



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

SECOND SESSION - THIRD MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2023



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

SECOND SESSION - 9TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Wednesday, 1 February 2023

Parliament met at 2.19 p.m. at Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. I got a request to pass on this communication from the Uganda Parliamentary Cooperative Savings and Credit Society Limited, to all of you; that they will hold their 18th Annual General Meeting (AGM) this Friday, beginning at 8.00 a.m. in the Parliamentary Conference Hall, and the Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament will be the Chief Guest. Thereafter, at 5.00 p.m., they will have additional programmes.

There will be a half-day pre-AGM training workshop for all Members tomorrow, Thursday, 2 February 2023, beginning at 8.00 a.m. and ending at 1.00 p.m., in the Parliamentary Conference Hall.

Colleagues, I encourage you to join this SACCO - especially the new Members who do not know how helpful it is; it has saved most of us. It is a very important aspect of our community, as Parliament. So, I encourage all of you to attend, and also to be members of the SACCO.

Later on, I will amend the Order Paper to receive a statement – honourable minister, you will ensure it will not exceed five minutes because it is just giving information from the Minister of Water and Environment, on her nomination to serve as a member of the Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance. It seems we have another resistance *-(Laughter)* - and Hon. Anywar is going to lead that army on our behalf.

Colleagues, I was checking through the recently released results of the Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) and I am sure the Minister of Education and Sports – I have seen very many Members raising issues around those issues.

My attention has been brought to the issue of students with disabilities. Of the 263 blind pupils that sat the recently released PLE, none of them passed in Division One. This is a point of concern for all of us and we really need – because this violates Article 35 of our Constitution, and we have not given this issue due attention, since when I came into this House. Of all things from matters of national importance, issues of children with special needs have not given enough attention in this House.

I, therefore, request the Minister of Education and Sports to give us a statement regarding – the performance of learners with disabilities. For example, when we had lessons going on *via* television, how did we cater for the blind children? How did we cater for the visually

impaired, the deaf and all those? There were very many gaps and with the world that we live in, we can no longer wish that away.

When the minister presents a statement, we shall then see how best as Parliament, we can support the ministry on this issue of special needs beyond the blind, the deaf and all children with special needs. How best we can intervene as Parliament, to support the Ministry of Education and Sports so that learners with special needs can be supported in their education endeavors.

I will not allow comments on that issue because I have requested for a statement; so, allow me to go straight to the matters of national importance, because we have very important issues on the Order Paper, for which I know you have been asking very many questions. We need to give them the prime time that we usually have. Procedure, Hon. Nsamba?

MR NSAMBA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, Hon. Michael Bukenya brought something related to the performance of learners to this House and you sent it to the Committee on Education and Sports, and we are supposed to report in a month's time. Wouldn't it be procedurally right to guide that the Committee on Education and Sports also picks interest in that area of special needs so that as they report back to the House, that is also a matter to report on by the committee? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this issue usually gets swallowed up in the major issues. You can imagine, out of hundreds of thousands of pupils who sat, only 263 were in that category. So, they usually get swallowed up. I want us to pick it; I want us to bring it to the fore. Once the minister brings the statement, we can send the statement to the committee, but it can be a very good beginning.

Also, this is a wakeup call to the committees and even those few – the extreme minorities in society - we need to see a way of picking out their issues. I may not have any blind learner that I know who sat for PLE in my constituency;

nevertheless, it may not be an issue I have been looking at as very important, but I am trying to see how best we can pick out - even if it is one or two students – how we can bring their issues to the fore. The moment they remain swallowed up in the bigger picture - I would want us to have a debate on their standalone issue. Procedure?

MS OPENDI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Regarding the results that have just been released, there is a growing trend in this country where parents think that when a child does not get Aggregate Four, then the child has failed. And head teachers are having a lot of pressure answering questions why the child got Aggregate Eight or Nine, and not Four.

We have also seen schools saying – most of these schools that you know – “Our cut-off is Aggregate Four or Five.” Mr Speaker, not every child in this country should get Aggregate Four. I do not know how many people are here and got Aggregate Four. *(Laughter)* During our time –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member said, “How many got a four”. I am not among those who got it. We had a few Basalirwas, it seems. *(Laughter)* There is no issue of order around that. Honourable member, conclude.

MS OPENDI: Mr Speaker, I remember that during our time, you would only be excited that you were in Division One. The procedural issue I am bringing up is that this “four” is making head teachers cheat so that the children can all get Aggregate Four.

Wouldn't it be right for the Ministry of Education and Sports to look into this matter and end the issue of the aggregates and consider divisions – either Division One or Division Two – other than Aggregate Four that is making some schools cheat exams because the children must get it? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this is a debate. Hon. Sarah, you were more or less debating the committee report, but you have delivered your point home.

Honourable colleagues, rule 78 is very clear on procedure. When you rise on a point of procedure, first, look at rule 78. I know we always find a way and, sometimes, I am flexible. However, let us always use this prime time to handle very important issues.

Hon. Nabukenya?

MS NABUKENYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of procedure. Six months ago, the state minister for disability affairs presented a statement to this House in which there were many issues regarding education for the special needs learners. Several recommendations were made. It is very clear that even in the examinations, you find an interpreter working for about five pupils. Also, there are no schools in the regions and districts.

Wouldn't it be procedurally right for the Minister for Education - because he was not present during that debate - to extract those details and include them in the statement so that we can get adequate answers for the special needs department in education?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Education, you can refer to the statement which the Minister of Gender presented on this issue. However, honourable colleagues, we shall scale it. I want this as soon as possible so that when we are budgeting - these are critical issues that should form part of the budget.

Minister of Education and Sports, let us receive the statement in two weeks' time.

MR KATUSABE: I want to thank you very much, Mr Speaker. On 23 December 2022, the President of this country went to Kasese, at the border, to open an international market. He gave a presidential directive to the effect that Shs 10,000 that was being levied as immigration fees from both the Congolese and Ugandan citizens be immediately dropped.

Mr Speaker, presidential directives, world over, carry a force of law and effect. We have one President -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the procedural matter, honourable colleague?

MR KATUSABE: The procedural issue is that on 19 January 2023, I appeared before the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs where the minister was. Luckily, we had officials from the immigration department and the minister directed that the presidential directive is non-negotiable. He directed his officers at the immigration department and directorate to immediately stop levying that money.

Is it procedurally right for the immigration officials at the Mpondwe-Rubiruha Border to continue acting like they are in a different country, where they pay no attention to the Presidential and Executive orders as well as the minister's directives as of 23 December 2022 and 19 January 2023, respectively?

Since the minister is here, Mr Speaker, I do not know whether it is not procedurally right that he, at least, addresses this issue and gives us a way forward because it is causing a lot of anxiety in the community. Being a border community, I fear that it could escalate the security or insecurity situation. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague. The matter you have raised is a very important one. I think it did not rightly fall under rule 78; it would fall under rule 42, basing on the way you have concluded it. A procedural matter is to do with the business going on in the House. Issues to do with presidential pledges and all that are not the issues that we are handling; they are not on the Order Paper.

Therefore, honourable colleagues, let me read for you rule 78(4):

“Where a Member interrupts debate on a point of procedure, the Member shall state the rule of procedure he or she deems to have been breached by the Member holding the Floor or the procedural matter he or she wishes to be ruled upon, before subjecting the Member to the Speaker's ruling.”

Procedure is about how we conduct business here, not how business is being conducted outside. A Member has raised a very important matter, which touches his people, but I am constrained to rule on it because it falls outside our rules.

Honourable member, I will give you space, if you want, to raise it under rule 42 or rule 41.

2.38

MS CHRISTINE SENDAWULA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kyankwanzi):

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance. Yesterday, we had heavy rains in Kyankwanzi, which destroyed houses and plantations in Kyamutete village, leaving the people homeless and without any food to eat.

Mr Speaker, this is the same village, which the National Forestry Authority (NFA) staff invaded on 25 January 2023, shooting one person dead – Bosco – and destroying all the plantations on the other side of the village.

My prayers are that:

1. The Ministry of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees should help our community with iron sheets and food relief – and cement. (*Laughter*)
2. The NFA should compensate for the plantations, which were destroyed, and we even need justice for the person who lost his life.
3. The National Forestry Authority should stop all evictions in the area and the supervisor and sector manager should be charged for the offenses in Kyamutete Village in Ntwetwe Constituency in Kyankwanzi Subcounty.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Sebikaali, you are a senior legislator and a vice-chairperson of a committee. It is wrong to access the microphone without the Speaker allowing you. Honourable minister for Environment, it has two aspects.

2.40

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT) (Ms Beatrice Anywar):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank my colleague, Hon. Christine Sendawula, for raising this issue. What happened is unfortunate. However, on the issue of eviction by the National Forestry Authority, which is under my sector, it is true that we are also carrying out a presidential directive for those in the forests and other natural reserves.

With what has happened in Kyankwanzi, I would have wanted us to address the problem once it came, but not curtailing the undertaking of the Government. I would like to connect with my sister, if there is anything we can do – we can give them even more seedlings to plant trees and have the other arm of Government also intervene, so that we make the condition bearable. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, if you are going to have a campaign on evicting people from the forests, you know that this is always a very good platform. You can come and bring a statement so that you update the country on the upcoming campaign to get the leaders on board. You would find that such situations do not arise. Please, if you are going to have such a campaign, you should come and we shall give you space to raise it.

Government Chief Whip, kindly help the Member to liaise with the Minister for Disaster Preparedness and see a way of helping the honourable colleague.

2.42

MS HANIFA NABUKEERA (NUP, Woman Representative, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am rising on a matter of national importance. Sometime back, I brought a matter here of a one Brig. Benkunda Besigye, who deployed the army on the said land in Namataba Subcounty, Mukono District.

Of late, the same people he deployed – the army – are wielding pangas and hitting the

settlers on the land. At this moment, he has caused insecurity in Namataba. Previously, I requested the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to come to the ground. She went and connived with the RDC, held a meeting in my place without consulting with me, and they concluded the matter - they did not even conclude the matter. I was called by the residents and told that the minister came to Namataba together with the RDC. After that, they requested the residents to call Brig. Rusoke; imagine!

Now –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, can I have your prayers?

MS NABUKEERA: My prayer is that the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, together with the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, should come to Namataba Subcounty and settle the matter that is haunting the people. Thank you.

2.45

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I request the honourable colleague to liaise with me and we call the ministry so that we solve this problem together with the ministry in charge. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. What I have picked out clearly is that the Rt Hon. Deputy Prime Minister is saying she is going to link up with the honourable colleague, get more details and arrange the visits of the ministers you have requested, so that you address this concern. However, if they do not do that, then, you can come back and we can interact. The Government Chief Whip is always available to coordinate such issues.

2.46

MS FLORENCE KABUGHO (FDC, Woman Representative, Kasese): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I rise on a matter of national importance in regard to the various killings of my people by crocodiles and hippopotamuses. On 30 January 2023, a

young boy called Yunus Ssenyondo was killed by a crocodile. This happened one and a half years ago, a senior six vacationer was killed by crocodiles. In just two years, 17 people have been killed by crocodiles and hippopotamuses. In two years, 49 people have been injured by these animals on Katunguru, Katwe, Kayanja, Kasenyi and Hamukungu Landing Sites.

My prayers are that:

1. Government erects a strong cage to stop these animals from getting out of the water body to the areas where people are.
2. The ministers of Tourism and Fisheries go down to the local community at the landing sites across the district and talk to these people so that they can listen to the plight of the local people. The boy, who died on Monday, died at Katunguru Landing Site.

Those are my prayers, Mr Speaker.

2.48

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Col (Rtd) Tom Butime): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My condolences go to the honourable member and to the community of Kasese and Queen Elizabeth National Park. I agree with the story and the unfortunate information she has given us.

However, we have seven well-constructed cages. Two of them, unfortunately, were destroyed by the hippopotamuses; so, five are operational. We shall continue to construct more cages so that the crocodiles have no opportunity of hurting and killing our people.

Since 2013, 36 crocodiles have been captured in the areas of Katwe, Kashaka, Hamukungu, Kasenyi and Kayanja on Lake Edward. Twenty nine crocodiles have been translocated to Lake Kibwera in Kyambura Wildlife Reserve. Seven were captured and translocated to Murchison Falls National Park.

Awareness campaigns have been going on in that area, which I know very well, and we shall continue -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you do not have the luxury of time on matters of national importance, I will not be taking clarification. Please continue.

COL. (RTD) BUTIME: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Awareness campaigns have been going on and we shall continue with these awareness sessions amongst the community.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, had you prepared a statement?

COL. (RTD) BUTIME: The problem is that people bathe and fish while standing in the water and the crocodiles take advantage. However, we shall continue with this campaign so that they do not fall prey to the unfortunate -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. However, I do not know when you will capture these elephants that are destroying my community. My community is finished. The destruction is bad, but I am going to come to your office and link up - yes, I know how to get to his office.

Honourable minister, I am doing badly in my constituency because we neighbour a national park and every day, the elephants are destroying our people's crops.

2.52

MR NOAH MUSA (Independent, Koboko North County, Koboko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding the non-payments for secondary school teachers in most districts in the country.

Following the enhancement of salaries for science teachers this financial year, most of the districts have had challenges with paying salaries. They have been managing this through a supplementary from the Ministry of Finance.

For Koboko District, the last submission to the Ministry of Finance for a supplementary budget was in November, in which the district requested about Shs 500 million to pay salaries of secondary teachers. However, up to date,

the Ministry of Finance has not responded to this request and teachers have not been paid for now three months - November, December and January.

Yesterday, secondary teachers in Koboko District held demonstrations threatening not to return to class when schools begin on the 6th day of February. This will affect learning and the students.

My prayers are:

The Ministry of Finance urgently responds to the supplementary request that was submitted by districts, particularly Koboko District, because the teachers there have indicated that they will not return to class if salary arrears are not cleared.

Secondly, I pray that the Ministry of Finance provides adequate resources to local governments in the next Financial Year 2023/2024 so that issues of salaries are comprehensively addressed to avoid interruptions in education and service delivery generally.

Thirdly, I pray that in future when the Government takes a decision to enhance salaries of civil servants, such a decision should be accompanied with the requisite resources so that services are not interrupted.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Minister of Education, you can seek for assistance from the finance ministry in case you need it.

2.54

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS)

(Mr Peter Ogwang): Actually, Mr Speaker, first of all, the matter is very straightforward. It is a question of finances. If it were to be an issue of recruiting more teachers, maybe I would come in, but I would like to pass this over to Finance.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Minister of Finance.

2.55

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This matter is not coming to this House for the first time, and we have always provided responses.

However, in order to help the Member, since he raises a specific issue regarding Koboko District – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, go on please

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, I wanted to respond to the issue that came from Koboko District. However, from what I pick in chorus, the matter is cross-cutting in the country.

Mr Speaker, it is true that at the onset of this financial year, we had not budgeted for adequate salaries for science teachers. What happened is that in the month of September, we provided for a supplementary, whose amount I can cross check and confirm. That supplementary was enough to pay adequate salaries for the science teachers and the other civil servants.

Mr Speaker – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, point of order.

MR MACHO: Mr Speaker, while the honourable member talks about non-payment of salaries for teachers in Koboko District, even in Busia District and maybe the country at large, teachers have not been paid salaries for three months.

Therefore, I do not know whether the Minister of Finance is in order to stand and lie to the whole country that money was released yet as we talk, even head teachers who are science teachers, have not got salaries. Is the Minister of Finance in order to lie to the whole country and to this august House?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, I am not the Minister of Finance to know whether he has said the truth or not because I do not run the Treasury. So, it becomes difficult for me to verify that. What we should do is to put him to task to bring evidence here. Otherwise, I might declare him a liar yet he has evidence, and we might look bad.

However, honourable minister, when we were breaking off for Christmas, this is an issue for which the senior minister, Hon. Kasaija, even one time left the session midway saying, “I am running now to ensure it is sorted.” He further said, “You people, you are holding me here; I am running late, so release me to go and release the money.”

What happened, honourable minister? Did he go to release the money or he went somewhere to release stress?

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, can I be protected.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, you are protected.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, indeed, you are very right. In December, we came here and the issue of failure to pay salaries was raised. This is the statement we provided to the House; I would like to repeat it.

“A number of Votes, especially Local Government Votes, experienced wage shortfalls in quarter one of the Financial Year 2022/2023. This was largely attributed to salary enhancement for scientists and secondary school science teachers.

As a result, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development provided additional resources for wage through supplementary funding to the affected Votes.

However, after releasing 50 per cent of the revised wage budget to cover quarters one and two, some Votes have continued to report wage shortfalls, indicating that they are unable to

pay salaries for December due to insufficient funds caused by inadequate budgeting - not necessarily relating to salary enhancement.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in consultation with the Ministry of Public Service will arrive at a lasting solution; to address the issue of inadequate budgeting, which causes recurrent wage shortfalls. In the interim, it has been decided to frontload quarter three expenditure limits for wage to enable the affected Votes pay salaries for December and the subsequent months.”

Mr Speaker, this is the statement we made to the House and we stand by it. What I undertake to do is to confirm with the accounting officers whether our decision is being implemented. If not, they should tell us why and I can come back to this House and report on the progress.

For emphasis, wage is a statutory obligation, which we must meet as and when it falls due. It normally takes the first call on the budget and also on the releases. This should not be a matter, which we should prolong. That is why I am asking that you give me time and I will reconcile with the accounting officers and we give you a lasting solution. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, can you report back tomorrow?

MR MUSASIZI: Much obliged, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, let us handle this issue tomorrow when the minister reports back.

3.02

MR ALED AKUGIZIBWE (Independent, Buruli County, Masindi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) under the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP) committed money for rehabilitation works on the Impara-Alimugonza-Kitanyanta Road worth Shs 1 billion in Masindi District.

A contractor was identified by MAAIF and the contract was signed on the 27th of June last

year. In early December last year, the site was handed over to the contractor and the works on the road were launched by the RDC. To our disappointment, up to now there is no work that is going on, on this road.

The road is no longer motorable and some bridges collapsed. This has taken more than two years.

Relatedly, in January 2022, the Ministry of Works and Transport, through a supplementary budget, allocated funds and committed to working on six roads in Masindi District. They came and committed to working on six roads in Masindi District. They did some work on two roads, but left after they had heaped murrum on the road and this has lasted eight months.

We have actually had very many accidents on this road. The six roads that they committed to work on are: Pakanyi-Nyakarongo Road—

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, you do not need to go into those details.

MR AKUGIZIBWE: Mr Speaker, I have made several calls to have these issues fixed, but in vain. It is actually worse that schools are going to reopen on Monday.

Now that I made all the calls and I was not helped, I had to run to this House. I request that the House really saves me and my people.

My prayers are:

1. Let the MAAIF push its contractor to come and work on the road as soon as possible.
2. The Ministry of Works and Transport should come and finish up the works on the six roads that they committed to work on in the district.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, this issue is not unique to Masindi; it is also in some places. For example, in my constituency, the Ministry of Works and

Transport was doing for us a small road under the interconnectivity programme.

There is a company called Dove, to which they gave the contract. They went and got soil - I should not even call it murrum; because the district leadership and the district engineer who were overseeing the project told them: "This is soil; it is not murrum." They heaped it on the road and it has caused me a problem. People are abusing me day and night that I should go and take away my soil. This has gone on for over a year.

I know General is really active. General, the interconnectivity roads; the small companies you give contracts do not have the capacity at all. Some of us believe that these companies might be owned by your staff. You wonder how such a company qualifies to even get a contract. You wonder, for a company which cannot even raise Shs 50 million to begin on a contract of Shs 600 million. How did it get the contract?

Honourable minister, it is a very big problem and really embarrassing. This is the second time in my own area and I know many colleagues are facing the same problem, especially on those small companies you give contracts for interconnectivity roads.

3.07

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Gen. Katumba Wamala):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I apologise for the shortcomings, but I also appeal to Members - because in the district, we have the RDC and DISO. If such a thing is happening, then let reports be made quickly. My office is always open and many of you have been there. Please do not wait to put the matter on the Floor because my office is open. You can come, like in such a case, and we address the issues.

Mr Speaker, I want to be given an opportunity to come and present a comprehensive report on the condition of roads, both national and District Urban Community Access (DUCAR) roads on this Floor, so that this issue of roads is answered. But where we have that kind of

evidence - where the road was started and not finished, or it is not progressing, please give us a report in good time and we shall respond.

For MAAIF, I may not answer because I did not contract the contractor. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I will give you space on the Order Paper on Tuesday. Colleagues, let us hold our guns on issues related to this. But honourable minister, I will appreciate if you can send your technical team from the ministry to go and visit the Member's constituency together with the Member because he needs you to save him.

MR NSAMBA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving time to the minister on Tuesday. There are 18 districts that missed out on the road units. Since 2018, we have been crying to the Government to buy the road units so that we are like the other districts.

Mr Speaker, my humble request, is that as the minister comes on Tuesday, let him also update us on the money we allocated this financial year for the purchase of the road units. When we passed the budget, we went and told the people that the issue of the road units was concluded. We are now in February - the third quarter - and there is no road unit.

Let the minister come here and tell us the status of those road units as well as when they will be delivered to the 18 districts. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, please, handle as requested. Hon. Ssewungu?

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. With that comprehensive report from the Ministry of Works and Transport, I pray that he gives us the names of those districts without a single tarmac road. We always see tarmac roads being given to different areas - and new districts were created. In Kalungu, we do not have a single tarmac road, apart from

the one road going to a church and it was built by one Christian. *(Laughter)*

We want to know why new districts like Kalungu, Buhweju and others do not have a single tarmac road within their area, yet they were created for development.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you – but honourable colleagues, we are going into the mind of the minister. Let us refocus. Whereas some are asking for a tarmac road, in the whole of my constituency, I do not have any single Central Government road. I survive on the Shs 350 million they give my district – for the whole district to manage, in a place which has a rift valley. It is a cross-cutting problem.

Honourable colleagues, please, the House starts at 2.00 p.m. If you book a matter of national importance and I call your name and you are not here, do not come to interrupt me. Hon. Naluyima?

3.11

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My matter is in regard to the environmental pollution by a polythene and plastic recycling factory found on Kasangati-Matugga Road in Kasangati Town Council in Wakiso District. The factory is located in a residential area and near a wetland.

Mr Speaker, the stench emissions and effluents from the factory pose a serious health hazard to the community. Residents have reported difficulties in breathing, contamination of water sources, including harvested rain water, which is believed to be caused by gaseous emissions and effluents.

Many people have since shifted to the villages while others are considering the same. Attempts by the local leaders to engage the factory proprietors have proved futile.

My prayers are:

1. That this House intervenes and interests itself in the matter by causing the National

Environment Management Authority (NEMA) to clarify whether a proper environmental impact assessment was conducted prior to licensing this investor.

2. That the Ministry of Water and Environment should visit this place and acquaint itself with the extent of environmental degradation and devise means of reversing the situation.
3. The ministry should sanction a countrywide independent audit to ascertain the authenticity of NEMA's certificates that are issued.
4. Finally, that the ministry ensures that all persons affected by this degradation are duly compensated in a manner commensurate with the damage incurred.

I pray, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

3.14

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT) (Ms Beatrice Anywar): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank Hon. Betty Naluyima for raising this pertinent concern of her people. This is an unacceptable situation. As a ministry, we are concerned about the pollution and I want to put it on record that:

1. On Friday, I am going to get my team and go with the MP to assess the situation and report back.
2. I also want to let you know, honourable colleagues, that we have halted the issuance of permits in our wetlands. So, anyone who is posing that he has got a permit from NEMA, as per now, is lying. We shall use the same occasion to look at the certificate which the owners have.
3. Last –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, please, conclude.

MS ANYWAR: Therefore, honourable colleagues, I want to let you know that I like these interactions. If you have seen any of our investors – we need investors, as a country, but they should be compliant. Get in touch with me – you do not need to come all the way here. Please, ring me up and I will connect you to my technical people so that we go and check it. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS ON:

I) NOMINATION OF THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE GLOBAL LEADERS GROUP ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you have five minutes. Secondly, it seems we still have a problem with our *Alfresco* system. So, Clerk, you have our emails: email these statements to all Members of Parliament because, at least, we can access our emails even when *Alfresco* is down.

Please, do that urgently so that honourable colleagues are able to access the statement - The statement will be captured in full, honourable minister. Just do a quick summary. Procedure, Hon. Anna?

MS ADEKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Now that we are on the section regarding statements by ministers, I would like to bring it to your attention that last week, Hon. Mwijukye raised an issue concerning the arrest and mistreatment of Dr Kizza Besigye, along with other leaders, and you designated Wednesday as the day on which the Minister of Internal Affairs would bring a report to this House. I do not see that item under statements by ministers. So, are we proceeding rightly?

I can see, luckily enough, that he is in attendance.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, tomorrow we are handling issues to do with complaints of arrests. That statement is coming with tomorrow's issue so that we have a general debate on the same. That is how we had structured it. Honourable minister?

3.18

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT) (Ms Beatrice Anywar): Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to make this statement. I am delighted to give you this information from what has happened – good news to this country.

I have made the same statement to the Cabinet and I am happy to make the same statement to Parliament – the people's representatives.

Mr Speaker, you might take note that Antimicrobial resistance, which I will be referring to as AMR, occurs when germs including bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites, change over time and no longer respond to antimicrobials. These antimicrobials include antibiotics, antiviral, antifungal and anti-parasitic agents, for example, the high incidence of drug resistance, like ticks – *(Interjections)* – I know Members are getting worried of these terms.

However, I just want to comfort you that I will go over it quickly. I am preparing handbooks on this subject matter where each Member of Parliament, Members of the Cabinet and key government offices are going to get copies. By next weekend, we might have the detailed handbook for each one of us, but allow me to just go over it. I do not want to speak in the ordinary language like I did elsewhere.

Antimicrobials are a situation where the drugs we treat human beings with, animals and plants become resistant. They are not effective. This has become common. You can see that malaria - sometimes you have drugs, which are not effective. In animals, ticks treatment is also not responsive. In some plants, we are also using some drugs, which are not responding; so, there is resistance.

That has not only become a Ugandan problem, but also a global one. There are groups of people who have assembled themselves at a global level - I am now talking ordinarily for understanding –(Laughter)– I even I have to understand this, colleagues. I am not a scientist, but the fact is that scientific knowledge has to be understood by non-scientists, because we are affected by these things. That is how we are breaking it down.

We have global high level ministerial conferences that sat and confirmed that this is a global problem. Therefore, they have assembled leaders at the global level to tackle this problem. It has been –(Interruption)

MR TEBANDEKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In reference to rule number four, the proceedings of the debate of Parliament shall be in English. Are we proceeding well if the minister is using terminologies that are in Greek? (Interjections)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, proceed.

MS ANYWAR: Mr Speaker, as I was explaining, it has become a global problem. Therefore, there has arisen a need to have a one-stop forum where these issues are going to be all discussed and solutions drawn; where the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture are key. We have animal health and have brought on board the issue of the environment –(Interruption)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order.

DR NICHOLAS KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In medicine, there is a condition called the Korsakoff syndrome. It is about confabulating. When somebody is confabulating, they usually put words, which are inappropriate, where they are not supposed to be.

The minister, in presenting about antimicrobial resistance is confabulating. Are you in order? –(Laughter)– she is using inappropriate words. Is the minister in order to come here and confabulate and mislead even the doctors

who know about antimicrobial resistance? (Laughter)

I am advising that she uses the services of Dr Jane Aceng to present on your behalf. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, I think you also risk confabulating –(Laughter)– but let us allow the minister - I know some of these are botanical terms - to go on with our statement because the honourable colleague has not referred to any word that is wrong. You just generalised.

Honourable minister, conclude. You can see how your statement is causing excitement.

MS ANYWAR: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Being a global problem and the leadership formed globally, I am here to report that Uganda has been given an opportunity to have a representative on the Global Leaders Group. The Minister of State for Environment, speaking, has been nominated to be on the Global Leaders Group. I am the only one from the continent of Africa. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, for guidance, can you take us to the benefits of your nomination?

MS ANYWAR: Thank you. Mr Speaker and friends, what is expected of us from this group –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can you go to page six – the benefits to the country.

MS ANYWAR: Yes. The functions of this group will be to advocate and advise the global leadership. As a country, we shall stand visible as a leader on the global stage. It is an opportunity to globally project, present and spearhead the environmental issues that Uganda cares about and wishes to offer global leadership on.

Secondly, Uganda's access. This will enhance Ugandans access and networks with her partners and the donors to enable her attract

possible multilateral and bilateral funding for environmental protection and climate change management.

This will also boost Uganda's leadership in environmental diplomacy, and increase her access to the global decision-making process on issues of the environment and development.

It will equally position Uganda better to appreciate and advance her national interests and agenda on matters of the environment at national, regional and international levels.

It would provide Uganda with a useful and strategic platform to promote issues and priorities of particular interest to Uganda as a country, Africa as a continent and the rest of the developing countries.

Mr Speaker, I request for the support of this Parliament as Uganda takes up this opportunity to help them participate at the global stage, to advance action both at home and internationally in the fight against antimicrobial resistance so that we become a case to be studied in the whole of the continent of Africa and abroad.

I will soon constitute a technical team in Uganda, as mandated, whose membership will be drawn from the Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Lands, the academia, Makerere University inclusive, the National Agricultural Research Organisation, the National Environmental Management Authority, the youth of this country as well as the private sector, so that we have a formidable technical team that will back up my team to go to the international global stage. I hope my brother from Parliament will be of help. We have already dispatched the letters to the permanent secretaries and I want these names before the end of the week.

I will be travelling to Barbados next week to be sworn in and I ask for your support, fellow countrymen. For God and my country.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Congratulations, honourable minister. If you have space, please take Hon. Dr Kamara with you.

II) SHORTAGE OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES IN GOVERNMENT HEALTH FACILITIES

3.30

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Ruth Aceng): Mr Speaker, allow me to thank you for this opportunity to share with this august House the current challenges of drug stock-outs in the health facilities and the reasons leading to that. First of all, I take note that this is a very sensitive issue; none of us is currently happy with the drug stock-outs because we are losing people.

Mr Speaker, the National Medical Stores (NMS) is a Government body with a statutory mandate of warehousing and distributing essential medicines and other health supplies. The NMS has, in the past and amidst numerous challenges, delivered essential medicines and health supplies on time, in accordance with a predetermined delivery schedule. Deliveries to hospitals is effected every two months while deliveries to lower health facilities is effected every two months in six cycles, and the honourable members have been getting information to this effect.

The current challenge started in 2020, but was camouflaged by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is now that people are beginning to notice, but it has been going on. The current non-adherence to delivery schedules and hence stock outs of essential medicines in Government health facilities is a result of the following factors:

- a) The failure by the National Medical Stores to timely receive funds for the delivery of these essential medicines and health supplies.
- b) Inadequate budget amidst increase in distribution costs as a direct result of the increase in fuel prices.
- c) The erosion of the available resources as a result of the Ebola distribution activities, for which no additional funds were provided.

Mr Speaker, the issue of the timely availability of funds for the distribution of essential medicines and health supplies has been raised by the National Medical Stores and I, a number of times. Mr Speaker, I beg to lay a letter that I wrote on 28 August 2019 to the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development about the same issue.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, as you do that, I seek your indulgence because we have visitors who might want to leave soon. Allow me to first recognise them.

Honourable members, in the VIP gallery this afternoon, we have Hon. Juliet Kabonesa, former Woman Member of Parliament for Kibaale District in the Eighth Parliament. She is accompanied by her family members. They have come to witness the proceedings of the House. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Thank you. You are welcome, honourable. Please, let us resume. This is a family; so, I had the feeling that they might need to go back early.

DR ACENG: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The distribution of essential medicines is a continuous activity, which is based on a pre-determined schedule. This statement means you cannot stop the activity; it has to be continuous. For this to be achieved, it presupposes that funds for distribution are readily available. This has not been the case, most especially at the beginning of the financial year.

Mr Speaker, allow me to give a brief background to this issue: prior to the Financial Year 2009/2010, funds for medicines and medical supplies, once appropriated by Parliament, would be sent directly to health facilities and districts. The National Medical Stores would then use its privately generated funds to procure, store and distribute medicines and medical supplies to these facilities.

It was later established that the funds sent to the district and health facilities for the procurement of medicines and medical supplies were, in actual fact, being used for other purposes, leading to perennial stock outs of medicines

and medical supplies in health facilities. The few medicines and medical supplies that were actually procured were easily stolen because they could not easily be differentiated from others in the private sector.

As a solution to the above two problems, it was agreed as follows:

1. All funds appropriated by Parliament for the procurement of medicines and medical supplies in Government health facilities should be recentralised at the National Medical Stores; and
2. The National Medical Stores should ensure that all medicines and medical supplies are uniquely embossed to differentiate them from those in the private sector to minimise theft of these medicines.

Mr Speaker, to implement the above solutions, it was agreed that the recentralised funds be made available by Parliament to the National Medical Stores through a recurrent non-wage Vote, which is Vote 116. Effective Financial Year 2009/2010, this took place. This would ensure that the National Medical Stores maintains its flexibility and business mode of operation given to it by the National Medical Stores Act, 1993 and ultimately, be able to effectively procure, store and distribute medicines and medical supplies to the public health facilities.

Thus, from the Financial Year 2009/2010, all funds for health facilities under the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Local Government were recentralised under Vote 116 and provided to the National Medical Stores as a recurrent non-wage Vote.

Mr Speaker, under this arrangement, the National Medical Stores operated Vote 116 as a recurrent non-wage Vote. Funds provided and appropriated by Parliament were all received on this Vote and accessed through the IFMIS. Operational funds would then be transferred to a National Medical Stores operational account while funds for payment to suppliers of medicines and medical supplies were transacted directly on IFMIS.

As a result of the achievements made under this system, and having met the expectations of the Government, His Excellency the President directed that effective Financial Year 2012/2013, all funds for medicines and medical supplies for the UPDF, the Uganda Police Force and the Uganda Prisons Services be recentralised at the National Medical Stores. This was also done as a recurrent non-wage Vote, Vote 116.

The National Medical Stores operations were maintained on business principles, allowing flexibility to timely deliver medicines and medical supplies to the public facilities and also attract more resources from development partners.

Mr Speaker, effective Financial Year 2019/2020, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development directed that all financial transactions of the National Medical Stores (NMS), that is procurements and distributions, must be effected through IFMIS.

This new system was a radical departure from the then prevailing negotiated position of the recurrent non-wage Vote. It forced the NMS to operate on non-business principles, taking away NMS flexibilities and fundamentally affecting operations of the NMS as envisaged under the National Medical Stores Act.

Under the current system, the NMS is unable to receive funds required for the delivery of medicines and medical supplies on the first day of every quarter, yet delivery of medicines and medical supplies is a continuous process that must not stop. With specific reference to this Financial Year 2022/2023, actual funds for the first quarter were not available to the NMS until August 2022. In the second quarter, funds were not available until the first week of November 2022.

Mr Speaker, I have provided a table, which shows the actual dates of approval of warrants to date. In that table, you can see quarter one; the cash limit release date was 9 July. The actual approval date was 25 July and the dates follow up to quarter three.

The above table means that for the whole of July 2022, there were no funds available for distribution of medicines. After approval of quarter one warrants, the National Medical Stores sent instructions to the Ministry of Finance for payment of suppliers and providers of services. However, most of these instructions to pay suppliers, including for distribution-related services, were not honoured until the end of September 2022.

Concern on this matter was raised by the General Manager of the National Medical Stores in a letter dated October 2022, addressed to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance. The said letter was copied to me and the Minister of Finance.

Mr Speaker, with your permission, allow me to read the letter because some Members do not have it. This was on 3 October and we had not yet received money. The letter says:

“Reference is made to cash limits of quarter one, Financial Year 2022/2023 and our subsequent warrant which was approved.

Against the side-approved warrant, the National Medical Stores processed payments for its supplies and service providers. We, however, regret to note that payments were not processed as far back as 8 September 2022. Payments, which were processed as far back as 8 September, have not been approved. These payments amount to Shs 15,397,802,000.

These outstanding payments are critical to our uninterrupted service delivery. They include payments for fuel, distribution allowances, motor vehicle repairs, staff emoluments, as well as suppliers of critical essential medicines and health supplies.

As a result of the above delayed payments, our ability to timely deliver essential medicines to Government health facilities has been negatively impacted. The NMS has not been able to deliver medicines in compliance with the published deliveries schedule especially delivery of personal protective gear to protect health workers against Ebola.

In our previous physical interactions and meetings with yourself and through various written communications, we had clearly stated that retaining operational funds of NMS on IFMS would negatively affect service delivery.

You had indicated that you would study and address the matter. Since then, only one aspect - that is allowing our delivery staff to access funds through e-cash - was addressed. Even then, since 8 September 2022, our instructions for transmission of funds to our e-cash account in Stanbic Bank have not been honoured.

Currently, there are no funds to pay delivery staff and thus no deliveries can be made..."

And then we give the purpose.

Mr Speaker, I have attached that letter and Members can refer to it. At that time, over two months had passed since the commencement of the financial year. Such a delay of over two months in distribution of essential medicines is a very long time and its spiral effects are being experienced in the current stock outs.

The said letter clearly shows that whereas the National Medical Stores had given payment instructions through the IFMIS, the Ministry of Finance did not affect those payments for over a month. NMS was thus not able to timely disburse funds for distribution of essential medicines and this negatively impacted its ability to timely deliver medicines to the facilities.

I will highlight why:

- a. The providers of fuel for motor vehicles were not paid on time and on several occasions, they cut off service delivery due to late payments. Vehicles could not move and other vehicles that were already in the field got stuck in the field;
- b. The last mile delivery provider - the provider that picks from the districts and takes to the lower health facilities - was not paid on time. The delayed payments affected the ability of the provider to continue delivering essential medicines;

- c. Distribution allowances, which are now paid through e-cash have not been promptly paid. Instructions to replenish the e-cash accounts take long to be honoured –(A Member rose)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, go on.

DR ACENG: Sending delivery staff in the field without allowances is a risk and is not possible, given the value of the commodities that they carry.

In respect to this quarter, instructions for e-cash for delivery staff was sent on 3 January 2023 and were not honoured until 27 January 2023. I have attached another letter as Annex B.

Mr Speaker, it should be noted that the mere release of cash limits and approval of warrants by the Ministry of Finance does not, in itself, avail funds to the National Medical Stores for disbursement. This must be accompanied by the actual honouring of payment instructions. Honouring payment instructions in IFMIS is a responsibility of officers in the Ministry of Finance, for which the NMS accounting officer has no control.

It has also been noted that the Ministry of Finance, in honouring payments, usually picks out some payments and leaves out others. In most cases, those left out have a direct effect on delivery of essential medicines and this frustrates service delivery.

Mr Speaker, related to the availability of funds is the issue of funds made available by development partners that are deposited on the NMS operations accounts with Bank of Uganda. Since Financial Year 2019/2020, the NMS cannot access these funds as and when needed.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development insists that these funds should first be deposited into the Consolidated Fund. This has created a challenge since the National Medical Stores cannot deliver medicines and medical supplies received from

development partners, including antiretroviral drugs and anti-malarials, even when the National Medical Stores have received their funds.

Insisting that these funds be deposited into the Consolidated Fund has contributed to the current crisis since the National Medical Stores does not have funds to deliver donor medicines and medical supplies already in its warehouse.

Furthermore, once such funds are deposited in the Consolidated Fund, at the end of the financial year, the funds are forfeited to the Consolidated Fund instead of continuing to deliver essential medicines, which are already in the warehouse.

Mr Speaker, the other contributory factor to the current stock-outs is the inadequate budget amidst increased distribution costs as a direct result of increase in fuel prices.

During the budgeting process for the Financial Year 2022/2023, the NMS indicated and presented challenges associated with increasing prices of fuel. The associated deficit was presented, but not honoured. As a result, the current distribution budget of National Medical Stores has a deficit estimated at Shs 7 billion.

The other contributory factor to the current stock outs is erosion of the available resources as a result of Ebola distribution activities, for which no additional funds were provided.

Mr Speaker, you are aware that in September, Uganda was hit by an Ebola outbreak. The National Medical Stores was required to prioritise distribution of supplies that were needed in the fight against this outbreak. No additional funds were provided to National Medical Stores for this additional work.

The National Medical Stores, therefore, had to use the resources that were otherwise meant for the distribution of routine medicines to distribute Ebola supplies. This eroded the already meagre and late resources. To date, the National Medical Stores has not been provided

with additional resources to alleviate this challenge.

As a way forward – and as part of the short-term remedy to alleviate the current stock-outs, the National Medical Stores has started delivering combined cycles. Each cycle has medicines that are supposed to last a facility two months. Thus, the facilities will be getting deliveries for four months. I have attached a letter to this effect as Annex C.

In the long term, however, the National Medical Stores made recommendations to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in a letter dated 3 October (see Annex A) and we await implementation of these recommendations that we know will solve the current problem of access to funds.

Mr Speaker, before I conclude, I want to refer Members to Annex B. I have a printout of when funds were released to the National Medical Stores. If we start from quarter one – First of all, you will recall that in my statement, I indicated that final approval took place in September and not July. The invoice date that National Medical Stores sent finally to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was 16 September. The payment date was 7 October 2022; NMS got Shs 42 million only on 7 October and another Shs 45 million on the same date, 7 October.

The next release was on 31 October. The next was in November, December and now in January. I have attached that printout for you to take note of the invoice dates and the actual payment dates, indicating that we have a big challenge.

Mr Speaker, if I may request and say something in regard to this, I had several meetings with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. I indicated that the National Medical Stores is not challenging operating on Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS). However, can funds for distribution be provided to the NMS in the first week of every quarter and, if possible, the first day and not after three months? *(Applause)*

The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development made a commitment, which has never been honoured to date. Instead, he wrote a letter to me – and I will lay that letter on the Table – clearly indicating that - Let me read what he said.

“We have studied the issues raised by the National Medical Stores regarding the release of funds and payments in the first quarter...” – that was Financial Year 2019/2020 – *“... and we wish to draw your attention to the following:*

1. *The challenge of delayed releases was not due to failure of the IFMIS, but rather people and processes issues, which can be addressed to ensure smooth operational efficiency through the IFMIS...*” – this was in 2019 and the people and processes issues have continued to 2023.

He added, *“The delays in releases and payment, which affected all Votes at the beginning of the financial year, were occasioned by last minute changes in the Budget estimates by Parliament, which led to further delays in finalisation of the delayed approved Budget estimates.*

2. *The challenge of delayed payments to service providers in the first quarter can be addressed through proper inventory management and resource planning in the fourth quarter, prior to the start of a new financial year and making use of the prepayment or advances, as regulated by the Public Finance and Management Act...*” – the challenge still continues in 2023 in spite of these commitments.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay this letter on the Table. *(Applause)* It is signed by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Matia Kasaija.

Mr Speaker, as I conclude, allow me to appreciate you and the august House for your enormous support to the health sector. The current challenge is something that we all do not want and it must never happen. We are losing lives. I believe that by working together, we can resolve the current situation.

I have three concerns: First, if the NMS is to operate on IFMIS, let money be provided by the first day of the quarter. Let it be treated as a unique entity. The others can wait, but let the NMS get money. *(Applause)*

Secondly, if that is not possible, then let us return to NMS operational funds kept in Bank of Uganda so that there is flexibility.

Thirdly, return development partner money back to the National Medical Stores. It is for distribution of medicines procured by the partners.

I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the ball is in your court.

3.56

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, when we were responding to the issues raised in the National Budget Framework Paper, we categorically stated that out of the approved budget for NMS, we had so far released up to 61 per cent.

The Minister of Health has stated a number of facts, but there is one fact left out: the NMS does not want to belong to the IFMIS system. The question I ask is, under which law do I implement the decisions you make here? My Bible is the Public Finance Management Act. As long as you are a Vote, you must comply with the requirements of the Public Finance Management Act.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, in order for us to appreciate this debate, it is important for us to acknowledge that the National Medical Stores is not an exceptional Vote. It is true that we have had a number of engagements with them and the advice we have recommended in terms of coming to a middle ground include:

1. Going forward, there is need for timely quarterly release of funds to the National Medical Stores and all other Votes for Budget execution.
2. We have advised the National Medical Stores to adopt proper quarterly resource planning – and I want to repeat this – we have advised the National Medical Stores to adopt quarterly resource planning and make use of the prepayments and advances functionality of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) to promptly process supplies and other payments. I am sure the accountants will agree with me here.
3. We have recommended to the National Medical Stores to use the contracting frameworks that ease medicines transportation, for example, adopt the use of framework contracts. This would enable the timely delivery of the much-needed medical supplies to health facilities.

Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, let us first hold fire. *(Laughter)* Let us put down our guns because this is a matter, which should not have come here. This is a matter for the Executive to handle. If two ministries do not agree – this should have gone to the Prime Minister. If there is still disagreement, it is then that we can – but the problem is one: all your disagreements are leading to people's deaths. While we talk about your systems and what can be taken advantage of, people are dying. These are essential medicines; people are dying and people do not know about any of these systems.

Honourable minister, the people are dying because you are denying them essential medicines out of their taxes, not out of donations.

Colleagues, I know where this debate can lead if I open up. Please, rarely do I use – I think I have never used the language of directing, but I hereby direct that the Prime Minister holds

an urgent meeting between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and report back to this House tomorrow.

Otherwise, if we debate, I know where we are going. The moment I open up, I know where we are going. Tomorrow at 2.00 p.m., I need a report from the Prime Minister on what you have agreed and on that report, then I will allow a short debate.

Next statement -

III) THE HIGH COST OF THIRD-LINE ARVS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister? Colleagues, I know when you are itching to contribute to a debate, but sometimes I look at where the debate will lead and the value it will add. Let us wait until tomorrow. Honourable minister, I think they called the statement on ARVs.

4.04

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Ms Jane Aceng): Mr Speaker, once again, allow me to provide a response to the question raised by Hon. Naome Kabasharira, Member of Parliament, Rushenyi County, Ntungamo District, on the availability of third-line antiretroviral drugs in Uganda.

Mr Speaker, the Government of Uganda and its partners are committed to providing quality HIV prevention, care and treatment services to all citizens. This includes the provision of high quality, effective and lifesaving antiretroviral treatment for all clients that need them. This is reflected in the Health Sector Development Plan and the AIDS Control Consolidated HIV Prevention, Care and Treatment Guidelines of 2022.

Uganda has made good progress in HIV prevention, care and treatment. Currently, we have 1,348,517 clients out of 1,450,000 people living with HIV who are on treatment, with 92 per cent of those on treatment virally suppressed.

The majority of the patients on antiretroviral treatment are on first-line medicines and these make up 95.5 per cent. 4.4 per cent are on second-line treatment and a small proportion; 0.1 per cent – In terms of numbers, 1,630 patients are on third-line treatment. All these patients receive their treatment through the public health system at no cost.

Mr Speaker, in collaboration with partners like the Global Fund and PEPFA, the Government of Uganda provides resources to procure adequate stocks of antiretroviral medicines for all clients on treatment including those on third-line drugs free of charge.

For the 99.9 per cent of clients who are on first and second line drugs, the distribution is done through the National Medical Stores and the Joint Medical Stores to the 2000 health facilities offering antiretroviral therapy across the country.

Mr Speaker, for the 1,630 clients who are on third-line treatment, the drugs are distributed through the national referral hospitals, centres of excellence such as the Joint Clinical Research Centre (JCRC) and the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI), and the regional referral hospitals. Why? Because we need to monitor them. They have already developed resistance twice and this is their last option. So, we need to follow them up.

From these facilities, the drugs are delivered by the implementing partners and the district health teams to the respective lower-level facilities, where the third-line patients seeking care are able to access the drugs. This arrangement ensures that the third-line care is closely monitored by the specialised facilities that have human resources and laboratory capacity to monitor treatment response.

I wish to inform the House that the Ministry of Health and the AIDS Control Programme have established mechanisms to estimate the HIV prevention and treatment commodity needs that form the basis of the Government of Uganda and development partner plans. These mechanisms utilise data from routine

health facility reporting systems, and periodic surveys such as the recently conducted Uganda Population HIV Impact Assessment (UPIA), through which we established a number of people that are living with HIV and those on treatment, among other important indicators.

In conclusion, I would like to reassure the august House that we have adequate stock of antiretroviral drugs; first line, second line and third line. I can name them if Members feel that some are missing - we have Darunavir, Etravirine, Raltegravir and Ritonavir in the country for all the patients who need them.

I thank you for your support towards the Ministry of Health, HIV and AIDS response for the HIV epidemic control and ending AIDS as a public health problem in Uganda by 2030. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. I think this is helpful. The minister has given a comprehensive answer and the Committee on Health should take up the matter and ensure they follow-up.

Honourable minister, yesterday Hon. Patrick Oshabe raised a very important issue, which I promised that you would answer today. It was about the Ebola treatment centre that you set up at one of the schools. Schools are going to open, but up to now, you have not yet cleared the school. He wanted to know when you are clearing the school so that students can report since you declared Uganda Ebola-free.

4.11

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Ms Jane Aceng): Mr Speaker, allow me to thank the honourable Member for that question. On 11 January, we declared Uganda Ebola-free, but when we do that, it does not mean we close shop. It means we continue intense surveillance for 90 days.

However, there are certain things that we continue to address immediately. Many of you will recall that we had one Ebola Treatment Unit in Kassanda, three in Mubende including taking over the entire Ministry of Works

facilities there, about two in Kampala and one in Entebbe.

On 15 January, we had a meeting and agreed that the Ebola Treatment Unit in Kassanda and the three in Mubende should all be dismantled so that work can go back to normal.

Mr Speaker, last week, the Ministry of Health, together with partners, began the process of dismantling. The process begins with removing medicines and beds. Subsequently, we remove the tents after which we remove all the concrete that is on the ground.

Therefore, I want to reassure the honourable member that the process has already started. We have already removed all the drugs and beds and we shall begin dismantling the tents soon. However, again, allow me to inform this House that the intense surveillance for 90 days still continues. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will allow Hon. Flavia Nabagabe because Hon. Nsamba has moved out a bit, but the concern was very simple: we are reopening schools; where will the students study from? That is the main issue.

4.13

MS FLAVIA NABAGABE (NUP, Woman Representative, Kassanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the minister for the response she has given in regard to this particular concern. Kalwana, where the Ebola treatment centre was, is right next to my home in Buteeka, Kassanda. I passed by that place on Sunday and realised that some of the things you are talking about are still there.

I interacted with the community and they said that they are actually still in great fear because they do not understand why the tents are still there. I guess some kind of community sensitisation about the closure and what happens is needed because the fear about the use of that particular place is real. They fear using the school and some students are very afraid of going back to the classrooms, where the centre is and it is extremely difficult.

I also talked to the VHTs on the Ebola issue and they told me that around 60 of them have not yet been paid yet they worked during the Ebola surge. They told me about a list that was submitted by the DHO and that only a few of them were paid; some of the names were removed from that list. I have the list of over 60 VHTs who claim they have never been paid a single coin after their hard work during the outbreak.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no rule that permits a Member to give information to a Member who is also giving information. Here, we use rules. We do not use location or comradeship.

DR ACENG: Mr Speaker, when you have invested nearly US\$ 50,000 on the ground, you cannot dismantle it in one day. I clearly stated that we started by removing medicine and beds. Those tents will go and the concrete will go; we are dismantling. We have four centres to dismantle and we request for patience.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, when we installed the Ebola tents in that school - which I personally visited because I asked the church to give us that ground after the entire district had failed to give us ground - we interacted with the school administration and the pupils and they know why we put the tents there.

In addition, they have benefitted from an underground water pump and water for the school. The school is happy with the electricity that has been connected. I beg for patience in dismantling; it is not going to happen overnight.

In regard to the payment of village health teams, payments were made, but there are challenges because payments are made through mobile phones. Many of these people share mobile phone lines. When partners are paying, they send money and when they realise that the phone line does not show your name, they stop the payment. We have been trying to address that and are encouraging them to get phone lines that have their names. They will be paid. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, we have got very clear answers. Honourable minister, to help the honourable colleagues, you have your technical people who are in charge of this programme. Please send them to the ground to meet with the community leaders. Since there is no Ebola in Kassanda, you can send a commissioner to meet a few leaders and reassure them. It is very important when colleagues raise such issues here.

Before any other statement is presented, I want to allow the statement on the Exodus SACCO to be presented; it is a short statement.

IV) ON THE DEDUCTION OF
POLICE OFFICERS' SALARIES AS
CONTRIBUTION TO THE EXODUS SACCO

4.18

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Mr Speaker, before I go into the statement, I beg to lay documents necessary for my presentation namely:

- a. The audited financial statements for the Financial Year 2020/2021; the documents for the Financial Year 2022 are not yet concluded because the audit is ongoing;
- b. The Savings Credit Manual for the Police SACCO; and
- c. The records of savings and withdrawals to the tune of Shs 86 billion.

I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

GEN. MUHOOZI: This is a statement regarding the matter raised by Hon. Macho concerning the 50 per cent deduction of police salaries as contribution to the Exodus SACCO and also alleged challenges to access members' savings. I want to report as follows:

At the Eighth Sitting of the Annual General Meeting of the Exodus Cooperative Savings

and Credit Society Limited held on 31 March 2021 at Naguru, resolutions were made, including the following:

1. That the minimum monthly savings deductions for the other ranks - those are the ranks, which are not officers - be at Shs 30,000 and Shs 50,000 for senior officers. This translates into the following percentages per rank category;
 - a) Police Constable to Sergeant Category – Shs 30,000; and that in percentage terms is five per cent for sergeants, five per cent for corporals, police constable and probation police constable at six per cent and SPCs at seven per cent.
 - b) AIGP to IGP category - Shs 50,000; in percentage terms, the AIGP has a salary of Shs 2,369,300 and the deduction of Shs 50,000 makes it two per cent, Senior Commissioner of Police – two per cent, Commissioner of Police – two per cent, Assistant Commissioner of Police – two per cent, Senior Superintendent of Police – three per cent, Superintendent of Police – five per cent, ASP – six per cent, Inspector of Police – 7 per cent and Assistant Inspector of Police – 8 per cent;

I want to note here, before proceeding, that the percentages of contribution are, therefore, not 50 per cent, as reported by Hon. Macho.

2. The best savers, as per the AGM, in the categories of constables, NCOs inspectors and senior officers were recognised and awarded during the AGM;
3. The members' savings interest of three per cent per annum was approved, as budgeted for in the financial year;
4. Savings withdrawal was regulated by the board to improve the liquidity position of the SACCO, with only two withdrawals allowed in a year;
5. The Allied CPA Audit Firm was approved as the society's external auditors for the financial year ending 31 December 2021;

6. The nine policy manuals, as presented in the AGM magazine, were approved, including the one I laid on the Table;
7. The board requested the Uganda Police management to prioritise payment of the society's debts;
8. The delegates to champion public relations of the SACCO in their respective units;
9. That the board carries out continuous sensitisation and recruitment of SACCO members across the country;
10. The board relocates the SACCO canteen to pave way for the construction of the East African Forensic Laboratories by the police;
11. The dividends be given to shareholders as proposed by the board;
12. That the board acquires a new accounting system software to solve the current reporting challenges; and
13. That the board reviews the SACCO bylaws and comes up with proposed amendments for consideration by the special general meeting.

I want to conclude that the Exodus SACCO is a member-financed SACCO through voluntary monthly contributions; there is no conscription of membership. The amount of contributions and other governance matters of the SACCO are the remit of the annual general meeting, the membership and selection of which is member-determined.

I also want the House to note that the percentage of contribution, as the tables have shown, relative to salary, is higher in the lower ranks compared to the higher ranks which have higher salaries and ideally in percentage terms could contribute higher. This is a matter the AGM could consider and discuss in the next AGM.

That said, however, the contributed money remains members' money or savings, whichever way you look at it. The SACCO needs to ensure further mobilisation of members to inculcate the virtues of saving, as opposed to living by the day, whatever their earnings. This is in addition to sound management of the SACCO.

I beg to submit, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I will pick a few people on this starting with Hon. Macho so that we go to the next item. Take two minutes each.

4.25

MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia): Mr Speaker, I thank the minister for giving Ugandans or policemen and women in this country answers. First of all, I have not received a copy of the statement, but one has been given to the Parliament of Uganda. This was a question for the Parliament of Uganda. Therefore, I am submitting on the question and answer given by the minister without a copy of the statement. Mr Speaker, I really pray that I get a copy of what the minister has submitted –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The statement is uploaded.

MR MACHO: As per now, it is not uploaded.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, I hope you have sent it to our emails because you have our emailing list. Please, honourable colleagues, we have iPads – Clerk, ensure we have it. If possible, Gen. Muhoozi, can you put it on our official *WhatsApp* group since you are a Member?

GEN. MUHOOZI: The presentation was uploaded, but if it was not because of a hitch in the Clerk's office, I will follow it up.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kindly sit closer to the Government Chief Whip and you will be able to post it on our *WhatsApp* group for ease of reference.

MR MACHO: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your guidance. With your guidance, can I use the General's copy so that I give a good submission? *(Laughter)*

The General has submitted a written document or statement, but it is not practical at all. First of all, the minister said that recruitment of members in the Exodus SACCO is voluntary. However, this is not true at all. The Exodus SACCO got members as a result of the police constables opening bank accounts. The first condition for them to get those accounts was that they must join the SACCO, whether they wanted to or not. In Kiswahili, they say, "*Oda ya jeshi ni moja.*" The men of the Uganda Police Force, who are members of the Exodus SACCO, are there as slaves. Should the Exodus SACCO request members to leave voluntarily, they might remain only four or five contributors.

Mr Speaker, as you can see, the percentage of savings of officers of the lower ranks is higher than that of the officers of the higher ranks because even the senior officers know there is a problem with Exodus SACCO. That is why, through their influence and the AGM – in which few people sit because they do not invite all the members – they make sure that more money is deducted from lower ranking officers.

Mr Speaker, as you heard, the minister said members are supposed to withdraw money twice a year. The reason the minister gave was that the SACCO is trying to face –*(Interruption)*– it means members are suffering. Mr Speaker, Exodus SACCO should copy from Wazalendo, which has won awards in Africa and the world over.

As I finish, because I want my colleagues to make comments on this matter, it is easier to go to heaven than to get money from Exodus SACCO. *(Laughter)* currently, police officers are taking their children back to school, but it is very difficult for them to withdraw money for tuition or fees.

Honourable minister, there is a problem. Let us not bury our heads in the sand. Exodus

must solve the problem of police officers and allow them to leave that SACCO so that – Mr Speaker, lastly, on the forceful retirement saving, I have a copy. I can lay my phone and the Clerk can get it from here.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Macho. Honourable colleagues, Hon. Macho has given himself more time. I have exempted him and kept quiet because a person who has ever attempted to go to heaven and knows the route –*(Laughter)*– So, I feared that I may stop him and he attempts to go to heaven. *(Laughter)* I request the rest of you to respect time; do not attempt to go to heaven.

4.30

MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Mr Speaker, I would like to agree with Hon. Macho on some of the statements he has made today.

Over the weekend, I attended a fundraising ceremony in my constituency. A policeman, who seemed very sad, approached me and his issue was the same as what Hon. Macho raised. He said, "Please, you are a Member of Parliament. We do not have representatives in the House like the UPDF; so, we have to rely on you. Could you, please, raise the issue of the Exodus SACCO? It has become compulsory now. On top of compulsory deductions on pensions, we now have compulsory deductions for SACCO."

In addition, in his own words, they are not allowed to withdraw money. According to him, only the top officers are benefiting from that SACCO since they are the ones borrowing from it.

During their SACCO meeting last time - I was watching television and the political commissar promised that they were going for a countrywide sensitisation of the police officers. However, it seems the message has not reached because most of these police officers are not aware of how the SACCO operates and how they can access their money.

Therefore, I suggest that if at all –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues and honourable minister, whatever explanation you give, there is a problem with Exodus SACCO.

Officers send me messages and one of them said, “We do not have a general assembly; we have a general parade.” (*Laughter*) He said it is like a parade; you cannot question anything. The question is, how come we have never had an issue with Wazalendo SACCO? They are all forces and sister agencies.

We are lucky that the minister, who presented the statement, was the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF); so, Wazalendo was under him. Honourable minister, whatever we do, there is a problem with Exodus SACCO.

4.33

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am speaking as a person who investigated the police savings scheme. Before it was called Exodus, I think it used to be called Police Savings and Cooperatives Scheme. By then, I was working at the Inspectorate of Government; so, I investigated it in that capacity.

During the investigations, this is what we established:

1. It was compulsory for every police officer to join this savings scheme.
2. It was next to impossible for any junior police officer to access this money. You could only access it after retiring.

However, even at retirement, there was an accountant called Wabwire who would sit in his office and prepare a requisition form. He would write it as if it was from the other police officers, put false numbers and withdraw the money –(*Interjection*)– Yes, following my report, this man was arrested and prosecuted. I do not know where he is now.

Mr Speaker, the recommendation we made then, as the Inspectorate of Government, was to abolish the savings scheme because it was not benefiting the majority of the police officers apart from the top-ranking officers who were actually borrowing this money at low interest rates and enriching themselves at the expense of the junior officers.

Mr Speaker, as a way forward, I want to request –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, once you are cut off the microphone, first seek my permission before you get more time. Conclude.

MS OPENDI: Mr Speaker, as a way forward, in order not to leave this matter hanging, I request that this matter be forwarded to the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs so that they look deeper into it and report back to this House. Otherwise, we are going to just gloss over it and it ends here. Thank you.

4.36

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This matter is very serious. Police officers stop Members of Parliament on the way so that they can explain their problems.

Mr Speaker, the report given to the minister is quite misleading. When a member wants to withdraw his money, he is not allowed to withdraw like someone withdrawing his normal savings. Instead, he is supposed to withdraw in terms of a loan.

Mr Speaker, many police officers have saved this money for more than 10 or 15 years. They were forcefully directed that 50 per cent of their savings shall be taken as their retirement package. Now we ask ourselves: when is that police officer going to retire? What if anything happens before he retires?

Mr Speaker, there is a problem and you should know that handling somebody with a gun is quite difficult. One of the police officers told me on the way when he was almost shedding

tears. He said: “One day, he will move to that office and kill everyone in the office.” They are quite annoyed, Let the minister not bury his head in the sand *-(Interjections)-* I propose that we take this matter seriously. Mr Speaker, please, set up an ad hoc committee. You know, these people are ever appearing before the committee and they take the *-(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please conclude, honourable colleague. But can you give us the name of that officer? *(Laughter)*

MR OLANYA: Mr Speaker, I need to protect him. Let the minister and the police officer behave well. I was saying that if possible, you need to set up an Ad hoc committee to investigate this particular police SACCO. The police officers are fond of coming before the committee and they take the committee for granted. I know the committee may not do as expected.

Let the Ad hoc committee be formed and thorough investigations be done on this police SACCO. I beg to move.

4.39

MR MOSES ALEPER (NRM, Chekwii County (Kadam), Nakapiripirit): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mine is to respond to the report by the minister.

First of all, it did not address the matters that were raised by the Member. The Member had raised issues that:

1. The savings have been raised to a certain amount of money.
2. This is something that is taking place currently.

What the honourable minister presented was the audit report for the year ended December 2021. So, it fell short of what it should have addressed.

My request is that the minister should go back and address the issues that were raised by the

Member. We want to establish whether there is forced deduction. One thing the report admitted is the deliberate timed withdrawals only twice in a year.

Someone should have access to their savings whether in form of borrowing or savings withdrawal like we do in our SACCO. Mr Speaker, I would like you to direct the minister to address the issue and bring this matter back to this House latest Tuesday, next week. Thank you very much. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Oguzu? - No, I have already picked the Members who are speaking on this matter and I announced to them.

4.40

MR DENIS OGUZU LEE (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Mr Speaker, arising from the minister’s statement and listening to colleagues, we all agree that the issue at hand has not been resolved. I am aware that SACCOs are under the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives. The Registrar of Cooperatives is supposed to superintend over them. I am also aware they are supposed to file annual returns, which must be examined and the activities regulated.

Therefore, because there is much more to be examined and looked into, I want to amend Hon. Opendi’s request so that we let the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry examine this matter.

If we send the Committee on Internal Affairs, they may not be aligned so much on issues of SACCOs. There are a lot of things to dig into how these people operate.

Secondly, some police officers in my constituency passed on and their families have been attempting to access the financial assets of their people. There are a lot of unclaimed financial assets sitting in these SACCOs. These assets cannot be given to the rightful owners and this is what somebody called “fraud” yesterday.

Therefore, because there is much more to be examined, let this matter be addressed to the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry such that more investigations are done. The minister cannot resolve this matter alone. Let us get a committee to dig into this issue so that we have a statement that works for the country and is able to guard all SACCOs, especially those –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, our committees have the capacity to handle matters within their dockets. Where they are lacking in terms of that capacity, we have enough technical staff. They can call on other Members, especially those with interest to come in and support them on some of these matters.

Therefore, since the House sounds dissatisfied with the response by the minister, I am referring it to the Committee on Internal Affairs. Honourable minister, do you want to first say something?

4.43

GEN. DAVID MUHOOZI: Mr Speaker, first of all, I want to allay the fears of Members. I am not here to cover up. Actually, I am one of you. If there is a problem, we need to resolve it.

Secondly, your concerns are valid. I would be interested in a forensic audit of this SACCO so that we put this matter to rest. (*Applause*)

That said, this SACCO had very many issues even more than today. Some of them have been addressed, but for others, it is work in progress. They are actually two SACCOs; not one and that is also part of the problem. This is divided loyalty.

Some people, I am told, are in one SACCO, the one Hon. Opendi investigated and others are in Exodus SACCO. I think the bigger question, which you should answer is; Why this SACCO? I think we should not kill the spirit of why we should have a SACCO: saving cheap credit for the rank and file of the police.

So, as much as it creates sentiments, we should address it without saying that we collapse it like the honourable member was intimating.

Even for the UPDF, it was tough. Actually, sometimes, we had to use – one time, I asked a soldier: “If we hadn’t forced you, would you have saved?” They laughed, “And we would not have given you that money”. Because they live by the day and they have this saying, “*mimi nelikufa zamani*”. One foot in the grave, one on the ground.

So, you have to educate them; that is leadership. I implore you that we should not kill this SACCO. Education is key and saving is critical, especially where earnings are not enough. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. I was giving my ruling. I am referring this matter to the Committee on Internal Affairs. I want a report within three weeks’ time. Study this comprehensively and report back to the House within three weeks. Next statement.

V) OPERATIONS OF CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY IN ENTEBBE

4.46

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Gen. Katumba Wamala): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I hope the statement has been uploaded on the intranet.

I will start with an adage in my language - in Luganda, but I will not say it in Luganda because it may not be properly recorded. The adage interpreted says, “The fly, which loves you, is the one that falls on your wound” - and it tells you there is a problem.

Why that? This is because what happened in the video clips was a very big eye-opener and I want to start off with that. At the Sixth Sitting of the Third Meeting of the Second Session of the 11th Parliament of Uganda held on Tuesday, 24 January 2023, in your communication on the media reports, highlighting complaints about alleged corruption and bribery at Entebbe

International Airport; you guided that the Minister of Works and Transport together with the Minister of Internal Affairs should present a joint statement to the House on allegations and the measures put in place to address the matter.

Mr Speaker, you guided that my ministry and the Ministry of Internal Affairs present this joint statement. Both ministries noted, with concern, videos that have been making rounds on several social media platforms since 18 January 2023, regarding the allegations of extortion from passengers by some staff at Entebbe International Airport that have attracted the attention of management of all agencies at the airport. As the ministry, – both of us – we are very thankful to those vibrant Ugandans who came up with those videos and were able to send them on social media.

I would like to report as follows:

Uganda Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) manages Entebbe International Airport in conjunction with more than 10 other public and private agencies and the list is this long:

1. Immigration;
2. Uganda Revenue Authority - Customs;
3. Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development;
4. Ministry of Health;
5. Yellow Fever Agency;
6. Security agencies including aviation police, External Security Organisation, Internal Security Organisation; Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence, Special Forces Command; Interpol, Uganda Peoples Defence Airforce, and Uganda Peoples Defence Forces, among others;
7. Airlines;
8. Ground handlers, that is National Aviation Services and DAS;
9. Cleaning services;
10. Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries; and
11. Uganda Wildlife Authority.

There is an adage, which says, “Too many cooks spoil the broth” and I think that is what happened.

As a result, a joint security meeting was held on 19 January 2023 to analyse the situation and the following were discussed:

1. Harmonisation of operations for the different stakeholders especially at Departures because this is where the vice was highly promoted. This will provide an organised and synchronised facilitation process for travelers by reducing the duplication of roles, multiple checks or desks before a passenger accesses the check-in counters;
2. Withdrawal of travel documents. The Labour Desk and Aviation Police have been withdrawing travel documents and passports from clients without following proper procedures, which include, but are not limited to, issuing a withdrawal slip and as a result, several passports are still in their custody;
3. Use of mobile phones. This was identified as a means of communication used to link the criminal networks involved in smuggling, human trafficking and other vices related to organised crimes and extortions;
4. Offloading of passengers beyond the Immigration checkpoint. This was found unnecessary and especially while already on board;
5. Sensitisation of clients about the airport clearance procedures. This was found to be wanting because some of the stakeholders do not even know what is required and what is prohibited while travelling through the airport; and

6. There is also need to retrain stakeholders about airport clearance procedures.

As a way forward, the joint security meeting resolved as follows:

1. Each agency operating at the airport - Security, Health, Airline and Immigration - should re-organise and ensure that the 11 checkpoints that passengers go through are optimised without compromising national security and the traveler's international experience;
 2. Effective 10 February 2023, departing passengers will access the terminal building using the remodified passenger terminal building. This will solve the facilitation challenge of having to push luggage from the parking to the terminal as passengers will be dropped off at the Departure;
 3. The authority has intensified communication messages to passengers through the flight information display screens at the airport where telephone contacts for complaints channeling have been indicated. UCAA operates a toll-free line, which is 080011477/8 and a 24/7 Duty Operations Officer number, which is 0757 270809. That is displayed on the screens in the various areas in the terminal building.
- However, in order to escalate and have quick resolutions of issues, we have shared numbers of senior officials including that of the General Manager of the airport, which is 070205558; the contact for the Manager Aviation Security, which is 0701488366; Manager, Operations – 0758483681; and Chief Liaison Officer at the Airport is on 0701477049. Feedback from the public is also received through email: aviation@caa.no.ug; the WhatsApp number is 0757269670 and through social media channels including the Twitter handle: @Ugandacaa;
4. The withdrawal of travel documents and passports is the mandate of the Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control

(DCIC) and should be the only entity to withdraw them. This is in accordance with section 47 of the Uganda Citizenship and Immigration Act, which gives the National Citizenship and Immigration Board the power to withdraw or temporarily seize travel documents or passports from any citizen. All the travel documents and passports in the custody of other agencies at Entebbe International Airport should be officially handed over to the DCIC. Indeed, on 25 January 2023, 192 passports, which were in the hands of Aviation Police were handed over to the DCIC for further management;

5. The use of personal mobile phones is banned during actual work time or in regular active working area. It is only the supervisors that are exempted.
6. It has been resolved that after a passenger has been exited by Immigration at Departure, offloading them for any reason would only take place with the express permission of the Director, Airports and the Aviation Security or the General Manager, Entebbe International Airport;
7. Intensifying usage of airport display screens and announcement boards with messages on flight information at the airport, alerting or reminding passengers not to be compelled to pay any money to anyone in exchange of a favour at the airport;
8. A joint investigation team was set up to ensure that all cases and complaints are well investigated for appropriate action. Actually, even the investigation team from the President's Office has taken up this matter;
9. All uniformed staff operating at the airport shall have their names embroidered on the uniforms with immediate effect; (*Applause*)
10. Continuous customer service training for stakeholders will continue;

11. Transfer of all staff that have overstayed at the airport – some of them have been there for more than 15 years;
12. The Labour Desk has been removed from Entebbe International Airport;
13. Engagement meetings were held with the various agencies that serve at Entebbe International Airport to harmonise the operations of the different stakeholders on departure with the view of ensuring that some functions are merged and handled more efficiently by fewer agencies to avoid duplication and multiple checks and desks;
14. The 12 check points that a passenger goes through on entry to the airport have been reduced to 12; that is what I mean (*Interjection*) – from the longest list, which we had. So, we have only reduced now -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Maybe, you will verify, honourable minister because you are saying the 12 have been reduced to 12. You can verify later when we are debating.

GEN. KATUMBA: I appreciate, Mr Speaker. Those are the 12 out there. The new harmonised checkpoints are as follows:

1. Roadblock checkpoint;
2. Staff car park checkpoint;
3. VIP access checkpoint;
4. UWA and AVPOL K9 checkpoint;
5. Entrance to the tent checkpoint;
6. External employment helpdesk checkpoint;
7. Yellow Fever verification;
8. Port-health check for COVID-19 vaccination/PCR extra;
9. Hold baggage checkpoint;
10. Check-in counters;
11. Document verification;
12. Immigration.

The new harmonised checkpoints are –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have reduced from 12 to five.

GEN. KATUMBA: They have been reduced to that number. You have now the roadblock, which is a must because that is the entry to the airport. You must be checked at that entry. This is where they check for arms and your baggage whether it has any items prohibited from travel.

We have:

- i) Roadblock check point
- ii) UWA and AVPOL K9 checkpoints because there has been a lot of smuggling of animal products, including skins, ivory, rhino horns and extra,
- iii) Hold baggage checkpoint,
- iv) Check-in counters. This is where they do document verification, and
- v) Immigration.

Those are the only checkpoints now. (*Applause*)

In conclusion, therefore, on 20 January 2023, the Deputy Director of Citizenship and Immigration Control held a meeting with the UCAA and other stakeholders to further caution all staff and communicate the decisions of the joint security meeting and minutes are here included.

UCAA has appreciated and acknowledged the feedback from the public and further requests that the public shares accurate information with evidence to enable them investigate. As stakeholders, the two ministries will constantly review the performance of these measures in order to restore confidence and shall continue to condemn any acts contrary to our service standards that are aimed at tarnishing the image of the country, the institution and Government.

Mr Speaker, allow me to just read some of the responses from the public with the measures. One of them came from somebody called

Charles Johnson Mwesigwa. He said, *“This has been the smoothest ever passing through Entebbe Airport. Whoever cleaned the crooks did a good job.”*

Another anonymous one said, *“Meanwhile guys, I do not know when this change happened. But Entebbe Airport was such a vibe today. Like things were so orderly; I was scared. I was like, ‘Are we in Uganda or outside country right now.’”* (Laughter)

The same -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us listen to the minister as he concludes.

GEN. KATUMBA: Mr Speaker, the same platform, which alerted us of this is the same communicating back. Attached for your perusal are two documents; Travel Guidelines for Departing Passengers through Entebbe International Airport and the list of cases of extortion at Entebbe International Airport and the action taken against these culprits. These are going to be subjected to further investigation and where the cases will be proved, they will be prosecuted. We have a total of 26 of them. The list is also attached. I beg to submit. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. In your statement, there are some corrections on record we need to make. The numbers you gave us for the General Manager of Entebbe International Airport were nine figures instead of 10. It is incomplete. Then the one for manager operations is also incomplete. If you could get the numbers properly, then I will give you a chance to again read them here.

Honourable colleagues, I am just going to allow a few of you - we have just received a statement. Let Members first debate a little.

5.03

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for bringing this statement to Parliament. From the onset, Entebbe

International Airport is the face of Uganda and so, we are all concerned about the fracas that happened. Equally, we are all embarrassed by what we saw on social media.

However, that points to the fact that the people who are supposed to do their work - to supervise and manage Entebbe Airport - have been sleeping on their job. What has not come out clearly from the minister’s statement is the action they have taken on people who had the responsibility to ensure that Entebbe is properly managed. If the same group of people are still going to manage it, we really do not think what you have laid down will improve.

Secondly, in your statement, you say you are transferring people who have been implicated - those who are responsible for this mess. This is one of the weaknesses that we have in this country - that even where on the face of it, you have got people red-handed, doing things against public policy; people have messed up institutions - all you can do is to transfer them and leave them to go scot-free.

I think at this stage, we would appreciate if you had listed to us the number of people who have either been suspended pending investigations or interdicted pending investigations, with the positions that they were holding at the time so that we can then get satisfied.

Thirdly, this is a policy matter. Entebbe Airport is still under UCAA. In other countries, the best practice has always been to separate - to have the CAA of the country deal with the regulations, and also to have an airport authority - separate body - to deal with the issues of managing the airport. If the minister feels that this is something that is helpful, then, I think we should look into that.

I know that Government has been talking about rationalising entities, but you cannot have the entity, which is managing, supervising and regulating itself. This is where the problem is. I advise that Government extensively looks into that. Thank you.

5.06

MR DAN ATWIJUKIRE (NRM, Kazo County, Kazo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Listening to the honourable minister, I feel that he was reading this statement in pain, given his outstanding record of being a clean person. However, at this time, unfortunately, presiding over - I do not want to use the words – “a very severely corrupt institution.”

Mr Speaker, I agree with the action taken so far, but this is not a one-day activity. What we saw was just a symptom. For 26 people to be stealing at the same time in an institution and you think it is something that we can take lightly? I request the minister to consider an overhaul.

I sit on the COSASE committee. There were serious revelations about the airport. Some of us were of the view that we should have a forensic audit. That is the face of Uganda. If they extort from you at the airport, you are likely to think that this is an extortionist country.

Therefore, I implore the honourable minister - and I strongly believe in him; if I did not, I would tell him – that there is serious work to do. From the management, this reflected incompetence and total negligence. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Please, use two minutes each.

5.08

MS LILLIAN ABER (NRM, Woman Representative, Kitgum): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the good statement. Honourable minister, I would also like to thank you for the vigorous efforts you are making to ensure that the airport is lifted to higher standards. However, those statements that you read from social media - yes, they are nice, but not yet to the standards we want. We need to improve it further.

When you are from another country and you land at Entebbe airport, honourable minister - I no longer use the VIP lift because it pulls you and you feel as if there is an earthquake.

(Laughter) However, there are some important visitors who come to this country and pass through the VIP gates. These are some of the things you need to prioritise and, at least, work on. *(Applause)*

On the issue of corruption, we just have to keep watch. Honourable minister, I also concur with my colleague, Hon. Dan Kimosho. It may not be easy for you because you want to be a clean person, but it is a racket. The good thing is that you have the background of being a soldier. Honourable minister, get the guns together. Let us clean this mess and have the face of Uganda portrayed to the entire world as a good one. Thank you.

5.10

DR CHARLES AYUME (NRM, Koboko Municipality, Koboko): Thank you very much, honourable minister, for your report. I think what we are seeing at the airport is a symptom of something deeper. This country is plagued with a lot of drug abuse. The statistics at Butabika can allude to that – drugs like cocaine and heroin. These are not very cheap drugs; they are quite expensive. They are not drugs you are going to get from South Sudan and Congo. Most likely, they come through the airport.

Therefore, the lacuna that we have seen at the airport is a reflection that there might be deeper holes in relation to the drugs coming into the country. I think you should also plug all those things. I am not very certain about the canines at the airport; they are probably also being bribed. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

5.12

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the honourable minister for the report. In most of the countries that we have travelled to, we realise that where there is extortion, there is always a link created. As much as we may have suggestion boxes at the airport, we have complainants as well.

I, therefore, wanted to put this before you. I still do not know whether the country has the links for complainants. In some countries, in

case of such kind of extortion, you do not need to go – like what they did – you simply need to drop something and the matter is addressed immediately.

Secondly, honourable minister, as much as you have addressed the issue, some Ugandans are complaining that it is actually much easier to travel via Nairobi than Entebbe International Airport because of the complications at our airport. You have to look into that as well. Thank you.

5.14

MR STEPHEN MUGOLE (NRM, Kabweri County, Kibuku): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would also like to thank the honourable minister for the statement. Whereas in our country we do not know how to manage information – which causes us issues – we are proud that those issues came out on social media and the minister can respond that way.

About two years ago, CAA was transformed into UCAA, instead of separating it to have the airport authority and civil aviation. In fact, this is a critical area that we must look at. Whereas we have this notion of rationalisation, there are certainly other critical areas that should be put separate.

You saw the minister aligning around 10 agencies to work at one facility and one agency with a multiplicity of departments. This is a crisis already. In fact, if we do not address that, we may not kill the vice that is currently at the airport. This is because as you fight one, the other one emerges.

Either by Statutory Instrument or regulation, we should come up with a way of managing issues at the airport. If every department has a head, how was this vice being multiplied without the heads of these institutions knowing at all? They should have known. The issue – *(Member timed out.)*

5.16

MR TONNY AYOO (NRM, Kwania County, Kwania): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I thank the minister for the statement and quick

response after social media was awash with the extortion stories at the airport. That response saved us a lot in terms of the image of the country to the tourists and incoming people. We should applaud the minister for that.

However, the minister, in reading out the responses from the people, made one statement that is a big issue that we need to look at. There are people who said that when they passed via Entebbe International Airport, they thought they were outside Uganda – it is as if Uganda is only for bad things and good things are outside the country. We should learn from this.

The too many teams that play at Entebbe International Airport is a source of the problem. I got information from some people who said that the people working with Uganda Revenue Authority get a lot more money than them, yet they work at the same airport. Therefore, issues of the welfare of the airport staff need to be looked into because they sit there to receive visitors and send them out. Once we do not look at the welfare of all the staff - some are getting less money and others are getting more - we will always push them into extorting money from people.

At the checkpoint, you will be surprised that the police officers there will stop you and ask for money. I do not know if the minister has also checked on that. At the first entrance, they will ask for money to allow you to go – *(Member timed out.)*

5.18

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the clear message. However, I want to be specific. I am on record for raising the issue of mismanagement and corruption at the CAA, right from the tollgate. The money that is collected at the tollgate is not declared and there is no accountability. I have evidence to this honourable minister; if you want it, I will bring it. I raised it here, in the previous session. The money from the tollgate is not declared and is not clear. Therefore, there is corruption from the top management.

Honourable minister, I want you to take keen interest in the way they manage the resources of the CAA. I know you have the capacity to do that; please, take keen interest.

Secondly, when you look at the issues of payment of the staff, you find a staff working at the same level with others, but they are paid differently. Staff negotiate salaries differently; some are paid higher than others, yet they are doing the same job. This is happening at the CAA.

Therefore, I request the minister to take keen interest in the top management of CAA. I even raised the matter here; I suggested a forensic audit, and, Mr Speaker, you ruled me out of order because the issue had just started.

I seek your indulgence that you allow this to take place so that we sort out the matters of CAA once and for all, because they-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, you have seen the progress made. You see forensic audits are very costly on Government. I want us to know where we have ordered them, what has changed. The same people have to implement.

What is important is for us to use our authority under committees; we can carry out investigations up to a level - then such forensic audits can come in if we believe the cases are still extreme. However, with such progress, which Members have appreciated, it would be self-defeating for us after applauding the progress to again ask for a forensic audit.

5.20

MS SUSAN AMERO (Independent, Woman Representative, Amuria): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the report. However, as a former staff of the CAA, I can say that there is a big problem at Entebbe International Airport. Unless we remove Entebbe International Airport from CAA, we cannot solve anything. The CAA should be autonomous from the airport. The CAA does not want to detach itself from the airport because the airport raises a lot of revenue,

which they want to control and yet, they do not pay the airport workers well.

Airport staff work longer hours, but they are not well paid. Therefore, the next thing is corruption. The people who are working on shifts need to be paid overtime because they work longer hours. However, people sitting in CAA offices at the headquarters earn more salary than the people who are at the operations level.

The worst bit is that the airport has been militarised. We know that we all need security. However, unless we detach and know what the security entities at the airport are supposed to do - you find that the UPDF and police also want to handle passports and in the process, they are all asking for something.

We have aviation security, which is trained and knows what they are supposed to do, but this so-called security –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ameede was also staff; so, she will be after Hon. Linos.

5.22

MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I believe we have to secure the lives of international and domestic travellers.

However, my issue is with the first checkpoint. When you reach at the checkpoint, they ask you if you are armed. If you say you are not armed, the policemen at the checkpoint ask for water. This is very dangerous in this current situation of terrorism that we have –(Interjections)- yes. I travel often; they ask those questions. If you give them money, they let you through; they do not even search you. We do not need to deny this.

Mr Speaker, I request the minister to take keen interest in this. Good enough, we also have the Minister of State for Internal Affairs, and I believe, if they take keen interest in these security lapses, our airport will be more secure.

Finally, the VIP Departure Lounge does not have urinals. It is really disheartening - *(Interjections)* - we have a toilet, but we do not have a urinal. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

5.24

MS AGNES AMEEDE (Independent, Woman Representative, Butebo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank you, honourable minister, for the statement.

This recent incident is only a symptom of underlying issues precipitated by the inefficiency of the management at the airport. Like other speakers have said, there is need to streamline who does what at the airport- there are too many people working at the airport. Airports are highly surveilled; where are the cameras when all this is going on?

The other issue concerns staff. The manner in which staff are recruited at the airport is demotivating. It has been linked to nepotism; nepotism in recruitment and promotions has left many staff demoralised.

We do not need to have a forensic audit; we should use audits that have already been done. During CHOGM, a lot of money was stolen at that airport.

Recently, the COSASE report gave information about the mismanagement of the airport. What have you done? The same people who are managing the airport are the common dominators. Thank you.

5.26

MR DAVID ZIJJAN (Independent, Butembe County, Jinja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the report he has submitted. What baffles me is that it seems we are taking a reactionary and piecemeal approach to fixing this country.

It is until citizens decry a situation or post a situation on social media - like the minister was admitting, that he only realised the problems at the airport when concerned citizens posted

complaints on social media. I then wonder whether our ministers are not spending too much time on social media and missing what goes on in the departments.

The dysfunctions are not unique to Entebbe International Airport. There are cries in almost every Government entity and department in this country. When you hear what goes on in NIRA when Ugandans are seeking to get National Identification cards, the molestation and the extortion in those departments - and they wait until citizens let out a cry that will go viral. That also actually injures our national image internationally, that a minister will come here and react to that, and then pull out a message or two. It is not only happening at the airport; it is happening at the NIRA offices; and it is happening at the Ministry of Internal Affairs during passport processing.

I think we need an internal mechanism in Government departments to detect these evils. This security – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, you do not have permission to add yourself time. Honourable minister, once you do good, Ugandans appreciate. For example, recently, you have followed on social media, to see reactions by Ugandans on the issuance of driving permits; you will notice that everyone is praising you on this. *(Applause)*

So, once you do good, Ugandans appreciate it.

5.29

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogola County South, Ssembabule): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for being genuine and sincere to this country.

Every one of us realises that whatever we are talking about comes at a cost. Ugandans have suffered; they have lost money and others have lost business. Who is held liable and accountable for whatever is happening?

The minister should explain to this country who is going to pay the costs to compensate Ugandans who have suffered. Among the

recommendations that you make, you also need to explain to us who is liable for the losses that have been made after all this has happened.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I think we now can see that mind-set change as a programme under budgeting should not be an area for us to spend money. Ugandans can change their mind-set depending on our actions. Therefore, I think we rather divert that money to something that is more productive than sensitising Ugandans on how to behave.

I pray that the money for mind-set change is diverted to something that is meaningful other than sensitising Ugandans because they are the ones now telling us what to do. If we do it, there is no need of teaching them. I beg to submit.

5.31

MS CECILIA OGWAL (FDC, Woman Representative, Dokolo): Mr Speaker, I have listened to the stories of corruption in two agencies of Government this afternoon. We have just talked about the police SACCO and now, we are on this.

The question I am asking is: when corruption takes place, it has two faces. One of them is individualised; an individual promotes corruption and is actually stealing. That is one face. The other face is corruption takes place when the system is weak. This is called institutionalised corruption. In other words, it is our way. If you do not cough money, you cannot move and everybody knows it.

Mr Speaker, you can come up with a prescription on the issues at the UCAA or the police SACCO. However, until you deal with the deep-rooted institutionalised corruption in this country, we are just scratching. That is one thing that I want to raise.

Secondly, as the minister is battling with the solution, I am asking the minister to take a serious look – Mr Speaker, the minister is not listening. *(Laughter)* We had wanted you to lay on the Table the positive statements that people are giving, but the Speaker is a good lobbyist and so, he saved you.

Otherwise, I beg that you listen to this: when you talk about a solution, I would like you to look at the structure – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, *Mama*.

MS CECILIA OGWAL: I want you to look at the structure of the top management. Who are the people driving the management of the UCAA? What is their professionalism? Where have they come from? What is the track record of their management? So, there is the issue of corporate governance, tribalism and nepotism.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I would like to request you to guide the ministry appropriately and all of them because all these things have the same symptoms. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, they have got guidance from our elder. I do not need to repeat the guidance.

5.33

THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I commence by appreciating and saluting the vigilant travellers, our citizens who have been circulating these videos to the world over.

Listening to all these forms of corruption: bribery, extortion, nepotism and tribalism and all manner of corruption cases; to end this vice, Mr Speaker, it may require raising a new generation of leaders that cannot tolerate corruption and that are corrupt-free. You can find those on this side of the political divide. *(Laughter)*

Honourable minister, in your statement, I expected you to have picked a leaf from the neighbourhood. There are vibrant aviation sectors in Rwanda that are making huge profits. In Kenya and Tanzania, the aviation staff are corrupt-free.

What they have done is to separate the regulatory function from the operations. Here, you have mixed it up. You needed to contract a company that would manage Entebbe Airport

as UCAA does the mandate –(*Member timed out.*)

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

MR NAMBESHE: Honourable minister, I have heard that some of those culprits will transfer their services elsewhere. However, I would caution that those culprits - not those in Busia or those at any of the borders that we have - should face the full wrath of the law.

Mr Speaker, those reforms should not be restrictive or prohibitive because they may even stop our tourists or visitors coming to Uganda. (*Interruption*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: LOP, have you concluded?

MR NAMBESHE: I am concluding with the information from –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: When you conclude your submission and you say you conclude with information - now, information from a Member, colleagues, according to our rules, cannot be a conclusion because it is supporting your submission; but you had already finished submitting. So, you tactfully denied a Member the opportunity to provide information. Yes, honourable minister.

5.36

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Gen. Katumba Wamala): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank all the Members for the positive contributions. The only question, which was on my mind as the Members were contributing to this was: if we all knew this, why were we not raising it? We should all be responsible to fight this animal called “corruption”.

I would appeal to Members that if you see any of this – like the honourable member who said that at the checkpoint, they ask for water - I hope you did not give the water. (*Interjections*) You see!

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you have three minutes.

GEN. KATUMBA: Thank you. Mr Speaker, Hon. Odur said that the list of interdicted staff is not there, but it is attached to the document. They were not all arrested on one day. It started in 2020 up to now. The list is very clear; who was involved, what they did or what their fate is.

We are not going to just transfer these people. No, those who have been involved in the vice will be charged. The only transfer we are talking about is those of institutions like the military, the intelligence, who have overstayed at the airport. There should be a tour of duty so that they do not build a cartel - because that is what was happening.

The other thing we have been trying to do, for example, at the check point – you saw we built a search park, which must be fitted with automatic scanner, not the hands. When we went to look for equipment, the cost is about \$6 million and we could not have that, but we are aiming at automating.

On the issue of separating the entities; this matter was even discussed in the Committee on Physical Infrastructure. The challenge, as of now, we have only one airport. But now, since we are developing new airports including Kabaale International Airport, then we shall have reason to ask for the separation. Otherwise, with one airport, it was very difficult to defend that expenditure of separating the entities.

As we move forward, Kabaale is about to become an international airport; Arua is growing and so, we may now look at separating the entities – with an authority to manage airports and an authority to be able to regulate the activities.

Mr Speaker, I think what we see in this society as you have said – there is a general moral decay because some of the things which, for example, those people are doing, as a human being, you ask how somebody can do such a thing to that extent. There is a general moral decay, which

must be a matter we should address. How do we address it as a nation? I do not have an answer, but it is a fact. We need to address that issue of moral decay because it is not – as somebody said, it is not only at the airport. In every institution, you will find the same things. So, I think we need to address that matter so that we get people *-(Interjections)-* I am not sure about Hon. Nambeshe's suggestion, but we need to address that as a requirement.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I will take all the advice with good faith and please, let us monitor together the actions, which have been put and how they improve our image. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I request you, before you leave, to link up with Hon. Acuti Opio and Hon. Amos Okot; they have a very important issue, which they will share with you. Thank you.

I appreciate you for the quick action that was taken because, at least, you have arrested our fears and please, keep it up. Next statement?

VI) THE PROCEEDINGS OF KASESE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL REGARDING THE PROPOSED BYLAW ON TRANSGENDER AND MINORITIES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister said this is a very short one; so, let us listen to her.

5.40

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Ms Victoria Businge): Thank you, Mr Speaker. You were applauded a lot by the people of Kasese for your quick reaction and in the interest of time, I carried all the documents - the minutes. Let me read what I did and then, the rest you will allow me to lay on the Table:

“Report to Parliament on the attempt by Kasese Municipal Council to pass a bylaw promoting homosexuality –”

Mr Speaker, on 25 January 2023, Parliament was informed that Kasese Municipal Council was in the process of passing a bylaw

promoting homosexuality. It was also reported that there was an NGO, which had sponsored the formulation and approval of that bylaw.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Wait, honourable minister. Colleagues, if you are moving out, move out. And you do not need to be shouting around here. - We have a procedural matter?

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, I have observed several times here - The training I got when I was joining Parliament with some ministers on the Front Bench whom I have been with for some time, that as you move out, you bow before the Speaker; as you enter you bow before the Speaker, to give respect. *(Laughter)*

However, what I am seeing these days; Members are marching out the way they want and they enter the way they want as if they are entering something that does not have that kind of very nice – wouldn't it be procedurally right, Mr Speaker, to remind Members that that seat where you are has authority and power – at least, I cannot forget it. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, please, all of you first bow. *(Laughter)* I love that. If you know that you do not want to bow when you are leaving, you can bow like 10 times in advance so that you use your arrears. *(Laughter)* Honourable minister -

MS VICTORIA BUSINGE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This report is on the attempt by Kasese Municipal Council to pass a bylaw promoting homosexuality. On 25 January 2023, Parliament was informed that Kasese Municipal Council was in the process of passing a bylaw promoting homosexuality. It was reported that there was an NGO, which was sponsoring the formulation and approval of the said bylaw.

Mr Speaker, I was assigned by you to follow up the matter, establish the clear facts, take action and report back to this Parliament about the same.

On 27 and 28 January 2023, the technical team from the Ministry of Local Government legal section and I moved to Kasese and held two

meetings with the senior management team and the leaders of Kasese Municipality about the bylaw on homosexuality that was being processed. The meetings were also attended by the Members of Parliament; Hon. Godfrey Kabbyanga, Minister of State for Information, Communication Technology and National Guidance; Hon. Kitanywa Sowedi, MP Busongora North; Hon. Mujungu Gideon, MP Busongora South; and Hon. Ferigo Kambale, MP Kasese Municipality. The two who missed were in another meeting and missed with apology.

Mr Speaker, from the above engagement, we discovered that Kasese Municipal Council was processing a bylaw titled “The Local Government Access to HIV and TB Services for Key Population Bylaws.”

By the time of my intervention, the bylaw formulation process was at the stage of second reading in the council, having been approved by the Social Services Committee.

The objectives of the bylaw are:

1. To give full effect to the Council of functions, powers, responsibilities and services at all levels of local government.
2. To increase access to HIV/TB prevention and care services among the key populations in Kasese Municipality.
3. To reduce high rate of new infections of HIV/AIDS, TB cases in Kasese Municipality.
4. To regulate health services by health facilities in Kasese Municipality.

Mr Speaker, the most contradicting part of the bylaw is the preamble which states that the bylaw provides for enforcement on the human rights freedoms of marginalised population and increasing access to HIV and TB services in Kasese.

The interpretation section of the bylaw refers to marginalised population as homosexuals,

transgender, sex workers, and drug users. This, therefore, means that the bylaw that was being processed could have had a hidden motive of promoting homosexuality. This is against section 38 of the Local Government Act, Cap 243, that gives legislative powers to local government councils to enact ordinances and bylaws, which are not inconsistent with the Constitution.

Mr Speaker, all the formulation processes were supported by an NGO called, Human Rights Promotion Forum, which is operating from Kasese District and headed by a one Bob Kyamanywa. I have already forwarded the name to the Minister of State for Internal Affairs, with his telephone number, for further follow-up.

Actions taken

I took the following actions:

- a) I instructed the municipal council leaders to drop the process of the bylaw since it was contradicting the laws of Uganda and the socio-cultural wellbeing of the people of Kasese and Uganda at large, which they agreed to do.
- b) I instructed Kasese Municipal Council to always seek legal support from the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, specifically the Office of the Attorney-General, whenever they are coming up with bylaws. I further advised them to seek guidance from the Ministry of Health whenever they are coming up with health-related bylaws.
- c) I requested the Ministry of Internal Affairs to pick interest and internalise the operations of this NGO called the Human Rights Promotion Forum, which was promoting that bylaw.
- d) I undertook to ensure that the Ministry of Local Government carries out an induction for Kasese Municipal Council leaders by end of February 2023.

Mr Speaker, at this momentous epoch, I beg to lay a conglomeration of documents gathered from a fact-finding mission in Kasese as follows:

1. The Local Government (Kasese Municipality) Access to HIV/TB Services for Key Population Bylaws, Bill (Annex A).
2. Minutes of the extraordinary Social Services Committee meeting held on 5 December 2022 in the Mayor's Council Hall, where the preliminary discussions were held.
3. The recommendations of the Social Services Committee on the Kasese Municipal Council bylaw on Strengthening Access to HIV/TB Services in Health Facilities for the Key Populations, 2022. They were also denying and rejecting the bylaw.
4. The invitation to full council sitting on Friday, 16 December 2022 in the Central Division Hall from 10.00 a.m. and attached are the minutes of the meeting of that day, where they blocked the leader of that NGO from giving opening remarks.
5. Statement from the *Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu*. They also wish to be counted among the people vehemently rejecting the bylaw, which was in conflict with the laws of the Republic of Uganda and the culture of *Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu*.

Mr Speaker, you instructed the Ministry of Local Government and Ministry of Internal Affairs. We have done ours as the Ministry of Local Government. We have even informed the Attorney-General and passed on all the documents to him, if he so wishes, to take further action. To my colleague from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, I have submitted all those documents, including the number and address of the gentleman heading that NGO.

I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. This was very good action. House is adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 5.52 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 2 February 2023 at 2.00 p.m.)