already taken note that before the conflict, farmers here had a lot of animals. And so, before we delve into how the Government can support, we need to look at what happened and what is happening now.

Madam Speaker, many things have happened but, currently, there are many things that impede the growth of livestock in northern Uganda, especially cows in Acholi. One of them is that the quality of veterinary drugs that are available here cannot be trusted by the farmers. You buy drugs to control ticks, but when you apply them, they do not control them. So, we urge the Government to try and control the quality and make the environment for livestock better than it is.

Madam Speaker, also, for a farmer to improve the breed, they should avoid inbreeding. To avoid inbreeding, you need to buy cows of other breeds from elsewhere. As we speak now, Madam Speaker, it is very difficult for a farmer in Acholi or even West Nile to buy cows from across Karuma. You need eight different approvals, which makes it entirely difficult, especially for the local farmers.

Madam Speaker, also, when we talk about livestock farming, we are not just talking about cows. So, in this motion, the Government should look into the whole livestock industry, including birds.

About two weeks ago, Madam Speaker, in this city of Gulu, there was very little supply of

eggs. Traders had to rush to Kampala and other towns to bring eggs to serve the needs of Gulu City. That means there is also a wide market for other forms of livestock.

Madam Speaker, while we have institutions being strengthened now, it is important that we strengthen continuous research into farming because all that farmers need is a good environment, quality drugs and seed money to begin with. I thank you and I support this motion.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Health, before you go, there is a question you need to answer. Members, I am coming back to you. The Minister of Health has something to do but there is an issue that Members are raising in northern Uganda regarding drugs; when they go to the hospitals, they tell them to go and buy drugs from out. The issue of support to the children suffering from nodding syndrome.

4.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (PRIMARY HEALTH CARE) (Ms Margaret Muhanga): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I prepared an entire booklet on everything in northern Uganda, starting with the Acholi Subregion, Lango, West Nile, and Karamoja.

Fast forward, I want to thank the people of this region, the Acholi Subregion because in my report, they contribute the least of non-communicable diseases. *(Applause)* In the entire region, the Acholi Subregion has the least morbidity for the commonly known non-communicable diseases.

Madam Speaker, as a sector, 75 per cent of our disease burden is preventable. If we increase health promotion and information, we will have very few people to treat in this country.

Madam Speaker, they asked why there are no medicines in hospitals. I have been to this subregion three times since I joined the health sector and sometimes - I have been informed that the day before yesterday, they received drugs.

The biggest problem we have with drugs is that everybody runs to our Government health facilities and the drug stockouts are one of our challenges. Why is it a challenge? We get very little money towards buying drugs under National Medical Stores (NMS). When NMS receives these monies, they purchase drugs, distribute them and send a message to every Member of Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, there is a point of order.

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Honourable Minister of Health should note that in Gulu Regional Referral Hospital – and this has been going on for quite long - when patients go to the hospital, doctors only prescribe and the patients are supposed to buy medicine from out. It has been there for so long and so, you cannot say it has just started recently; that is out. We come from here and we know what is going on in this region.

The minister should also note that the CT scan that was given to Gulu Regional Referral Hospital has never worked. The medical superintendents told us that there are no technical people to operate the CT scan. The problem here is quite enormous.

Finally, I would like to thank the President. He committed the other day that he was going to support the students from northern Uganda majorly in sciences. Right now, all the intern doctors from northern Uganda were not deployed and more so, COVID-19 interfered with that deployment. If they fail to be deployed this time to the medical health centres, they shall have taken more than two years without completing their studies.

Madam Speaker, I pray that the President and Parliament take very special consideration of the people of northern Uganda. Let the intern doctors be deployed. I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Dr Lulume - let me hear from the doctors. After Dr Lulume, then Dr Acuti. Hon. Richard, did you become a doctor?

DR BAYIGGA: Madam Speaker, I want to inform the House that the health committee –

THE SPEAKER: A minute. Honourable members, why I diverted the debate is because I am sending the minister on an assignment. We have a patient that she has to sign papers for to be taken for treatment.

DR BAYIGGA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to inform the House that the health committee of which I was part crisscrossed northern Uganda, and will have a report. I think we shall be on Order Paper tomorrow. I was seeing the minister pre-empting the report that we must give to Parliament. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Dr Acuti -

4.10

DR SAMUEL OPIO ACUTI (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Madam Speaker. As my colleague has indicated, there is a report from the health committee, which is going to expound more on the drugs. I want to give three reasons that we have always observed for drug shortages. One is delayed deliveries. Delivery that was supposed to have been made three months ago has not been made.

The second reason is we have what we call artificial drug shortages. The drugs are in the stores but when the patients are sent outside to get the medicines. We observed this during our oversight visits where a patient was sent to buy Panadol or Amoxicillin outside in a pharmacy yet when you go to the stores, the medicines are available. So, we are having issues of artificial drug shortages, which is driving all these. This is what the report is going to try to raise and see how best to address it. I thought I would give the information that our report is going to clarify more on that. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Dr Ruyonga.

4.11

DR JOSEPH RUYONGA (NRM, Hoima West Division, Hoima City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am Dr Joseph Ruyonga, the Chairperson of the Committee on Health.

Madam Speaker, as my colleagues have mentioned, we had an oversight from the 12th to the 17th and we have a report, which we put up for space on the Order Paper and I will present it tomorrow.

However, to add to what my deputy has mentioned, there is a very big deficit in the budget for drugs. For the whole country, we had an interaction with the National Medical Stores but there is a deficit of about Shs 180 billion. As much as there is a shortage, we have to think of increasing the budget for drugs for our country. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, let us hear from the Government Chief Whip.

4.12

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Madam Speaker, following our earlier consultation with you, two ministers from the Ministry of Health are currently out of the country on state assignments. We have only one who should equally proceed to Kampala to sign a document to allow one of us to move out of the country for urgent medical attention.

So, we have also consulted and in the absence of the ministers of health, we have duly agreed that Hon. Dr Kenneth Omona, the Minister of State for northern Uganda, will hold fort - what the lawyers call "holding brief", for the Ministry of Health, alongside Hon. Dr Kaducu from the Ministry of Education and Sports. Both are doctors who are part of the doctors in the House and I believe they will do a good job, in consultation with the technical team from the Ministry of Health.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. So, we will have the report on the health committee tomorrow. We should not rush because it is one person. Hold your questions on health. We will discuss it now that we have people who will hold fort.

MS MUHANGA: Madam Speaker, I have already handed over the document prepared by the Ministry of Health on the entire northern Uganda. I beg to lay it on the Table and leave.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I wish you a safe journey.

MS MUHANGA: Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Other question on health will be handled tomorrow after the report has been presented.

4.14

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Madam Speaker, this is a bit urgent.

THE SPEAKER: Yes.

MS LUCY AKELLO: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The issue I am raising now is in regard to an Mpox positive test that was got at Elegu. Amuru District Local Government has reported this but said they have not got any Government response. That is why I was insisting that it must be raised so that the people at the border and Amuru District Local Government are assisted. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, minister.

4.15

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (PRIMARY EDUCATION) (Dr Joyce Moriku): Thank you, Madam Speaker. My sister, Hon. Lucy has raised a very critical issue, that is topical in the country. Recall that the Minister of Health made a statement on the Floor of Parliament and gave preventive measures. She gave interventions that currently the ministry is undertaking.

Madam Speaker, it is true that Uganda is on very high alert because there are confirmed cases. As far as I know, there are still four, unless there is a current update that probably I may not be aware of - the ministry, one, has built a very strong capacity for surveillance right from the district up to the national level. In my district equally, there were cases, I think. Moyo is one of the districts and of course, Amuru. However, we have a surveillance system that can identify, detect and take samples without

much delay and from there to the regional and from regional to the national levels.

Number two, already protocol for care and management has already been developed. This has been disseminated to every district. As you know, Madam Speaker, these are infections that are not managed at regional and neither at district level. That is why COVID-19 has got different centres and it has been managed within the district.

Therefore, I want to inform the House that the Ministry of Health is in full control, on full alert and has put in place very strong measures to ensure this disease does not spread.

On the other hand, however, as leaders, it is our sole duty - as the minister presented - to ensure that we take special precautions. We can see from His Excellency, the President, how we can try as much as possible to avoid close contact, use preventive measures and do all that we can to ensure we do not spread the infection across the country.

For any further information, I beg that we get the latest number. We will present it tomorrow. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries - Doctor, do you have something to say?

4.19

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (NORTHERN UGANDA) (Dr Kenneth Omona): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I just want to say a few things, still on the motion to urge the Government to increase funding for livestock. As the minister for this region, I am very happy that the matter of livestock has now generated debate in this region.

Some time ago, I remember when I was still a student, the first time I met Dr Abed Bwanika, I think I had gone to do something in Namulonge, but by some coincidence, I met him, he was already in politics. I heard he was doing fish

farming so I asked him, "Sir, can you help me also learn how to do fish farming?" He told me in Luganda, "*Omona, mulina ettaka, mulime ku mwanyi, muluunde ku nte, mufune ssente.*" These were very many years.

I am very happy that I have heard Hon. Abed Bwanika saying the same thing. In English, he told me, "Omona, you people have land. Please, plant coffee, rear cattle and get money." I am very happy that the debate about livestock is catching up in this region.

Madam Speaker, I just want to inform Parliament that one, livestock farming is one of those investments that we who are working in this region are trying to promote. Luckily, in this region, livestock farming is not a new thing. In fact, if you look at the data, you will notice that between 1980 and 1985, the biggest population of livestock was in the eastern and northern parts of Uganda. We got disorganised because of insurgencies and the wars that occurred here. I am very happy that now we are talking about livestock restocking.

Very briefly, Madam Speaker, I want to inform and urge the Members here why this is very important. First of all, I am very happy that the people in northern Uganda here - I do not know why Dr Abed Bwanika was shy to accept his rebuke for the leaders in northern Uganda here - but it wasn't until recently when the Baraaro (migrating cattle keepers) began competing with the people in the North here that they realised, I think, that it is important to keep cattle.

Again, as you have said, Madam Speaker, on the matters of poverty and mindset change, we will have to speak the truth. The leaders in northern Uganda here must lead by example. Many of you have land and at least some resources. It is easier for you to tell the people to rear or keep livestock when you are also doing it. People love to do what they see their leaders doing.

Also, I would like to say that livestock farming is actually complementary in agriculture. It gives so many other things. The Member

of Parliament who talked about leading by example, Hon. Afoyochan, talked about only biogas but there are so many other benefits from livestock. For instance, the manure. If you talk about growing coffee or bananas, you need manure. In this region, getting manure is very difficult and so, it is very difficult for people in this region to grow bananas, coffee and other forms of vegetables because they cannot easily get manure, which is now more expensive. Some people now get more money from manure than their livestock.

Secondly, the biggest challenge we have had with the livestock in this region is the issue of the breeds that have been given to the people in northern Uganda. We have held so many discussions with the honourable minister - and I am happy that he is also here - to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to guide the people of northern Uganda on what kind of breeds of animals are good for economic benefits and for the survival of this region.

Many years ago, through Government interventions, a number of animals were supplied to this region. But I can also say that very many of them died, especially the foreign or the Friesian dairy animals. So, we are urging the people and colleagues who work with Ministries, Departments and Agencies that are partners in restocking this region to bring to the people breeds that can survive.

For dairy, we are meaning *–(Interjection)–* let me finish. I will give you the opportunity, honourable. Therefore, we are saying that when we talk about breeds of cattle, we mean dairy and beef, but all these need to be breeds that are useful to the people.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries needs to teach the people here that we can still have dairy animals, which are not necessarily Friesian. There are other breeds, like the Brown Jerseys and others, which can survive in this region.

This is what I talked about yesterday, that we as the Government, we must guide the

people correctly. The same as beef. These small animals that honourable members talked about, that look like big goats, are no longer useful and they are very many in some of our communities.

Therefore, the fact that we have a lot of land and grass for free, it is a very good decision to tell the people to keep animals. However, most importantly, I would like to tell the people that there is no mistake in doing livestock because the President keeps talking about doing business with “*cura*”.

If you look at the global beef market, you will realise that it is about worth \$645 billion. There is a lot of market for beef that can come from Uganda. Within the country itself - the national market, the volume of beef market in Uganda is about \$2.9 billion. China, which imports a lot of beef from elsewhere also, is about has a market worth \$273 billion as of this year. Therefore, there is a huge market for beef and so, I encourage farmers and people in northern Uganda who have land, to rear animals.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister- [*Member rose*]- let us first hear from the minister. “PP”, you are complaining that they have permitted you; there is only one chair in the House. I know your issue and I am going to give you time but let us first hear from the minister.

4.26

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (AGRICULTURE) (Mr Fred Bwino): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Before I respond to some of the issues that have been raised by the members, allow me to thank the movers of the motion and also agree that northern Uganda has a lot of resources, which would be useful in having livestock farming as a key commercial activity in this area.

I agree that where livestock farming is being practiced currently, and a lot of lives have been transformed. Therefore, we are not exploring as a country, we know that livestock farming is

a very profitable enterprise. I thank the movers and I support the motion as well.

Regarding the issues raised, key among them is the requirement by my ministry to involve the communities and the leaders in northern Uganda in determining what kind of livestock would be most suitable to the various categories of people or farmers in northern Uganda.

Of course, severally, we have received guidance from His Excellency, the President. He has also repeated it here and we have also seen what is happening on the other side of the cattle corridor.

The guiding principles, we know them - but we shall come back and in a participatory way to determine which animals are most suitable for a particular area. I would like to request the leaders that when the time comes, we work together on this, but we also work together on the mindset change because that is the starting point. It is not a matter of giving out animals; we have to educate and inform the masses and then with us as a ministry - we shall, after that, continue to offer extension services to the population.

With that, allow me to say that once we get the resolution of Parliament, my ministry will go to Cabinet with a paper for considering the proposal and then accordingly work out how to prioritise livestock farming in northern Uganda. I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, before you leave, there is information from Hon. Okot, on Aswa.

MS SANTA OKOT: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I would like to say that I support the motion on livestock farming for the people of northern Uganda.

I would like to give information to this House, especially to the Minister in Charge of northern region - we have been talking about Aswa Ranch, which is in my constituency in a sub-county called Angagura. This Aswa Ranch land was given to the Government way back in

1964 by the former Acholi District but the land in the area belongs to the clan of the paramount chief to which I belong.

This Aswa Ranch you have talked about - I am happy that you have budgeted that big sum of money to revamp it. However, the information I want to give you is that the Aswa Ranch we are talking about has been completely depleted.

The land has been given to different people. I do not think you will get any space to revamp the way you would like to. Land has been given to a group called, Banoti, National Animal Genetic Resources Centre & Data Bank (NAGRC&DB), some former Members of Parliament who have put themselves together under some group called Gravity, some group called NEC, Panacea Agribusiness Group Ltd and pro-organic.

I would like to ask these hard questions: whose land is this? Does it belong to the Uganda Livestock Industry? Does it belong to the National Animal Genetic Resources Centre and Data Bank (NAGRC&DB) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF)? Or does it belong to the community of the Payira Clan?

These are questions that I want the minister to answer because if you are saying that you are going to put livestock there that will help in the improvement of the livestock industry of the people of northern Uganda, I am sure it is not going to work. My Woman Member of Parliament, Hon. Paska had already told you that NAGRC&DB has been there with the livestock industry from the time animals were put back after the ranch was destroyed. That was in 2014.

Now, if they say this land belongs to them, we need the Government to open the boundaries to separate the land for the Government ranch from the people's land.

The other issue I want to inform you about is that during that time, in this ranch, we had a veterinary institute, which was vandalised. This veterinary institute should be put back

so that the people can be trained on veterinary issues that will help the whole of the northern region.

This is the information I wanted to give you. Even with the time that NAGRC&DB has been there, no work or help has been given to the community. The ranch is guarded by the military. My chairman is in the gallery. Even the chairman LC5, entered that NAGRC&DB farm when the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries went there. The manager of the ranch has never come out to educate the people on how they should change the livestock because – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Santa Okot, the land we are talking about is the one I talked about where we budgeted \$354 million and it is for NAGRC&DB. NAGRC&DB is a Government institution, it is not private like the one of the MPs, and that is the one they want to revamp; so, it is not some other land.

However, I agree with you that the institute must be put back if we are going to look after cows in that place. The rest can be answered by the minister.

MR SANTA OKOT: Madam Speaker, I am talking about the land. It does not belong to NAGRC&DB. This is what I am saying. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I am talking about what is documented in Parliament where we approved a loan to NAGRC&DB for 165 square miles and the amount was \$354 million, unless the land is not there.

MR BWINO: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The land that you have talked about is the land that my ministry knows. However, from the honourable member's submission, I can see that there are some conflicts over ownership at that location.

My proposal, Madam Speaker, is that you allow my ministry to go—

THE SPEAKER: Honourable, just a minute. Hon. Ikojo? Is Hon. Ikojo still here, the Chairman of the Committee on National Economy? The deputy is here. What was the money that we approved in the House for Climate Smart meant for?

MR MIGADDE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is true that NAGRC&DB was one of the beneficiaries, but it is also true that sometime back, the President cleared the Banuti Ranchers to get 10 square miles from that same ranch. So, there may be other issues but there is also a portion owned by - and initially, the entire land was under NAGRC&DB. About the other issues of who took what later, I think the minister can better explain.

THE SPEAKER: We still have one report. I thought one of you was bringing a motion. Yes –

4.38

MR ANTHONY AKOL (FDC, Kilak North County, Amuru): Madam Speaker, last year, we had a serious issue of conflict in Aswa Ranch over the land and **Got-Apwoyo**. As leaders from Acholi Subregion, we gave some roles to some Members of Parliament to do a thorough research, which was led by Hon. Mapenduzi.

Madam Speaker, this information has been gathered together and presented to the Government of the Republic of Uganda, and there is a common position that is agreeable. If you want some updates on the issue of the land that we are talking about, Hon. Mapenduzi has detailed information about that, and I hope you give him the opportunity to present it, then you will understand more about the land we are talking about. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Where is Hon. Mapenduzi? Chairman Mao, you are most welcome.

4.39

MR MARTIN OJARA (Independent, Bardege-Layibi Division, Gulu City): Madam Speaker, thank you very much. I am happy that this matter of Aswa Ranch has been brought up.

It is true, Madam Speaker, that last year, the chair of the Acholi Parliamentary Group assigned me to gather information with a view of resolving the Aswa matter, and also assigned Hon. Tony Awany to look at the question of Got-Apwoyo.

Madam Speaker, I did my part, gathered and got every document, including government documents right from 1965 to date. The details are very clear on the question of ownership. There are three critical issues that we are looking to address. The first is the question of who owns Aswa Ranch. The second is the question of boundary and three, how the ranch is currently being used.

We have been able to provide all the facts. We had meetings with the different stakeholders, NAGRC&DB, Uganda Livestock Industries, the local people, and different groups.

Madam Speaker, I have a suggestion because I have a detailed report plus all the attachments that unfortunately I did not carry. My suggestion is that through you, Madam Speaker, you can direct to cause a meeting that would bring the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, NAGRC&DB, Uganda Livestock Industries and all the private groups that have been given land in Aswa Ranch.

Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: But Hon. Akol said that the report was with the Government.

MR OJARA: Madam Speaker, it is true the report is available. But what I am saying is that there is need because the different groups that got land inside Aswa are waving documents that were issued by the President as Presidential Directives.

Our biggest concern is that firstly, the manner in which the population is being treated in that area is not fair. Secondly, the purpose for which Aswa ... Secondly, the purpose for which Aswa Ranch was established is no longer what is going on ground. Thirdly, there is need to have meaningful discussions to ensure that,

that ranch, with the help of National Animal Genetic Resource Centre and Data Bank (NAGRC), is used for the purpose of helping the region, not benefiting individuals who are not supporting the cause of the region.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, all matters are serious.

MR BWINO: Madam Speaker, as you intervened, I am requesting that you allow my ministry to consult widely, and then come back and report to Parliament with a comprehensive report.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Gilbert, do you have something to say? Let me first hear from Hon. Gilbert.

4.43

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The issue of Aswa Ranch is very serious. I request Hon. Mapenduzi to lay the document on the Table, so that Parliament deliberates and discusses it. Let him present it on the Floor.

THE SPEAKER: Do not lay it on the Table. Let us have the report presented to the House.

MR OLANYA: Thank you. Madam Speaker, I appreciate your directive. Finally, like Hon. Migadde stated, it looks as if people are distributing Acholi land like they are giving chicken to an individual. You heard him mention that 10 square miles were given to another group; 20 square miles were also given to other people. We should not take our land for granted.

The Aswa Ranch was given to the *balaalo* and the President directed that the *balaalo* must leave Acholi. That was a clear directive from the President -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable, you are diverting from the debate. Somebody said it is good we have these *balaalo*, so we are able to copy from them how to look after cows. We need to coexist, but also at the same time - if I remember what *Mama* said - Hon. P.P. said that

the land was originally for the Government, not so? It was given to the Government.

Actually, even when we leave the 11th Parliament, we are also going to apply and they give us some cows, so that we form an association - Yes, because if they can give them out, we shall also get.

Honourable members, I put the question that the motion for a resolution of Parliament urging Government to prioritise and increase resource allocation to West Nile, Acholi, Lango and Karamoja regions for livestock farming to accelerate socio-economic transformation be adopted with amendments.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Lucy, there is a response to your issue on mpox.

4.46

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (PRIMARY EDUCATION) (Dr Joyce Moriku): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I made a very quick call and I got the update from the Director General of Health Services at the Ministry of Health -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Lucy Akello of Amuru, can you listen?

DR MORIKU: I have been informed of the current update. There are four confirmed cases of mpox in the country. Out of the four cases, two are from Congo and they were admitted in Bwera General Hospital; they improved and were discharged.

The two other cases came from Kampala. They were detected, confirmed, and right now, they are admitted in Entebbe Hospital at the isolation unit.

Madam Speaker, as I sat down, I immediately got a message from the Director General confirming that the case in Amuru District that was raised by Hon. Lucy Akello has been confirmed positive. So, we have got a total of three active cases of mpox and all of them are admitted.

For the one in Amuru District - of course, each district has an isolation facility - they will be isolated, given supportive care, given conservative care, until they improve then they will be discharged, like those in Bwera General Hospital.

Like I said, the ministry has developed a case definition already. There are probable suspected cases and confirmed cases. Therefore, let us continue to be vigilant so that we detect these cases early, refer them to the appropriate surveillance system within the district in order for them to do the needful, and take care of them.

Madam Speaker, permit me, lastly, before I sit down to say this. There was an issue raised by the Member of Parliament for Amuru, Hon. Olanya, on the interns. I thought I should say something since he said that no interns from northern Uganda were deployed.

I wish to inform this House, like the Minister of Health has already informed us, that indeed it is true, in the country this year round, there were a total of 2,860 interns. They included: the medical doctor interns; the nurses and the pharmacists. The medical doctors have both the dentists and the other line. The ministry so far deployed 1,590 medical interns. The remaining, from the stock that were not deployed, is a total of 1,270.

The criteria that has been set is very clear. All medical schools, which are quite many, have trained doctors, nurses and pharmacists. The priority for those that were deployed was given to those that completed in 2022, including medical doctors from Gulu Medical School, interns from Arua and nurses from Lira University. I want to allay the anxiety that all those interns from northern Uganda, especially from Arua, Muni, Gulu and Lira University, who completed before last year, were equally deployed.

It is true, Madam Speaker, when these doctors, nurses, pharmacists complete their training, they need to translate the theory into practical. The longer they stay, the more they are de-

skilled. They need to put the skill into practice, but the challenge the Ministry of Health has got on the table is that they need Shs 18 billion to deploy the remaining stocks of interns.

Therefore, I thought I could give that information so that this House goes, knowing that interns from northern Uganda; universities from northern Uganda, were equally treated like any other university across this country. The criteria were clear.

It is my prayer, as a former teacher in the medical school - and I say this because I have confirmed with Dr Kaducu, who is the dean at the medical school where these doctors were deployed - apart from those who completed recently. It is my prayer that the sooner these doctors get deployed to practise what they have learned, the better so that they manage better and their skills are sustained for the good of the country. I thank you and submit.

THE SPEAKER: I want you to thank Dr Kaducu for giving us the information. Next?

4.52

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Madam Speaker, I thank Dr Kaducu for giving us this information. Madam Minister, I want to bring to your attention a report that is just coming from Elegu Border highlighting the challenges in regard to mpox management.

1. One of them is that they lack work tools and some equipment is missing.
2. Emergency response facilitation is not up to date.
3. The isolation is not given a perimeter fence.
4. No facilitation to cater for the suspected client under isolation.
5. No transport means and facilitation to quickly and easily move samples from Elegu to the next collection hub.

Finally, since COVID-19, as leaders from Amuru, we raised an issue of lack of a health centre III at the border. And Government

started to construct a health Centre III facility but along the way, this construction stalled up to now.

How can a whole international border not have a health facility in the midst of all these emergencies that are coming up? What has happened to that construction work that started over two years ago? I have been asking these questions and I have not got the answers. I think we need to revive this because emergencies will always come at these borders. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Can we discuss that in tomorrow's debate when they have presented a report on health? That is one of the first things you should be able to answer tomorrow. We are going to have a brief report on the pledges.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF
THE REPORT OF THE STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
ASSURANCES AND IMPLEMENTATION
ON THE STATUS OF GOVERNMENT
ASSURANCES ON THE COMPENSATION
OF VICTIMS OF WAR AND
INSURGENCIES IN THE SUB-REGIONS
OF WEST NILE, ACHOLI, LANGO,
KARAMOJA, TESO AND SEBEI

THE SPEAKER: Pursuant to rule 179 of the Rules of Procedure, the chairperson will present the report in regard to Government assurances and implementation of projects.

4.55

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES AND IMPLEMENTATION (Dr Abed Bwanika): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I beg to lay the report of the Committee on Government Assurances and Implementation on the status of the assurance to compensate victims of war and insurgencies in West Nile, Acholi, Lango, Teso, Karamoja and Sebei Sub-Regions and the attachments thereof.

THE SPEAKER: Please, lay them on the Table and give us a summary of each region.

DR BWANIKA: Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the minutes of the meetings of the Committee on Government Assurances and Implementation.

From 1987 to 2005, the northern and eastern regions of the country were ravaged by several wars and insurgencies, which led to loss of lives, livestock and properties.

In 2003, Cabinet placed a moratorium on ex-gratia payment for compensation claims by persons affected by wars and insurgencies.

Consequently, claimants and beneficiaries from Acholi, Lango and Teso Sub-Regions filed numerous lawsuits against the Government in the high courts of Gulu, Lira, Soroti, Arua and Mbale.

In 2008, His Excellency the President directed the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to amicably settle court cases and verify all claimants irrespective of whether they took Government to court or not.

In 2016, the inter-ministerial committee conducted a verification exercise of war debit claimants/ beneficiaries in Acholi, Lango and Teso sub-regions.

In 2020 the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs initiated a validation exercise in the three sub-regions of Acholi, Lango and Teso.

In 2021, the verification exercise was devolved to the district structures.

On 29 July 2021, the Rt Hon. Prime Minister confirmed to the Parliament that Government was in the process of verifying livestock compensation claims for the areas of Acholi, Lango and Teso sub-regions including Karamoja, West Nile, Sebei, Bukedi and Busoga sub-regions that were affected by the insurgency.

On 3 August 2021, the Attorney-General also assured Parliament that he would give a report, in a fortnight, on where the Government was going and in what direction it was taking so

that Parliament could know what Government was thinking.

On 18 August 2021, the Deputy Attorney-General reaffirmed before the Parliament that the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs was conducting verification of livestock compensation claims in the areas, which were affected by the insurgency.

He also informed the Parliament that other sub-regions affected by the insurgencies were to be incorporated in the next phase. These included Karamoja, West Nile, Sebei, Bukedi and Busoga sub-regions.

He also informed the Parliament that all livestock claims and compensations would be settled within the Financial Year 2021/2022. He informed the Parliament that livestock compensation rates would be harmonised across respective sub-regions.

He informed the Parliament that a report with the final assessment was to be submitted to the Cabinet and Parliament for consideration.

Madam Speaker, allow me to go to the committee findings, observations and recommendations. We looked at the registration and verification of the claimants/beneficiaries.

In 2020, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs initiated a validation exercise in the three sub-regions of Acholi, Lango and Teso and displayed the lists of the claimants at the district headquarters and subcounties.

The verification exercise intended to confirm the genuine claimants/ beneficiaries. The following were the numbers of claimants/ beneficiaries recorded:

Acholi Subregion – 16,946 verified claimants
Lango Region – 42,024
Teso Subregion – 33,664
Giving a total of 92,634 claimants.

The committee found out that the registration and verification exercise was marred by

discrepancies and inconsistencies as discussed below:

Acholi and Lango subregions

In Acholi subregion, verified lists of claimants/beneficiaries did not involve some of the stakeholders, and the lists of claimants which were verified by the inter-ministerial committee did not capture all the befitting claimants/beneficiaries. For instance, in Gulu District, 5,733 claimants were left out.

In Kole District, 8,471 claimants were reported not verified.

Teso Subregion

The Inter-Ministerial Verification Committee only captured members of the Teso Animal and Property Compensation (TAPCO). Fourteen thousand, four hundred and ninety-nine befitting claimants/beneficiaries, from nine districts across the entire Teso subregion, were left out. This figure of “500” is supposed to be 2,500 claimants, which was the group headed by the former Kapelebyong County MP, Julius Ochen. They were also left out. We have attached their list.

Karamoja, Sebei and the West Nile subregions

In the case of Karamoja, Sebei; and the West Nile subregions, the Attorney-General stated that the registration and verification exercise of claimants and beneficiaries was scheduled for the next phase, subject to the guidance of His Excellency the President.

However, the committee established that data forms in Karamoja and Sebei subregions have never been collected for verification. They distributed the forms to the subcounties in 2020, but they never collected them. Up to now, those data forms are still in the field.

The committee observed that there were major discrepancies in the number of verified claimants/beneficiaries, with the actual number of the benefiting claimants/beneficiaries, in

all the affected subregions, including Acholi, Lango and Teso.

There was gross negligence of duty on the part of the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs’ officials, with respect to the way they handled the claimants/beneficiary registration and verification exercise, in all affected subregions.

Committee recommendations

- i) The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should conclude the claimants/beneficiary registration and verification exercise in all the affected subregions, including Acholi, Bugisu, Lango, Teso, West Nile, Karamoja and Sebei, within a period of six months. This is to ensure that the verified amounts are included in the Financial Year 2025/2026 budget.
- ii) The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should address all complaints relating to the cases of claimants/beneficiaries, who were excluded from the initial verification exercise with a view of compiling a more inclusive list of verified claimants/beneficiaries.
- iii) The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should prepare a comprehensive verification report on the compensation of all victims of war and insurgents, and present it to Parliament within six months from the time of this report being adopted.

Determination of compensation claims and rates

The Attorney-General stated that the compensation packages to the claimants were determined through a verification and validation exercise, to establish the number of livestock lost per claimant/beneficiary, and the agreed rate was Shs 1,050,000 per head of cattle. This was arrived at after consultation with the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and fisheries. This was done three years ago.

However, in many instances, the number of livestock previously verified was significantly reduced by the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, without providing any explanation to the claimants/beneficiaries. Such cases were reported across Acholi, Lango and Teso subregions.

The current market price per head of cattle in today's open market could be slightly higher. No information on the current compensation rates used for other categories of livestock, such as goats and sheep, has been provided. Where we went, apart from cattle, people lost sheep, goats, donkeys and, in some cases, pigs.

The committee observed that:

- i. Whereas the compensation package for claimant/beneficiary was determined through a verification and validation exercise, many complained that the number of livestock validated by the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs did not reflect the exact losses incurred during the insurgence.
- ii. The rate used for compensation was not based on the current market price.

Committee recommendations

- i. The ministry for Justice should base its payment to the claimant/beneficiaries on the exact number of livestock lost, as determined by the respective verification committees at the local government level.
- ii. The livestock compensated should relate to the established rate, for example, Shs 1,050,000 per head of cattle. This amount should be uniform throughout the subregions. Madam Speaker, we discovered that in some cases, people were paid Shs 500,000 or Shs 300,000, instead of Shs 1 million, for a cow.
- iii. The Inspector General of Government should investigate the varying payments per head of cattle in the different regions,

against the agreed amount as per the verification exercise.

- iv. The Government should revise the compensation value per animal, to meet the current market price per head of cattle, goat, sheep and donkey.

Government funding for compensation claims

In Financial Year 2021/2022, His Excellency the President directed that Shs 150 billion be provided to kick-start – and the keyword is “kick-start” – compensation. However, the committee found out that during Financial Year 2021/2022, only Shs 50 billion was made available to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, for payment of the verified claimants/beneficiaries, in three the subregions of Acholi, Lango and Teso.

According to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, these funds were distributed equally among the 27 districts and two cities, which are listed. Every district/city received Shs 1.72 billion. Further, funds totalling Shs 676.3 million bounced due to various reasons, including invalid bank account numbers, irregular title of the bank accounts, closure of the bank accounts and dormant accounts. This led to the return of these unpaid funds, to the Consolidated Fund.

Omoro and Kumi districts did not receive payment during Financial Year 2021/2022, due to what the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs termed as “defective submissions”, which were returned to the respective districts for remedial action. Consequently, the allocations to these districts, with defective submissions, were pulled together and reallocated to other eligible claimants/beneficiaries.

The committee established that in Financial Year 2022/2023, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs had a budget provision of Shs 30 billion, for the compensation of verified claimants/beneficiaries, but those funds were not released for that purpose.

In Financial Year 2023/2024, a budget allocation of Shs 80 billion was made available to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs for payment of claimants and beneficiaries in Acholi, Lango, and Teso subregions. Out of this, Shs 71.3 billion was received and Shs. 69.9 billion was paid out to the claimants and beneficiaries.

The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs stated that to date, a total of Shs 121.28 billion has been released to the ministry for compensation of claimants/beneficiaries in Acholi and Teso subregions and Shs 119.24 billion has been paid out to the respective claimants. The details are attached in the report regarding what money went where.

The committee was informed by the Deputy Attorney-General and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development that as at 30 June 2024, the total outstanding liability for compensation claims so far verified amounted to Shs 472.72 billion and that the finance ministry had allocated only Shs 40 billion for the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs in the Budget of the Financial Year 2024/2025 to cater for the outstanding claimant's debt.

The committee observed that:

- i) the Minister of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development had not provided for a budget in the medium term to cater for compensation of claimants/beneficiaries due to lack of comprehensive verification report on the compensation of all victims of war and insurgencies.
- ii) the finance ministry did not have a plan in place as it had not yet established the current total budget requirement for compensating all the claimants/beneficiaries in all the subregions, which were affected by war and insurgency.
- iii) the annual budgetary allocations made by the Government towards compensation of claimants/beneficiaries were not commensurate to the outstanding claimant debit requirement.

Committee recommendations:

- i) That the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should establish the total amount required to clear all claims. The finance ministry should provide the required amount to settle all the compensation claims within the Financial Year 2025/2026. This plan should be presented to the Parliament within six months from the time this report is adopted.
- ii) The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should at all times confirm the status of bank accounts for individual claimants scheduled for payment by sharing the list with the local governments and other stakeholders prior to effecting any payment to avoid bouncing of the payments made.

We looked at the actual payment of the claimant/beneficiaries. The Attorney-General stated that the outstanding liability of the claims as of 30th June was about Shs 400 billion - I have already read this. -However, upon actual analysis of the verified payment list submitted by the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, the committee established that the actual outstanding total liability for compensation claims as at 30 June 2024 was Shs 208.72 billion, not Shs 472, leaving a variance of Shs 264 billion, whose purpose was never explained by the Attorney-General.

The Attorney-General reported to the committee that the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs had so far paid Shs 119.245 billion but the committee discovered that the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs had actually paid only Shs 114.7 billion to the claimants. This leaves an explained variance of Shs 4.495 billion. The details of the payments have also been attached.

Furthermore, the committee discovered a number of inconsistencies in payment to the claimants/beneficiaries across the affected subregions. These included, but not limited to - for example, in Pader District, out of the 1,900, only 800 had been paid. Madam Speaker, allow

me not to go through those details. Members can read.

Let me go to the committee observations.

- i) The committee observed that the Attorney-General had not explained the variance of Shs 4.495 billion arising from the contradiction between the amounts of funds reported by the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs as money paid amounting to Shs 119 billion, and the actual amounts according to the information that they gave us.
- ii) A variance of Shs 264 billion was not explained arising from the contradiction again from the information that was supplied.
- iii) The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs effected payments to individual claimants' bank accounts before ascertaining the status of those accounts, resulting in bounced payments.
- iv) There was no clear communication between the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, the various local governments and associations of the war claimants on the verification and payments to be made.
- v) There were allegations of fraud and other financial malpractice in the payment process, which have made the genuine claimants to miss out on their payment.
- vi) The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs did not conduct due diligence to ensure that claimants have active bank accounts through which payments for compensation should be made.
- vii) The claimants are incurring costs of maintaining active bank accounts without getting payments.

The committee recommends that:

- i) The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should at all times confirm status of bank accounts for individual claimants

scheduled for payment by sharing the list with all key stakeholders including local governments, associations for war claimants, prior to effecting any payment.

- ii) The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should put in place clear communication channels with the local government to facilitate timely feedback on payment of claimants.
- iii) The local leadership right from villages, parishes, subcounties and districts should be made aware of the exercise of identification and profiling of deserving beneficiaries in an attempt to generate accurate data.
- iv) The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should consider other cost-effective payment options for the claimants whose amounts are Shs 5 million and below.
- v) The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should structure payments as a one-off for each claimant instead of piecemeal or instalment payments strategy that is currently affected. Madam Speaker, where we went, we found that someone who is claiming 22 heads of cattle, has been paid for one or two and they are still waiting.
- vi) The district verification committee teams should, with immediate effect, stop receiving payments on behalf of claimants and charging them 10 per cent. We discovered that some of them are charging these claimants.
- vii) A forensic audit on the payment process should be carried out to address the glaring discoveries of fraud.

General observations and recommendations

Observations

- i) The committee observed that there was no clear policy framework to guide the

implementation of compensation-related interventions in the country.

- ii) There was no communication between district officials, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and the claimants. The claimants did not know how best and where to get information in regard to their payment

Recommendations

- i) The Government should put in place a comprehensive policy framework to streamline the compensation process across the country as and when they arise.
- ii) The Government should document, verify, and validate all war livestock claimants, cattle rustling claimants and related animal losses arising from war and conflicts.
- iii) The Government should prioritise payment of elderly claimants before they pass on.

Madam Speaker, we met these men; the last one we met was in Sebei, 94 years old. He has been waiting for his payment and we are asking the Government to prioritise such people.

- iv) Registration, verification and validation of claimants should be done with transparency to avoid continuous litigation.
- v) Subsequent livestock compensation claims for the other three subregions of Karamoja, Sebei and West Nile should be handled with utmost urgency. The Government is currently handling Teso, Lango and Acholi. The other three subregions are waiting and Government should handle them with urgency.
- vi) The Government should consider and define a programme to include restocking and resettling of claimants. Madam Speaker, I have heard you clearly on this. Restocking is key if we are going to build the economy of these regions so that they can become part of the national

economy. Apart from compensation, there should be restocking.

- vii) The Government should put in place mitigation measures against cattle rustling in the sub-regions of Sebei, Karamoja, and Teso, including, but not limited to, the deployment of radio frequency identification. Let me repeat this because it is very important - on those herds which are near places prone to cattle rustling - there are devices called radio frequency identification. You can track down any animal, whether it has gone to Kenya or Sudan. You can know whether it has gone in a kraal anywhere, you can track it. We should deploy that.
- viii) The Government should invest in the education of communities where cattle rustling is endemic as one of the long-term remedies.
- ix) The Government should deepen the disarmament exercise and improve security to guarantee security of people and property.
- x) Lastly, compensation should be coordinated and handled by one Government agency to avoid duplication and waste of resources. In Karamoja, we found out that both the Prime Minister's office and the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs were involved in compensation. There is need for coordination.

In conclusion, the insurgencies and the armed conflicts coupled with cattle rustling caused loss of lives, livestock and other property, which devastated the socio-economic structure of the people in the affected sub-regions. The Government committed to compensate the victims for their lost livestock. The compensation is not only justified, but also long overdue. The Government's commitment is yet to be fully fulfilled. The process was marred with fraud, procedural irregularities, undue delays, and insufficient funding.

It is only just and fair that compensations are administered timely, fairly, transparently and without prejudice. The Government should fulfil their commitment, or come out honestly and declare their incapacity to fulfil its pledges.

Madam Speaker, I beg to report. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much, Dr Abed, the acting Leader of the Opposition. Hon. Silas? Attorney-General, do you have something to say first? Let him say what he has to say first.

5.26

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you, my senior colleague, Hon. Dr Abed Bwanika and colleagues, Members of Parliament. The report, as presented by the Chairperson of the Committee on Government Assurances, is not a glowing tribute to the exercise. It paints a bleak picture and I may not have answers to a number of the issues raised.

Madam Speaker, with your guidance, I would have wanted - once the report is shared, now that it has been brought to Parliament - to liaise with some of my technical people over issues of the figures, some of the things he has raised, so that we can prepare a comprehensive response addressing issue by issue and present them to Parliament for a general debate. I beg to request.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

5.28

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS (Mr Nobert Mao): Madam Speaker, first, permit me to apologise for being absent when you opened the House yesterday. I was obligated to welcome delegates from 22 countries attending the first ever Africa Women's Conference on Intellectual Property, and I had to be there to welcome Her Excellency the Vice President.

This morning, though I arrived late, I was in time to listen to the speech of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda.

Please, kindly accept my apology, and I welcome everybody else to the warm heart of northern Uganda.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Hon. Dr Abed Bwanika for being the most eloquent spokesperson of those who are victims of broken promises. I hope some elders will be identified to give him a name from northern Uganda because of the eloquence with which he spoke. This shows that even though, geographically we are in Gulu in northern Uganda, we are articulating national issues and our aim is to integrate the whole of Uganda.

In relation to what has been presented, let me stress that these payments are ex-gratia. Ex-gratia is a Latin word which means that the payments are made out of a sense of moral obligation rather than because of any legal requirement or arising from an admission of liability. It is a gesture of goodwill. It is part of the national reconciliation process.

Therefore, on behalf of the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, I wish to inform the House, Madam Speaker, that the Cabinet has discussed this matter, and I do believe that since, with your permission, we may be given up to six months to come back with a comprehensive response, I believe that by that time, we will have held the consultation that His Excellency the President talked about.

We are supposed to bring together all stakeholders, and we tackle this problem together. I want to assure you that the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs is not hiding any information, and we will abide by the resolution contained in the report. Like the Deputy Attorney-General said, I wish to request, Madam Speaker, that the real debate should take place when we come with our response. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. There is a procedural matter.

MR OKIN: Madam Speaker, thank you very much. Madam Speaker, this report has already been presented in the House. Our Rules of

Procedure require that a report that is presented is debated, whether improvement is given to or certain omissions are supposed to be given to complement the strength of the report.

For that matter, Madam Speaker, wouldn't it be procedurally right for us to give our input into this report while we wait for the other one and we combine eventually? But this has to be debated and then improvements made on it. Are we proceeding right, Madam Speaker? Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I want to refer you to Rule 204(6): "*Notwithstanding subrule (5), debate on the report may, at the discretion of the Speaker, ensue –*". Therefore, we can even decide to adopt this report as it is and we ask for action under rule 220.

Attorney-General, do you want to say something? Just a minute.

MR KAFUZI: Madam Speaker, the report as presented made some very serious allegations, some of which touch on the integrity of the actors in the ministry.

Madam Speaker, I humbly pray we are given two weeks exactly to prepare a response; then we can have a discussion. I will give an example: the report indicates that while the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs said the outstanding amount was Shs 400 billion, the findings of the committee are to the effect that it is Shs 200 billion. And they go ahead to ask: "Why the discrepancy?"

Now, I do not know whether they are right, or we are right. Some of these questions can only be answered by us; myself, engaging with the technical people and giving me a proper response, which I would use to present a response to Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: The issues the minister is talking about; the discrepancy borders on criminality. Therefore, if we are to discuss something that does not have proof on it – (*Hon. Muwuma rose*)- There is a procedural matter?

MR AKOL: Madam Speaker, the issue we are dealing with is in the middle and at the heart of the issues that people want to listen to in northern Uganda. This issue started with some of the things that happened in 1986.

Madam Speaker, if there is anything that people have been telling us, the leaders of northern Uganda, that must come out clearly in this regional sitting of Parliament in Gulu City, is the issue of compensation. The Deputy Attorney-General has been at the centre of this issue for a long time, and is a source of confusion as per our knowledge as leaders from northern Uganda.

If there is anything that he wants - I thought he was going to ask you for only this night to consult his technical team so that the debate takes place tomorrow when he is here presenting the facts he has found from his technical team.

Madam Speaker, if we leave this place in Gulu without discussing this particular report which is at the heart of –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Akol, did you say that the Deputy Attorney-General is a source of confusion? Did you say that?

MR AKOL: Madam Speaker, I am not withdrawing that statement because - give me time to substantiate that.

THE SPEAKER: I am saying, that is unparliamentarily. You can use a better word. I have never known you for that. That is not the Hon. Akol I know. Please!

MR AKOL: Madam Speaker, for lack of a better English word, I would say, he has been confusing the process.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Akol, back to the microphone. Can I have that withdrawn from the *Hansard*? You can use something else but not a person confusing - You would equally feel bad. At the beginning I said let us debate these issues with sanity.

MR AKOL: Madam Speaker, let me remove the confusion.

THE SPEAKER: The same way you feel –

THE SPEAKER: I apologise for using “the source of confusion” but I must say, he has not been doing things right. I apologise for the other word. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Milton Muwuma.

5.38

MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. In the background of the report that the chairperson was presenting, he did mention the subregions that are supposed to benefit from the war claims. Bukedi and Busoga were clearly mentioned.

However, when it came to regions that were verified, Bukedi and Busoga disappeared and died a natural death. When it came to recommendations in the report, Busoga is not mentioned anywhere.

Madam Speaker, before we debate, we need to consider the issue of war claims conclusively without handling it piecemeal like the report was on the Floor of Parliament. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Aogon –

5.39

MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi): Madam Speaker, when we sit in a place like Gulu, we begin to debate better. And I appreciate this current location. If it were possible, we would extend our stay here to even one month, so that Gulu feels us and Parliament feels Gulu.

THE SPEAKER: Actually, for you to feel Gulu, after this debate, you will just turn your back behind and enjoy the evening.

MR AOGON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. God indeed chooses leaders, the ones he knows are able. That is why he chose you and put you in that seat. Thank you so much.

In Financial Year 2021/2022, Kumi and Omoro did not get the money. The claim was that the forms were not handled properly, according to the report. Who, then, was responsible for guiding the process, Attorney-General, if you really think things went well?

Madam Speaker, we want to believe and accept that, yes, they put in effort but something went wrong, and there is no way the committee will hide the truth. I want to appreciate the Hon. Bwanika and the team, you have done your part.

I know, for the last eight years I have been in Parliament, that you first allow us, the Members of Parliament, to pour out our hearts, then you come and respond to our cries later, but do not try to stop the debate.

I want to beg of the Attorney-General and the team; allow Parliament to be Parliament, and then your house will be in order.

Madam Speaker, when you look at what has happened, we are talking about compensating people for the loss of animals, personally, I lost my father. Probably if he was still alive, and those days when I was struggling with education, he was there, I would have been on another level of protocol politically. *(Laughter)*

I failed on that because I lost my father. Nobody is talking about compensation for the loss of lives. When are we going to do it?

The Transitional Justice Bill (T.J) is what is supposed to be summarising all these matters that we are talking about. Why did the Government list the T.J. Bill and leave it up to now? Because the policy that the report is talking about should have been this one, on T.J.

THE SPEAKER: But we have granted that Bill today.

MR AOGON: That is why I want to appreciate you. That is the route to follow. Transitional Justice is what helps us to move from the time of war, tears, trauma, and now to peace. But also how we hold on to that peace is something

big and that is the meaning of that law, accompanied by the National Legal Aid Bill, which the committee on legal is still holding in their cabinet up to now.

Madam Speaker, I think this is the time for us to talk about these things. People have to be helped. We must compensate for lives, livestock, and property.

There are institutions for example, schools that lost trucks; they were taken by the soldiers. Up to now, no compensation has been done. Poverty has put its pedestal in eastern and northern Uganda because we have not compensated the people.

Therefore, as the Chairperson of the Greater North Parliamentary Forum, I want to beg that Rt Hon Speaker, you continue with that heart of granting us that space to debate on compensation and supporting the people so that we see the boat balanced. Without that, other parts of the country will be okay but the Greater North will be the one begging. We are economically kneeling. We need the support. I submit this for God and my country. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. We need a reconciled report. The discrepancy of 400 and 200 is a very big figure. You are going to continue talking here until the cows come back home.

MR AOGON: Madam Speaker, I think it is a wise decision. Even looking at the time, it would be okay that we give the Attorney-General's Chambers time to come here. They should have no excuse. Then you give us - even if it is one week, to debate this very fat matter, because it is a matter of national concern. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Abdu, Hon. Felix.

5.44

MR ABDU KATUNTU (Independent, Bugweri County, Bugweri): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know the emotions when it regards this subject. The most important

thing is that we must be judicious. It is no use discussing a one-sided report. We need to be fair to ourselves. We need to be fair to those people listening to us.

Allegations have been made in that report. We have not heard responses to those allegations. We, who want to meaningfully contribute to the allegations that have been made, are begging that we want to hear the other side and make a contribution.

That is what our Rules of Procedure say.

I strongly suggest, Rt Hon. Speaker, that the learned Attorney-General has asked for two weeks, but we are here until tomorrow. Two weeks may be a long time. Why can't we give him until tomorrow so that he comes up with specific responses to the allegations in that report, and we debate meaningfully? Then we can appreciate because that is what – *(Interjection)*- oh, you want to educate me on the rules, madam? I will listen.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Attorney-General - first of all, before I get to the Attorney-General, Hon. Katuntu, I want the revised rules by next week. The amendments of the rules.

MR KATUNTU: The rules are almost ready, and I can tell you that much as we wrote to the office, for example, of the Leader of Opposition, we got nothing. The Government Chief Whip responded, the Clerk's Office responded, and we have been processing. By next week, put us on the Order Paper, and there will be a report. There is no doubt about that.

THE SPEAKER: We need the rules.

MR KATUNTU: I am only waiting for somebody who was putting me on order to listen to it because –

THE SPEAKER: Let us get the point of order from - she was putting Hon. Katuntu to order.

MS ALYEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity when I raised a point of order to Hon. Abdu Katuntu. I attended

and I have understood this report. The report is good, but it does not contain everything that we have to discuss here. Now, Hon. Abdu Katuntu is proposing that the Deputy Attorney-General should go and respond to the report without getting issues from us who are on the ground here.

We are aware that some of the issues have not been captured and we want to add to what has been captured in the report presented by Hon. Abed Bwanika. Madam Speaker, is Hon. Katuntu in order to say that we should not discuss this report, yet we have to add on more issues so that the Attorney-General comprehensively comes up with the answers that this region deserves?

THE SPEAKER: I want to refer you to Rule 179, the functions of the Government Assurances and Implementation Committee.

“The Government Assurances and Implementation Committee shall-

- (a) record and scrutinise the assurances, promises and undertakings given by a Minister, Prime Minister, President, Vice President, in the House from time to time.*
- (b) monitor and evaluate the fulfilment of the Government assurances; and*
- (c) exercise such functions that are not covered by paragraphs (a) and (b), as may be allocated to the committee by the Speaker from time to time.”*

We are scrutinising the promises that were made. One hundred and thirty billion shillings was released. In the report, they say, “a discrepancy of Shs 209 million.”

DR BWANIKA: Madam Speaker, that is not money released. That is-

THE SPEAKER: Money given out to beneficiaries.

DR BWANIKA: The money that has been given out, what the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs has reported, is Shs

119.24 billion so far. When we added the total figures so far released, we found out that it is Shs 114.7 billion. there is a discrepancy of Shs 4.495 billion. The other money is a total of Shs 472.72. It is the total of the verified, according to the ministry. When they supplied us with the information, we added the figures because there are names of the outstanding. When we added the figures, it came to Shs 208.7 billion. So, there is a discrepancy from that figure with what is in the document, which they supplied us.

THE SPEAKER: My reasoning is that we must be able to reconcile these figures. As Hon. Katuntu said, we are having a one-sided debate and giving Hon. Kafuuzi a night to bring the figures that reconcile what is being said.

You heard the President say that there is a problem in the compensation. This is the problem that we must resolve. If we fail to resolve it between the Committee on Government Assurances and Implementation and the ministry, then we shall get a select committee or ask for a forensic audit on this. Hon. Katuntu was still on the microphone.

MR KATUNTU: Thank you very much for that wise ruling, Madam Speaker. For every committee of Parliament, before it embarks on a task, it has its own terms of reference. Are we now going to set different terms of reference, which were not captured by the committee? Then, we will be moving outside the committee report and actually, the rules of procedure.

I am really requesting my colleagues to appreciate the point that we need to get that side. Any issue that is going to be brought and is outside the terms of reference of the committee, how would the committee have investigated it? What we are debating now are issues that were investigated in the report. Madam Speaker, I can relinquish the microphone.

THE SPEAKER: Somebody is putting you to order. First get the point of order from Hon. Linda.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. What we are discussing here is very important and has affected the Government for almost 26 years –

THE SPEAKER: First of all, before you say it has affected or not affected, I want to go back to what we agreed on; no personal feelings. Let us debate with all the sanity. We are only limiting it to northern Uganda. If I start talking about Teso, you would actually cry. Go ahead.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to seek your guidance whether Hon. Abdu Katuntu is in order, trying to pre-empt what the Members want to discuss. What I know very well is that the report of the committee brought out some facts but there are others that were not brought out.

When the Attorney-General comes back to give his response, it is prudent enough for him to hear these other issues that the committee did not capture so that he comes with a comprehensive response. It does not mean that when we are going to react, we will only talk about the discrepancies in the –

THE SPEAKER: Okay, tell me what you want to add in the report.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: We shall give the Attorney-General two weeks to respond.

MS LINDA AUMA: No, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Exactly. Add what you want to add to the report.

MS LINDA AUMA: Madam Speaker, I still request that even if I say it - these are things that the Attorney-General even knows -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Linda, please, add.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. On this issue of compensation, there are almost three categories. There are

categories that went to court and the matter was concluded. There are categories that benefit from the President's guidance that those who even did not go to court should be compensated. Like for us in Lango, there are categories that are on the 42,000 list and the Attorney-General accepted only 18,000 to fill the data cards.

It was stated clearly on the list that 23,000 was not approved for payment. One of the claimants is Hon. Felix Okot-Ogong. They said that he was not approved because he claimed frivolously.

Another issue was on the reduction of people's claim. When we are discussing this and we do not iron out those other issues, this matter will keep coming back to the Government. That is why I was requesting that if it be in order, you allow us to leave out the discrepancy on the money but bring out other issues so that when the Attorney-General is responding, he responds to it. Is he in order?

THE SPEAKER: He is in order.

5.57

MR FELIX OKOT-OGONG (NRM, Dokolo South County, Dokolo): Madam Speaker, allow me to thank the presenter, Hon. Abed Bwanika, for his excellent, brilliant and eloquent presentation. Thank you very much, honourable committee chairperson.

Madam Speaker, this matter is not new to this Parliament. It has been on the Floor of Parliament so many times. The President is willing to pay the people of Northern Uganda. He promised that he is going to pay the claimants their claims. However, our problem has been the process of how this matter has been handled.

Madam Speaker, as Hon. Linda said, there are members who went to court and the Government decided to do an out of court settlement. It was agreed and the lists were presented. We have those lists from two advocates companies. The President agreed, therefore, that to clear this matter –

THE SPEAKER: Which company?

MR OKOT-OGONG: It was Makmot Kibwanga & Company Advocates and Bashasha & Company Advocates whereby members spent money to process their claims. Some members even went to court to get the affidavits and also administration of their estates.

Madam Speaker, I want to appeal to you and this House that our people have waited for too long. Parliament, let us decide today. Let the matter be concluded in Gulu and we refer to it as the "Gulu Declaration," that all the claimants be paid.

Madam Speaker, our people have been waiting for too long, as I said. Some of them died. For example, my father was the biggest cattle keeper with over 1,000 cattle. He lost all of them during war. He died without getting his claims. When I decided to claim on his behalf, they said it was a frivolous claim. I was claiming on behalf of the family. Even then, it was even approved. I went through all the processes and they approved 600 cattle for my father but up to now, they have paid only 10.

Madam Speaker, I am not saying I should put my interest before the interest of the people. My interest is that the people of Lango, Acholi, Teso who have genuine claims be paid their due.

Hon. Attorney-General, it was me –

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR OKOT OGONG: Madam Speaker, let me add this one. When the President came to Lango during the campaigns, it was me who suggested that he should increase it to Shs 150 billion -Shs 50 billion per region, per annum. Every year, they should be getting Shs 150 billion. From Shs 30 billion to Shs 50 billion

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Felix, not all claimants will be paid apart from the verified claimants. It should be on record that, the verification process must take place and determine the rightful people to get the money.

MR OKOT OGONG: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am happy that you have made a good statement that all verified claimants should be paid and it should be in this financial year. If you can vary the budget, get a supplementary budget and our people are paid. Thank you

MR OCHERO: Madam Speaker, we are discussing a very critical matter. One of the purposes of regional sittings was to completely exhaust debate that pertains to that particular region. And compensation, like they said, is at the heart of the matters that affect the people of northern Uganda.

So, we must thank you for bringing Parliament here.

Madam Speaker, I look scared and worried, when my senior learned brother, the Minister for Justice, walked over there and declared-

THE SPEAKER: He is on procedure.

MR OCHERO: And he declared a compensation token as ex gratia and that is a senior learned lawyer. He said that everything we are discussing here is ex gratia, like a salary for LC1 chairman.

We are talking about compensation. Are we proceeding well by debating ex gratia? Are we debating ex gratia or compensation?

THE SPEAKER: One thing that the President or the motion said was that what the Government is paying for now is not what the Government did but what was done by the past Governments.

Yes, Hon. Ojara-

MR MAPENDUZI: Madam Speaker, Hon. Norman Ochero is my good friend -

THE SPEAKER: No, he is your old boy in the-

MR MAPENDUZI: One time I took him to our village only to realise that he was actually operating in our area and is one of those who took part in - with the rebel groups raiding our animals and he knows.

THE SPEAKER: And they took nine bags of your groundnuts?

MR MAPENDUZI: They carried, including groundnuts and goats. *(Laughter)* Is he in order to pretend to be caring when he is actually part of the problem. Thank you. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ojara, I cannot rule on a matter where I was not present. However, Hon. Attorney-General, so far, we have released Shs 130 billion. How much has been paid out?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Speaker, when we appeared before the Committee on Government Assurances and Implementation, we informed them that in the Financial Year 2021/2022, we received, Shs 50 billion.

In Financial Year 2022/2023, Shs 30 billion was budgeted for but it did not come. In the Financial Year 2023/2024, we received Shs 80 billion, making a total of Shs 130 billion.

THE SPEAKER: Was that what was allocated by Parliament?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: That is what was allocated by Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: How much did you get as a release?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: From the document I have here, Shs 121.28 billion was released.

THE SPEAKER: How much have you paid to the verified claimants.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Shs 119.8 billion was paid out and Shs 1.486 billion bounced. That is what I can talk about. So, for the discrepancies discussed or brought forward by the report, I can only correct them by engaging the technical people so that I respond to them ably. It is already past-

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Attorney-General, the people of Acholi, West Nile,

Teso, Bukedi, Busoga, Lango are on issues of compensation.

Compensation is paramount for them and they would even be happy if we only discussed compensation in this sitting. So, you need to put your things right to be able to tell the people how much you have given them and who the beneficiaries are.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Speaker, that is why I requested for time. I will be ready to respond to everything raised during next week's sitting. But be that as it may, all the figures paid out, including the lists, are on the website of the Ministry of Justice.

Every member can access it, so that by the time we appear next week - if you agree to my proposal to present my response, everyone will have the requisite information from the website. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: And in total, from the list you know that you are supposed to pay, how much money is required to pay the verified claimants.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Speaker, when we appeared before the Committee on Government Assurances and Implementation, we said that on the basis of the verified claimants that we have on the lists, we would require Shs 400 billion.

THE SPEAKER: Shs 400 billion?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Yes, I believe that is what we have presented to the committee

THE SPEAKER: You have already received Shs 130 billion.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: When the committee said that all we required was Shs 200 billion, that creates a discrepancy of Shs 200 billion. Now, I need to engage with the technical people to find out how they arrived at the Shs 400 billion so that I can present that to Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Zombo -

6.10

MR LAWRENCE BIYIKA (NRM, Ora County, Zombo): Thank you, Madam Speaker-

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, you heard what the Attorney-General said. You are the ones who give out money. I will agree with what Hon. Okot Ogong said, that we must find money and clear these people.

So, if we agree here that in the next supplementary budget that is going to come and Hon. Kasaija is in agreement that we should get money for the claimants, let it be so. However, we need to make sure that the right people get the money and that verification is done right.

MR BIYIKA (NRM, Ora County, Zombo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, this is a very important issue that should be handled with all the gentility it requires. There are many stakeholders in this and, if it is not properly handled, these stakeholders may start their own action, which may not be nice for us as a country.

Secondly, I go back to the Latin origin of “ex gratia”. Fortunately, I studied Latin. “Ex gratia” means “out of goodwill”. “Compensation” comes from the Latin word “*compensare*”, which means “restoring the gains and the losses”. While compensation is legal, ex gratia is voluntary. While compensation is to restore to the original position, ex gratia is just goodwill. While compensation is taxable, ex gratia is tax-free.

If I inherit the office of Member of Parliament of Ora County, I need to take responsibility and carry on what I got on the ground. It is an obligation that I feel I should work towards fulfilling. When you look at the history, the events and the people who suffered the impact of these catastrophes – if you look at 1996, for example, when NRA burnt about 16 vehicles on Karuma-Pakwach Road, it was the people of West Nile who suffered.

So, first of all, I need clarification from the Attorney-General: why are you calling it “ex gratia”, and not “compensation”? I think it is for the Attorney-General and the minister for justice.

Secondly, the people who suffered in this are not restricted to Acholi, Lango and Teso only. So, what is the position of the people of West Nile? Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE SPEAKER: Yes, honourable committee chairperson – even the people of Bugisu suffered.

DR BWANIKA: Madam Speaker, when we moved across –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Abeja, do you have something to say? Okay.

DR BWANIKA: Madam Speaker, when we moved across the subregions, this was a very important matter. There are teams that travelled from Karamoja; they are here. There are teams that travelled from Sebei; they are here. There are teams that travelled from all the subregions to come and hear the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda debate this very important issue.

Madam Speaker, I implore you that the Attorney-General, tomorrow, comes up with some answers and allows Parliament to debate this very important issue for the northern region. We cannot defer this issue to the next two weeks. We must leave northern Uganda when we have fully debated and taken resolutions on this very important issue.

I implore you, Madam Speaker, that tomorrow – the Attorney-General can call over these discrepancies. He can call his office and allow Members to debate and come up with resolutions and settle this issue.

I implore you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, you have heard from the committee chairperson. You have also heard from Hon. Felix Okot – honourable member from Bugisu, do you have

something to say? Then, we can hear from Hon. Abeja.

6.15

MR ISAAC KATENYA (Independent, Bulambuli County, Bulambuli): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was surprised when the Committee on Government Assurance and Implementation went out for verification and omitted Bugisu subregion. I want to ask the Office of the Attorney-General - because I wrote to you and you responded that Bugisu subregion was going to be included. You know very well that we suffered the cattle rustling. We suffered together with Teso. My constituency, in particular, neighbours Karamoja, Teso and other regions.

Our sons and daughters died in the Kony war. We suffered during the Lakwena and many other wars. Therefore, Madam Speaker, I request that Bugisu subregion be included on the list for compensation. If not, we are going to engage in litigation with the Office of the Attorney-General such that we are in position to get compensated.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Isaac Katonya, he only did oversight on verified claimants. What I want Members to know is that West Nile and the other regions are not there because this was a political promise. It was where, when the President was campaigning – Hon. Dr Omona was the PPS at that time – and the President would reach and say, “I will give money for compensation”. When he reached Lango, he said “I will give money for compensation”. In Acholi, he said, “I will give money for compensation” and, then, when he reached Teso, he said, “I will give money for compensation”.

Now, what we need to do is to look at it holistically. It is not only the three areas that suffered. Let us look at it holistically and come up with the right figure that we may need to sort out these people.

MR KATENYA: Madam Speaker, when the President was in Sebei, on 9 October 2022, he promised to compensate the people of Bugisu and Bulambuli, in particular, was mentioned.

Therefore, I wrote to the Attorney-General. He responded and said we were going to be included on the list of the people who would be compensated. Even the President instructed his Principal Private Secretary, Hon. Omona, who is aware of this.

The Attorney-General wrote to me and I wrote back to him. I received a response, but when he came to present the issue, I was not –

THE SPEAKER: Okay. That will be looked at.

MR KATENYA: I request, Madam Speaker, that we include it on the list of areas to be compensated. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Abeja?

6.18

MS SUSAN ABEJA (Independent, Woman Representative, Otuke): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Allow me to appreciate the report from the committee.

To begin with, Madam Speaker, let us appreciate His Excellency the President. The issue of compensation, sometimes when I hear about it, I feel so pained. *Mzee* has a very good heart to compensate, but the reason this matter can never come to a conclusion is that – according to the report coming from my district, the confusion is being caused by the lawyers who took over this compensation.

These lawyers never lost anything like a cow, but the money they have “eaten” – the corruption in this compensation! God will repay them. God will punish them. My father lost cows. None of my family members has ever received any cow. However, we have evidence in Lango that people have “eaten” these cows.

THE SPEAKER: That the lawyers received?

MS ABEJA: May God forgive them. (*Interjection*) May God not forgive them, but may they be forgiven. (*Laughter*)

Secondly, Madam Speaker, we were in Kyankwanzi for our first retreat. You were not there. After the people's presentation before *Mzee, Mzee* requested that since your parents died, but left behind children, why can't we give two to four cows per household, or to every surviving family?

However, people who had a hand and had negative feelings towards this never accepted it. So, as a woman and a child...

So, as a woman and a child whose people in Otuke suffered this fate - I would even go for the motion that they proposed today, to reinstate each and every household.

THE SPEAKER: Restocking vis-à-vis compensation.

MSABEJA: Yes. This is because in my district, even the real beneficiaries are not going to get this compensation. How about those who will be left crying? I submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Suzan and then Hon. Dr Achuti.

6.21

DR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Madam Speaker. As Lango, we have been having discussions with the Attorney-General for the last three years. What has been presented today is information that he has. There is key information that we want him to present here tomorrow.

One is that there was a court case between Akello Betty the Attorney-General where verification was done for 59,088 claimants. All of them have been excluded from the compensation and the payment process for the last three years. We want the Attorney-General to come out very clearly with that and present that court ruling because there was a ruling that was made. The verification was done in court in the presence of the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs but all the 59,088 claimants have never been paid up to date.

Two, the Attorney-General had the 42,042 people that they verified. However, only 18,000-

THE SPEAKER: Dr Acuti, actually, I delegated you to represent me in that meeting. Now, what you are giving out is what was in the committee. Remember, we had a meeting of the different three subregions. Go ahead.

DR OPIO: Yes. They were 42,042. Those were the numbers that were verified for Lango by the Attorney-General but only 18,000 were allowed to fill the forms - what they call the data cards - to be paid. We want the Attorney-General to come out very clearly on that tomorrow. Otherwise, this is a matter for the last two years we have followed up and there has been no clear response.

The third is the issue of compensation in terms of numbers that were reduced. People's numbers were reduced from 10 to 5, 20 to 6. The Attorney-General stated that they should complain. Complaints have been made but to-date that have not been considered.

Lastly, as we speak, there is a document known as the data card, which has not come out clearly on the report. For everyone to be compensated, you must fill the data card. Madam Speaker, the number of people in Lango who went to court is 125,524 but only 18,469 have been given data cards. We want the Attorney-General to come out very clearly on the issue of data cards. The reason they are not being compensated is because the data cards are not available.

I want to state, Madam Speaker, that as much as we are discussing an outstanding figure of over Shs 400 billion, the actual figure is much bigger and the Attorney-General has already verified. So, even when we say six months for verification, he already has additional numbers.

THE SPEAKER: What figure do you have from our side?

DR OPIO: There is an additional 59,088 on top of the 42,042 that were already verified in court and the court made a ruling that they be

paid. However, they have been excluded from the list itself.

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of procedure. Honourable members, it is an agreed position that we get a report from the Attorney-General tomorrow. Not so?

MR ABRAHAMS LOKII: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of procedure. I keep on hearing English words *ex gratia*, compensation. Who are the people of *ex gratia*? Who are the people for compensation? Where are they? How many are they? It sounds like *ex gratia* has no legal basis, as Hon. Mao submitted, but compensation seems to have a legal basis. Where does that put Karamoja, whose cases have not been verified?

My understanding is that the state has a responsibility to protect life and property. In circumstances where the state fails to protect life and property, what do you do to those people? Do you give them *ex gratia*? Or do you compensate them?

Madam Speaker, are we, therefore, proceeding properly when we cannot define who the beneficiaries of compensation are?

THE SPEAKER: We are actually not moving well because we have deviated from the report. Where is - Yes, Hon. Emmanuel, and then Hon. Tinkasiimire.

6.26

MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach): Madam Speaker, yesterday, I raised a point of procedure that stopped the minister for northern Uganda from continuing with the issue of compensation.

Today, we are discussing the issue of compensation again yet, yesterday, I stated clearly that if we do not have the West Nile and Karamoja regions, there was no reason to continue. That was why in your wise ruling, you stopped the minister from continuing.

Today, we are having this discussion and still, we are not hearing about West Nile and Karamoja. *(Applause)* Madam Speaker, to me,

whether people like it or not, I would not mind even the two weeks the minister is talking about, as long as in that period, we at least have something comprehensive for West Nile and Karamoja. *(Applause)*

What is the use of continuing to discuss this tomorrow when we still do not have Karamoja and West Nile in all this debate? Madam Speaker, I wish to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, yesterday- Hon. Dorcas, I have not called you to speak. I am just telling you there is one meeting. What Hon. Emmanuel is mentioning is what happened to Karamoja yesterday. Hon. Nakut, stop being a Karachuna.

Honourable members, since you are becoming undisciplined - Hon. Acen Dorcas! Attorney-General, since everything should be inclusive - Is someone bringing a motion? Yes -

6.29

MR ANTHONY AKOL (FDC, Kilak North County, Amuru): Madam Speaker, I move under rule 64 that the debate should be deferred to tomorrow. You can adjourn the House. I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, this report will be presented. The fact is, I still go with one member, Hon. Okot-Ogong. We need everybody paid. We need to retreat and make sure that we get money. I am happy the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is here. Finance minister, we need to retreat and make sure that we have money. We are going into a political season, so we need everybody sorted. That is the wisest idea that has come out. We are going to ensure that we provide money so that everybody is paid.

On the inconsistencies, I want you to present the report on Tuesday in the House but give us the source of funding. We want everybody to be paid. I adjourn the House to 10.00 a.m. tomorrow.

(The House rose at 6.30 p.m. and adjourned until Friday, 30 August 2024 at 10.00 a.m.)