



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

## IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

### Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

#### SECOND SESSION - 11TH SITTING - SECOND MEETING

Wednesday, 23 November 2022

*Parliament met at 1.58 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

#### PRAYERS

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

*The House was called to order.*

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, coming earlier than Hon. Bahati today has made my day; so, I should be congratulated. *(Applause)*

Honourable members, I want to welcome you to this afternoon sitting. This morning, I had a meeting with the Auditor-General and his team and he submitted reports. One, he submitted a special audit report on select procurement expenses and asset management for the Parliamentary Commission.

Two, he also submitted reports for classified expenditure. Three, he submitted a report on forensic investigations into COVID-19 funds, which were received in financial years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021.

During this sitting, I will cause the laying of the aforementioned reports so that we are able to send them to the relevant committees. We need to know what happened, through the Auditor-General's reports, and we also need to know the recommendations.

We received sad news of the death of Hon. Patrick Masette Kuuya, who previously served as Minister of Rehabilitation in the Obote II Government. He was also a Chairman of the National Council of Sports and a national treasurer of the Uganda People's Congress party.

On behalf of the Legislature and on my own behalf, we condole with the family and the people of Bugisu. We condole with the UPC fraternity on the loss. May we observe a moment of silence for this gallant leader.

*(Members rose and observed a moment of silence.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the loss of our elders poses a risk of loss of very important history in this country. A few days back, we lost Dr Kawanga; we have now also lost Hon. Kuuya. I implore you - We have elders like Hon. Nathan here. Write books so that people are able to read what you are leaving behind.

Leave the history behind. You need to write books and the world will read about what these people did. *(Laughter)* That was a light moment. Hon. Nathan is an elder; I am saying we have elders here like him. We need to document whatever we do so that we are able to remember, in future, what has been done. Let us pass this knowledge that we have now, to the next generation because people will not know what we have done.

Honourable members, yesterday, Hon. Okot, the youth MP, raised an issue on delayed disbursement of funds under the Ministry of Education and Sports, for the loan scheme. In response, the Prime Minister undertook to relay the matter to the Minister of Education and Sports and report back today. I do not know whether the statement is ready.

This morning, the media was awash with reports of various challenges affecting higher education students and that included students not sitting for exams because of delayed disbursement of loans. We need to help these students and remember, that is why we are here. We are the voice of the voiceless; so, we should speak for them and we should make sure they sit the exams. We will expect a report.

Government Chief Whip, you are here. I will also require a comprehensive report to that effect, including equity, as said yesterday. Minister, we will require that report to be laid on the Table and discussed by this House because it is now a problem; it is a big challenge that should be solved.

Otherwise, I am glad everybody is in orange today. *(Applause)* We are creating awareness on the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, which are international. The 16 days start on 25 November up to 10 December. We will have a motion to that effect. We launched the orange awareness today in Parliament and I am happy that all of you are smart.

When we talk about gender-based violence, we are not only talking about the girl-child; the boy children are included. *(Applause)* So, we will have a debate on it in the next item. Matters of national importance -

**MR KIBALYA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I request someone near Hon. Nantaba and Hon. Ssewungu to teach them the right way in which to wear the attire that we have on, in respect of the programme and the project that we are promoting. Thank you, Madam Speaker. *(Laughter)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MS LUCY AKELLO:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for your communication. I just wanted to use this opportunity to wish you a very happy birthday. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you so much. In the House, we do not sing.

**MS LUCY AKELLO:** Madam Speaker, we are praying for you to live long and may God bless you as you take on that hot seat. Thank you so much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. *Mukatuliki-*

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am raising a procedural matter on a very sensitive matter that can even affect Parliament. Recently, there is a video going around in the country covered by *NTV* where we see the Prime Minister and the RDC of Rubaga by the name of Anderson Burola, summoning a judicial officer after making a judicial decision in the court. And under Article 128 of the Constitution, judicial officers are independent.

Madam Speaker, What we are seeing is that we saw that Prime Minister summoning a judicial officer who is free of any encumbrance, and at 128(4) of the Constitution, that nobody can ask his decisions in court other than the Judicial Service Commission, which is mandated under Articles 147 and 148.

Madam Speaker, the only way a decision of a judge can be taken is by making an appeal in court.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssewungu, to the best of my knowledge the Chief Justice issued a circular to that effect. I don't think we are competent enough to discuss that, since the head of Judiciary has already prevailed over it.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** But Madam Speaker -

**THE SPEAKER:** I have ruled.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Most obliged. However, Madam Speaker, my interest was in regard to Parliament; the Attorney-General should come to this House and give your position.

Otherwise, decisions of the Speaker would also be challenged in the same manner, and the way we are heading, we must be very careful. We know a lot of issues in the Judiciary, but we stomach them, because we respect this institution, however painful the decisions taken are.

Madam Speaker, you know you have two Members of Parliament in incarceration, but because you are respecting the Judiciary-

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssewungu, let us not smuggle in issues. To the best of my knowledge, the Chief Justice is in full control of his Judiciary. And nobody is going to hijack the powers of Parliament; nobody will hijack it. The day they hijack it, then they have hijacked you, yourself. But as long as I am in the seat, nobody will hijack it. The best we can do is to work together with the Executive and the Judiciary. We complement each other. Hon. Angura.

2.11

**MR FREDRICK ANGURA (NRM, Tororo South County, Tororo):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I am rising to comment on your communication. This morning, as PAC, we interfaced with the team from the Ministry of Education and Sports in respect to the Auditor-General's reports on the skilling.

Madam Speaker, the PS -

**THE SPEAKER:** Excuse me -

**MR ANGURA:** I am communicating on the education issue you talked about, regarding the students.

**THE SPEAKER:** Excuse me. You are not the education minister; that is one. Two, do not be a rumour mill. You are now carrying out rumour mongering. What was discussed in the committee remains there until it comes to the House by the chairperson of the committee. [*Member rose*] Hon. Lokwang, speak up.

**MR PHILLIP LOKWANG:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on the issue of national importance -

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Lokwang, we have not yet reached there. We are still on - Hon. Lokwang, is it your maiden speech? I am going to allow you to speak; I know that is your maiden speech. Can I have Hon. Moses?

**MR WALYOMU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand to comment on your speech -

**THE SPEAKER:** It is not my speech, but my communication.

**MR WALYOMU:** On your communication, Madam Speaker. In your communication, you talked about the loan scheme and you emphasized the proponent of equity. However, apart from the point of equity, we also need to be given the criteria that may lead to the selection of the loan beneficiaries.

After maybe looking at the sub regions - because when we look at the criteria, maybe it will help Members of Parliament to also know the reason their district or subregion never benefited.

Madam Speaker, I beg that as they give the details of the equity, even the criterion is required. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. The report will be submitted to this House and all those matters will be looked at. There is a procedural matter by Hon. Gorreth.

**MS NAMUGGA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also join colleagues to wish you a very happy birthday. I am rising on a procedural matter on an issue of insecurity in this country, and it may be a threat to the Parish Development Model. I was so concerned because according to His Excellency, the President of Uganda, it is a game changer, a magic bullet and a transformational programme. So, anything that threatens it, as an MP, I cannot remain seated.

Madam Speaker, in my constituency, I have a wetland of over 150 acres on which the honourable minister, Anifa Kawooya, is claiming that the Parish Development Model is being conducted. They are planting eucalyptus

trees on that land and I have been told that it is being conducted in the guise of a Parish Development Model.

According to the guidelines of the Parish Development Model -

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members -

**MS NAMUGGA:** Madam Speaker, I beg to be protected. People's property and plantations were cleared on that land and the minister claims that the Parish Development Model is being implemented on that land.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Gorreth, I wish we would not bring our constituency fights into this House. Hon. Obua, You are Hon. Anifa's whip and Hon. Sseggoni is in charge of Hon. Gorreth; can you people have a meeting and sort out your constituency issues and give my office feedback?

**MS NAMUGGA:** Much obliged, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members, when you make noise - we have some guests up. I don't want the guests to go back and say that in the Parliament of Uganda, they make noise and do all this. So, let us be a little disciplined.

2.17

**MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County North, Kasese):** Madam Speaker, on behalf of the people of Kasese, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very warm happy birthday. You are a great gift to this country and you make us all proud.

This is in reaction to your communication. I am one individual - and I believe all of us in this House - believe that our pre-occupation in this House is to ensure that -

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Anifa, there is only one Chair in the House.

**MR KATUSABE:** And that is the No. 3. *(Laughter)*

Madam Speaker, I believe that our major pre-occupation is to ensure that there is value for the taxpayers' money. In your communication, I am glad you hinted on receipt of the report from the Auditor-General. Together with that, I make reference to the report from the Inspectorate of Government, which indicated in 2021, that about Shs 23 trillion is lost to corruption.

Madam Speaker, you also hinted on procurement. In that very report, Shs 1 trillion is lost to procurement fraud. In this very House, we have had reports from the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Planning and the Minister of Works and Transport, with all of them crying that the Government does not have money.

The procedural issue, which is a direct reaction to your communication is: how come, in this country, we cannot find money for our fellow citizens to get clean and safe drinking water, but Shs 23 trillion is lost to corruption and Shs 1 trillion is lost to procurement fraud alone?

When I go back to Kasese or when I travel countrywide, I find a lot of people applauding you. One of the reasons is your commitment to fighting corruption. We will never blame the leadership of this House for not having given us enough space to fight corruption - *(Interjection)* - wait a minute.

The accountability committees of this Parliament are headed by us - the Opposition. In other words, if there is corruption, we are not going to point to one direction. We are going to point at all of us.

The reason I showed up to make this reaction is what are we going to tell our sons and daughters when they ask us, "What did you do?" It is time for you, Madam Speaker, to put your foot down, roll up your sleeves and tell the people to get ready for accountability. This Parliament must speak.

In conclusion, we are looking forward to exhaustively looking at those reports and holding accountable those that are bleeding

this country to death. The reason our mothers and daughters continue to die in hospitals while giving birth –

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, we are going to look at those reports and the recommendations will be presented to this House.

**MR KATUSABE:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. My focus this afternoon, in reaction to your communication, was basically to appreciate you for putting the fight against corruption at the forefront. Much appreciated.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Government Chief Whip, do you have something to say?

2.23

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Denis Obua):** Madam Speaker, permit me also to wish you many more years of good health as you celebrate your 49<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in terms of when you were born.

The fight against corruption is a shared responsibility. That explains why under our democracy, we have chosen, for instance in Parliament, to have all the accountability-related committees chaired by the Opposition – to provide checks and balances. I believe that the report of the Inspectorate of Government is one of those provided for under the law.

If there are reports indicating corruption, I believe the respective accountability committees will bring those reports, through our known procedures and processes. Those reports, then, will be tabled in Parliament, debated and Parliament will take decisions that are corrective in nature. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, we are going to refer the reports to accountability committees, which will scrutinise them and make recommendations and they will be brought to this House. However, it is the responsibility of the Executive to ensure that a treasury memorandum comes back to the House on the actions taken. This is because we can have reports in this House and you do not

take action. We want you to be accountable to the country. That is where I agree with my in-law there. Thank you.

2.25

**MS IDAH NANTABA (Independent, Woman Representative, Kayunga):** Madam Speaker, in the interest of time, allow me to restrict my submission to a letter that has been addressed to you, through me, the Woman Member of Parliament, Kayunga District -

**THE SPEAKER:** But I have not got the letter.

**MS NANTABA:** Madam Speaker, I intend to lay it after reading it.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is it a public letter?

**MS NANTABA:** Madam Speaker, it is public because I presented this matter before this Parliament and you made a directive. I want to report what has transpired since that day.

**THE SPEAKER:** Has the body been brought?

**MS NANTABA:** Madam Speaker, that is what I am going to talk about.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, do not read my letter in public. *(Laughter)*

**MS NANTABA:** Madam Speaker, it is just two pages.

**THE SPEAKER:** Tell us: has the body been brought?

**MS NANTABA:** Madam Speaker, I presented this matter on the Floor of Parliament. Allow me just –

**THE SPEAKER:** Just speak about it.

**MS NANTABA:** Madam Speaker, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November, I presented a petition to this House regarding a widow from Kayunga, who lost her child in Saudi Arabia under unclear circumstances. When I reported that matter on the Floor, you directed the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development to handle it by

way of compelling the company that recruited and deployed the deceased - Lydia Aliba - to process the repatriation of her remains.

I interacted with the minister and the Prime Minister, as you had directed. Unfortunately, nothing had really happened until yesterday-but-one, when the minister informed me that they had paid \$1,000 only, out of the \$3,400 that was required for the repatriation expenses.

Yesterday, our Ambassador in Saudi Arabia informed me that if we do not pay the full amount by today, they will have no choice, but to bury this young girl by tomorrow. Therefore, this morning, I quickly rushed to your office, Madam Speaker, with the mother who was grieving and yelling, as a result of that loss.

I wish to report to this House that this message that is entailed here is an appreciation to you, Madam Speaker. Colleagues, the Speaker has paid the US \$3,400. (*Applause*) She has paid the expenses. I want to report to this House that this letter is from the mother; it is an appreciation note to you for showing this motherly and compassionate gesture towards this noble cause. We have sent the money to the ambassador. (*Applause*) We do know that the body will come anytime from now.

Madam Speaker, allow me to deliver this message to you and allow me to lay it on the Table, as a matter of national concern, and to be on record that this motherly gesture could be realised in such a short time.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MS NANTABA:** Madam Speaker, her plea is that her sister - the sister of the deceased, called Jackie Nalule, accompanies the body of her sister back to Uganda. These are the only two daughters that this widow had. She has lost one and the other is also in Saudi Arabia, but she is also asking to accompany her dead sister's body. Her boss has offered to pay for the travel expenses so you do not have to incur them.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, this morning at 8.00 a.m., when

I reached my office, I found an old woman wailing at my door. I wondered where she was coming from. Hon. Nantaba was seated in the waiting room and everybody else that was there virtually cried. We had to support the old woman.

Then, the other issue that came up in this House - I do not know whether it is true - Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, you may need to help us in this - that every licensed company makes a deposit of Shs 100 million. If it is true, what is hard with parting with US \$3,400 out of the money deposited?

Secondly, we may need to do an in-depth analysis of these companies. Like somebody else said, we need to open the veil and know who the owners of these companies are. I gave the old woman money from my salary - and not from Parliament - because of what I saw. Let us help these people.

I am not going to allow debate on this, but I will ask the committee that is handling this to do an in-depth analysis of the owners of these companies. We need to open the veil.

2.32

**MR MEDARD SSEGGONA (NUP, Busiro County East, Wakiso):** Madam Speaker, I also thank you for your kindness. If anything is going to break your back, it is this kindness and generosity. (*Applause*) We have said here in the past, and repeatedly, that before we allow free transfer of labour from this country, we must have a clear policy. We must have bilateral relations with the particular countries where we are sending our children.

Today, it came to you as Speaker, and because of your profile, we are talking about it. It happens to us on a daily basis. We, Members of Parliament, are always called upon to contribute to the transfer and repatriation of bodies of our children.

Away from the financials, which we can dispense with, what happens to these lives? One day I travelled through one of the Arab countries and as I was coming back to Uganda

and on the plane, we had over 30 children. You would look at the malnourished children; some were pregnant, in that condition and state.

The alarming levels of poverty here have forced our children into economic exile and slavery. Some people have even called it “modern-day slavery”. There is no modernity in this kind of slavery. Even our slaves in the past would be fed, treated and remained sober all the time. Today, our children are crying day in and day out. Why is it that Government continues to allow people to go into those countries with which we have no state relations? Labour relations, the world over, are regulated by the State.

I agree with you and support you unreservedly, Madam Speaker, when you say that our committee responsible should investigate and come out with a report. I thank you because I trust that you are going to give clear terms of reference.

However, in the meantime, we need to put a stop to this. Any transfer of labour to a country with which we have no bilateral relations - as Government we have no control - should stop until we investigate this matter. We need to develop regulations and guidelines that are sufficient.

I really feel sorry for my daughter, the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development. I do not know for how long she has now been in that ministry. I would have expected, first, the policy to have been brought to Parliament, but also a Bill, specifically, to regulate this. There is just one clause that talks about migrant workers, which is in the Employment Act – (*Interjection*) - I will take information because I know he has information.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am not going to allow more debate on this because we are waiting for a report. It is going to be on the Order Paper. We will discuss this - you can talk about the tourist city, not about that again.

**MR RUHUNDA:** Madam Speaker, I equally wish you a happy birthday. As you know, the

people of Fort Portal - the tourism city - love you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much.

**MR RUHUNDA:** Madam Speaker, we need to create internal opportunities for our young people. There is no reason whatsoever why we are failing to plan for this young labour force.

Unfortunately, many leaders are promoting the exodus of our people. They are making them not believe in their country. They just think that this country cannot provide them with opportunities. When many of us finished university, we went back to the villages - I went to Fort Portal and started my life there; I am a successful man because of that.

Therefore, we can be role models. We should not kill the spirit of our young people and make them think that life is out there, and yet here in Uganda, we have all that it takes. That is why that corruption, which we are talking about, is the cause of all this. We must fight it to the end because if we do not come together and fight the parasites, who are just siphoning money and sending it out of the country - they are the cause of all this that we are going through. We must fight this.

I thank you, Madam Speaker, for allowing me to talk about the young Fort Portal tourism city that needs to be boosted because we have not been given money. We need to get money and then grow the city.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, we are not going to continue the discussion on this. First of all, I am equally not happy, as the leader of this institution, with some Members. I got footage of how some Members attacked the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia in the parking - the Ambassador was attacked in the parking, and that is very dangerous because it causes diplomatic issues. Let us desist from that. Let us have some in-house management way of handling things.

I have told the committee to open the veil so that we know who the owners of these companies are; that is what we mainly should do.

On behalf of this Parliament, I really want to apologise to the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia for the action of my Members. We are truly sorry for whatever happened.

Matters of national importance.

2.39

**MR PHILIPHS LOKWANG-ILUKOL (NRM, Napore West County, Karenga):** Thank you, Madam Speaker-

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, that is his maiden speech; listen to Hon. Lokwang.

**MR LOKWANG-ILUKOL:** I apologise for the tone I have taken -

**THE SPEAKER:** It is okay, take your time.

**MR LOKWANG-ILUKOL:** It is an indication of the gravity of the matter I want to raise here. The Karamoja issue I have always talked about has become serious. In this particular sense, the insecurity in my constituency and the district at large has become too much that by 6.30 p.m., my people are locked indoors.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of October, they killed the principal assistant secretary. Three days later, another boy was killed. When I called security, they told me they were acting. However, everything has gone to the dogs.

The situation is threatening because we have over 70 armed warriors loitering in the park. When I requested security to intervene, they did nothing. Kidepo being the 3<sup>rd</sup> tourism destination in Africa, this is scaring away tourists.

I do not know what it will look like now that we are going into the festive season. It is alarming that even when I call the security people to come on the ground, they do not come. For example, last night -

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Lokwang, your issue has been heard. What is your prayer?

**MR LOKWANG-ILUKOL:** My prayer in this sense is; can the security operatives or the Government tell us what they are up to, because people are dying? They took the cows and now they have come for the human beings; what are we going to do? I want to know from the officer.

**THE SPEAKER:** Who took the cows?

**MR LOKWANG-ILUKOL:** They first took the cows, and they are over. They have now come for human beings; what can we do? *(Laughter)*

**THE SPEAKER:** We are very sorry for whatever is happening. We sympathise with whatever is happening to the region. Hon. Okot has the same - I want Hon. Okot to raise his issue because they have the same issues.

2.42

**MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago):** Thank you. Madam Speaker. On 12 November 2022, a one Opio Bosco, a 34 year-old man was killed. On that same night, two people - Omoli Christopher and Lakidi Bosco - were injured.

Today the 23<sup>rd</sup>, this morning when we woke up, again a one Obwala Charles, a 38-year-old man with three children and two wives was shot dead and they raided over 18 heads of cattle and walked away.

The warriors are not very different from the warriors my friend has just talked about because their behaviour and tactics are the same. We border the Karamoja Subregion. There is a vast land between us, which is harbouring the warriors and the bandits.

We got information that the same groups went to the checkpoint, hacked and ran away with the guns for this government. We got information that the warriors have the liberty to do anything.

Around Omiya Pachwa, Paimol, Lapono and Lira Kato, that is the Eastern part of Agago

North County; we have information from our farmers and the people that when you move in their gardens, you find very many footmarks of warriors.

**THE SPEAKER:** Tell us your prayers; you are now telling us a story.

**MR AMOS OKOT:** Madam Speaker, we have talked about this area. My first prayer is a question: I want to repeat the same question my brother has asked; what is the Government up to? The army is very thin on the ground. They do not respond as fast as possible. Whenever you bring information, they do not respond. We want him to respond -

**THE SPEAKER:** What are your prayers?

**MR AMOS OKOT:** We want them to take charge now for all the burials that take place when our people are killed. At this point, I want to thank -

**THE SPEAKER:** By God's grace, we do not want anybody to be killed.

**MR AMOS OKOT:** Allow me to appreciate Hon. Gen. Muhoozi David. One time, when one of our councillors was killed, he contributed Shs 1,000,000 to cater for burial expenses. At this point, if any person is killed, let the people responsible take over the burial of that person.

In addition, stop this because we are now going into the festive season. If you do not stop this, where will our people go?

Lastly, Madam Speaker, most of these warriors are young boys. Sometimes, when they are put out of action, you find them with identity cards that belong to persons who are supposed to be in school.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, we do not want you to bury; we want people alive. We do not want anybody to be killed. We want to know your plans, especially in this festive season. Yes. He has a point of procedure.

**MR SILWANY:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The issue of insecurity has become something very touchy in this country. Almost on a daily basis, Members are raising a similar matter. I remember I was on this Floor and I sought the indulgence of the Chair; wouldn't it be procedurally right for us to request the Head of State, as he did in 2017, to come and address Parliament about the security situation from the Karamoja subregion to Western Uganda and the whole country?

He should come and talk to Parliament, and address us the way it was in 2017. That time, His Excellency the President addressed Parliament and things became better. We saw cameras being installed.

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, wouldn't it be procedurally right, for your Office to invite the President to come and address Parliament and to handle Members' issues?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the President of Uganda appointed ministers to work under different ministries. I understand Hon. Silwany's issue; he must be yearning to see the President. Now that he wants to see the President, maybe that is why he is saying that *Mzee* should come and sit here so that he can be able to see him directly. For now, let the ministers first work.

Honourable members, to whoever is raising an issue that has already been raised, it is going to be answered under 'Actions Taken'. We are looking at more recent things like the one of yesterday. That is why I told you to include everything that was mentioned, look at the responses and include the issue that you raised.

2.48

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I take note of the concerns of the honourable member from Napore and Hon. Okot.

Indeed, this House knows that there was a spike in insecurity in Karamoja to which Government responded. I can report that in

spite of those, the situation has tremendously improved. These are residual challenges that we need to address to ensure that our people are peaceful in that area. I will interact with the two Members to see how to work out responses to address that problem.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Give information to the General and you will get feedback. You need to handle that issue as soon as possible.

2.50

**MR MEDARD SSEGGONA (NUP, Busiro County East, Wakiso):** Madam Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Gen. Muhoozi, not for the Shs 1 million, but for coming up and giving us that response. However, as he got up to address Parliament, your instruction was that he addresses us on what measures they are going to put in place because it is not limited to these two honourable members. There could be other issues, which have not been brought to their attention.

I had expected that the minister was going to say, this is what we are doing to ensure it does not happen. Of course, it may cut across and go beyond his ministry because when Hon. Okot was telling us where these people are coming from - there is even a possibility that it is cross-border insurgency. I thought that the minister was going to say, in addition to what he has told us, "I am preparing a comprehensive statement in liaison with the sister ministries that are mandated to handle issues that are beyond Ministry of Internal Affairs."

I understand that some of these issues have been handled by the UPDF, which is not his docket as minister, although it is related. Is it not procedurally right that he be guided - I do not want to use the word "directed", which I know is the language he is used to -

**THE SPEAKER:** I think what the minister is saying is that they had the same issue, they handled it and what is left is a residual matter. It could be residual people; persons who are causing insecurity. What the honourable is asking is, what is the plan, how are you going to handle?

**GEN. MUHOOZI:** Madam Speaker, I totally agree with Hon. Sseggon, but I did not want to pre-empt our bigger response, which is part of our responses to the resolutions of Parliament, and it includes the question of Karamoja. We shall give you the measures we have taken and then address these particular concerns.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

2.52

**MS DOROTHY NYAKATO (NRM, Woman Representative, Kitagwenda):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I rise on a matter of national importance concerning land evictions in Kitagwenda District.

Around 700 households in Nyabuhoko Parish, Buhanda Subcounty, Kitagwenda District have been threatened with eviction by someone called Kabbani, the purported owner of that land. The affected areas are Kanara cell, Mitwe cell, Nyabuhoko cell, Nyabugando cell and others.

Madam Speaker, people are spending sleepless nights and they are in fear. They do not have where to go and yet they have been living on that land for over 100 years.

My prayer is to request the relevant ministry to intervene in this matter and resolve this issue of land such that our people are able to stay on this land peacefully.

I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Dorothy. Prime Minister-

2.54

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Madam Speaker, we all must agree that land issues are becoming a thorn in our throats. Just recently, there is a widow who was being evicted from her land that was bought out of funeral collections. A man wanted to take her land at just Shs 5 million in Namungoona. We need to join hands. The rich want to take free land from our people.

I want to inform you that the issue of land is a collective responsibility. We, the Members of Parliament, must all put our feet down and say no to this kind of thuggery. With that background, I want to allay the fears of our sister that the President made a very good directive, “No evictions on any land even when they have a court order” because the RDC and the security committee - Yes.

**THE SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, that will be contempt of court.

**MS NABBANJA:** Then they will chase them, but the President -

**MR SSEGGONA:** Madam Speaker -

**THE SPEAKER:** Members, can we have some silence?

**MR SSEGGONA:** I rise up with pain because you know my relationship with the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, but I have a deeper relationship with the law. Just on Monday this week, the Prime Minister is on record as having invaded the court in Mengo and attacked a magistrate for a decision made. The Chief Justice has since issued -

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssegona -

**MR SSEGGONA:** Yes, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am not aware of that. First, give me that information before we come and debate it in the House.

**MR SSEGGONA:** I will give you that information.

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not want to debate in anticipation -

**MR SSEGGONA:** On a point of order -

**THE SPEAKER:** I have already ruled that it will be contempt of court. We cannot be seen to fight court. It is a collective responsibility, fine, but we cannot go against court orders.

**MS NABBANJA:** Madam Speaker, what I was telling you is a directive. Having seen the number of people being evicted – *(Interruption)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Jonathan, first wait.

**MS NABBANJA:** I have protection from the Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, let us listen. Be good listeners because I know there is no order that the President will give, which is against the law.

**MS NABBANJA:** Members, having seen a number of evictions in the country, the President guided that the RDCs should help because a number of people were being evicted. To some extent, you can see that there is some order.

I would like to allay the fears of my sister from Kitagwenda that the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development - and I know she is a field woman – has been directed to go there and see how best we can help those people, who are facing eviction. Thank you so much.

**THE SPEAKER:** The lands minister should go to Kitagwenda and report back to the House. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, there was an issue that was raised by Hon. Hanifa Nabukeera, where an army man is guarding the same place. Everybody has been chased and he has deployed security to guard it in Mukono.

Madam Prime Minister, when we are getting Action Taken Reports? This should be one of the issues that should be captured.

**MR TEBANDEKE:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Section 92 of the Land Act gives powers to convict a person who attempts any land eviction for seven years or a fine equivalent to US \$96.

Madam Speaker –

**THE SPEAKER:** Is it dollars or pounds?

**MR TEBANDEKE:** Pounds. I am sorry. Madam Speaker – Yes, currency points. Madam Speaker, isn't it procedurally right to have the minister in charge of lands and the Prime Minister too, to lay evidence here of such practitioners of land eviction that have ever faced the consequence of the law? I beg to submit.

**MR ODUR:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Prime Minister mentioned here that the President has given an order. She is the Leader of Government Business; she represents the President here.

Wouldn't it be procedurally correct that that order is laid here because it has become law? This Parliament is the only one –

**THE SPEAKER:** It has not become law; we have not passed it.

**MR ODUR:** That is why we want it here.

**THE SPEAKER:** It is not law.

**MR ODUR:** Madam Speaker, I do not intend to debate with you. The Prime Minister is here; she said it on record here and is affirming it. Let us have it here because it will help us sort out this matter.

3.01

**MR DAVID ZIJJAN (Independent, Butembe County, Jinja):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance. I pray that I am granted leave to proceed, under Rule 83(1)(e) of our Rules of Procedure, that this be taken as my maiden speech –

**THE SPEAKER:** No. *(Laughter)*

**MR ZIJJAN:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of national importance to bring to the attention of this House the plight of the sugarcane farmers in Uganda. It is common knowledge that sugarcane farming is being carried out across several regions of this country - northern region, Bunyoro subregion, Buganda and other regions, Busoga subregion being at the forefront.

For years now, sugarcane farmers have writhed in agony and suffered several challenges, which Government is yet to address, yet the farmers continue to suffer and wallow in poverty.

Madam Speaker, on 23 April 2020, the President assented to the Sugar Act, 2020. This Parliament received it on 28 April 2020. Section 3 of the Sugar Act establishes the Sugar Board. Two and a half years down the road, that Board is yet to be operationalised.

The Sugar Board's functions, among others, is to regulate and supervise the sugar industry, in order to answer the challenges this industry faces, including human rights violations. This pertains to rights to property of women, where women are the other ones who look for food while their husbands authorise the renting of the entire land that the families have and they are left with no place to cultivate food. Children's rights are violated by being employed on these farms as well.

Madam Speaker, we all know that sugarcane farming is an agricultural enterprise, but the sugarcane farmers of this country are regulated under the trade ministry, as opposed to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. When the ministry of agriculture brings programmes to emancipate the situation of farmers, the sugarcane farmers are left unattended because they are regulated by a ministry that is not agriculture.

Recently, the agriculture minister has been undertaking a drive, where large scale farmers are being empowered and equipped with tractors. The President has told this nation that one of the answers to dealing with abject poverty is the mechanisation of agriculture, but the sugarcane farmers are not attended to, hence, they continue to suffer. We wonder why sugarcane farmers are regulated by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, as opposed to ministry of agriculture.

The President met the sugarcane farmers in Jinja and they cried to him about the one per cent – *(Interruption)*

**THE SPEAKER:** There is a procedural matter.

**MR KAYEMBA-SSOLO:** Madam Speaker, two weeks back, Hon. Ssimbwa from Nakifuma brought the same issue about sugar and sugarcane and you referred the matter to the able Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry.

Is it procedurally right for Hon. Zijjan to go on and speak about the same issue that you ruled on, yet the able committee is handling it?

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Zijjan, what you can do is to take the matter that you are raising to the committee, on why it is in the Ministry of Trade Instead of the Ministry of Agriculture, and then the one of what is in the Act.

The issue is about operationalising; creating awareness of what is in the Act. If the Act is there and people are keeping it in their drawers, how does the public get to know what is in the Act?

That is a very good matter you have raised, but I request you to take those issues to the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry.

**MR ZIJJAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We are talking about the Sugar Board being given resources to operate, which is not. However, Madam Speaker, just in one minute - if it may please you, this being your birthday; I know that you are very gracious this afternoon.

I was talking about the President's directive, in which he directed that the one per cent withholding tax, which had been levied against sugarcane farmers, be returned to them as a Government intervention in answering the consequences of COVID-19. As we speak, two and a half years down the road, the farmers are still demanding for this money and it has not been given to them.

Finally, local farmers –

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, I have already ruled on that. Your issue is going to be captured at committee level and reported. Even

those pledges that the President made will be captured and presented to the House.

**MR ZIJJAN:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker. Happy Birthday, by the way, from Busoga. *(Laughter)*

**MS OPENDI:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It is past 3.00 p.m. and we are all wearing orange for a purpose. Today, we would like to thank you for launching the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. *(Applause)*

As Parliament, we must stand in solidarity with the women and girls -

**THE SPEAKER:** What is your procedural matter?

**MS OPENDI:** The procedural matter that I am raising is that we suspend matters of national importance and receive the minister's statement because we have guests from our development partners, who are here to listen to this Parliament debating and receiving the report on the gender-based violence. *(Interjections)* Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I like the way you can make noise. *(Laughter)* At the end of the day, there is one person to rule. *(Laughter)* Next item.

#### LAYING OF PAPERS

THE FORENSIC INVESTIGATION  
REPORTS INTO THE COVID-19 FUNDS  
RELEASED TO THE MINISTRIES,  
DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES  
DURING THE FINANCIAL YEARS  
2019/2020 AND 2020/2021, VOLUME ONE

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I invite the Parliamentary Commissioner to lay the documents on the Table.

3.10

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the Forensic Investigation Reports

into the COVID-19 Funds Released to the Ministries, Departments and Agencies during the financial years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021, Volume One. I beg to lay.

**THE SPEAKER:** Please, lay. Pursuant to Rule 181(3) of the Rules of Procedure, I refer them to the relevant committee. (*Member rose*) No, we also have a report on the Parliamentary Commission. Let us not hide the one on the Parliamentary Commission.

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

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, as I communicated before, we also received audit reports on classified accounts. The reports will be referred administratively; there are only three Members in that committee. The committee will look at the reports and report back to the Auditor-General.

Honourable members, there is a statement by the minister and, as I said before, there are 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, which is an international campaign that commences on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November and ends on the 10<sup>th</sup> of December.

This commemoration is important for awareness and accountability on the steps taken to eliminate gender-based violence. As you are aware, gender-based violence remains a disease to our people and a challenge in the society in which we live, and among the people we represent. So, we need to work together to ensure that we eliminate it.

This morning, I had an interaction with some of the stakeholders from the Uganda Women Parliamentarians Association (UWOPA), as part of the activities for commemoration of these 16 days, and we agreed that nobody should be left behind, including the boy child. When you talk about gender-based violence, people think it is about women only, but it includes even the boy children.

We need to unite and fight this violence and it must start with us, the legislators, because we are the voice of the voiceless. As leaders, we need to go and create awareness of what is happening.

We need to tell people how we can eliminate domestic violence. We also need to legislate on these issues – make laws that prevent or eliminate gender-based violence. We also need to do budgeting. If we have a law, we must budget for it. It is not just a matter of having a law without budgeting for it.

Most importantly, when the law is in place, we must popularise the law. People should know what is happening, what would happen and what would be the remedy should anything happen.

Therefore, honourable minister, I invite you to make your statement. However, before you make your statement, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have staff from UWOPA and from the Department of Corporate Planning and Strategy. We have;

1. Mrs Salome Anyoti.
2. Ms Lillian Najjuma.
3. Ms Isabella Tusubira.
4. Ms Joan Sagiri. (*Applause*)

You are being gender insensitive. I have not seen any boy child there, yet in UWOPA, we have boys too. (*Applause*) They are here to listen to and witness the proceedings of the House.

Honourable members, still in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation from the United Nations, based in Kampala. These include Ms Evelyn Letiyo. (*Applause*) She is a UN Women Programme Specialist.

We have Ms Agripinner Nandhego, a UN Women Programme Specialist. (*Applause*) We also have Ms Eva Sibanda. (*Applause*) Thank you for joining us.

Still in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation from the Embassy of Netherlands

in Kampala. We have Ms Ruth Van Zorge. *(Applause)* Ruth is the First Secretary. We have Ms Judith Adokorach, a policy officer. *(Applause)*. We have Ms Fatia Kiyange, the Executive Officer. *(Applause)*. We also have Ms Brechje Huisma. *(Applause)* They are here on the 16 days of activism.

In the strangers' gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation from Miss Curvy Uganda. Stand up *(Applause)* I thank all of you.

You can now sit down. Honourable members, join me in welcoming all the guests that we have this afternoon. *(Applause)*

I now welcome the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development to present her statement.

3.18

**THE MINISTER OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Betty Amongi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and the women of Uganda, I wish you the very best happy birthday. We are proud of you, as the No.3 in this country. *(Applause)*

I would like to draw your attention to the statement of business by the Rt Hon. Prime minister and Leader of Government Business on 10 November 2022, where the Ministry of Gender is required to make this statement.

I also thank you for officially, today, sparing your time and launching this campaign in Parliament, where we shall be lighting Parliament orange – and you lit it upstairs in the lobby. *(Applause)*

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

organised by various stakeholders. This year marks the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the 16 days of activism campaign.

In 2008, the UN General-Secretary launched another initiative dubbed "Unite, End Violence against Women By 2030." This reinforces the 16 days of activism campaign – I do not know whether this man is not gender – thank you, honourable minister. It was "friendly violence". *(Laughter)*

Madam Speaker, the Unite campaign calls for global action to increase awareness, galvanise advocacy efforts and share knowledge and innovative measures to address gender-based violence. The Government of Uganda, under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, joined the global campaign in 2008 and has since utilised the campaign annually as an advocacy and mobilisation strategy for raising public awareness and gender-based violence-related awareness, especially its implication to national development, influencing behavioural change, securing high level political and social commitments to end the impunity.

The campaign has served as a call to action to ensure that comprehensive services, including protection, medical, legal and psychosocial services are available to survivors of gender-based violence.

The campaign also contributes to the efforts to deliver on the international, regional and national commitments on gender equality and women empowerment, which includes the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, that is, SDG 5 on gender equality; also, the Uganda Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan III, which runs between 2020 and 2025, among others.

The 16 days of activism campaign commences, usually, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November, which is the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women, with a national launch, which flags off various activities at the national and district levels in line with the national theme. It ends on 10 December, which is Human Rights

Day. That is why it runs for 16 days.

Since 2008, Uganda has been engaged in this campaign and the following impacts have been realised:

1. Increased public awareness on gender-based violence as a human right, public health, economic and social issue at the family, community and national levels;
2. Increased reporting of cases of gender-based violence from 39.5 per cent in 2003 to 70 per cent. And 43 per cent of these are seeking help to end violence. This is according to UBOS National Survey on violence against women and girls, a report of 2021;
3. The Ministry of Gender has enhanced dialogue with key actors, including religious and cultural leaders, since they are custodians of socio-cultural norms to achieve transformative approaches to gender-based violence, prevention and response;
4. It has also strengthened local initiatives and networks of stakeholders to address gender-based violence and enhance accountability by Government and other stakeholders on actions to address gender-based violence.

This year's global theme is: "Unite, Activism to End Violence against Women and Girls." Uganda has adopted this global theme as the national theme.

"Activism" refers to the deliberate and noticeable actions undertaken by all stakeholders to bring about the much needed change of eliminating gender-based violence. The emphasis put on ending violence against women emanates from the fact that women and girls are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence, including harmful traditional practices - child marriage, female genital mutilation, widow inheritance and disposition. That is why we put emphasis on women and girls.

The Ministry of Gender is coordinating the organisation of the national launch and bringing together all stakeholders, including MDAs, development partners, civil society, the private sector and religious and traditional cultural institutions in planning the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence across the country.

The National Survey on Violence against Women of 2022 conducted by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics indicates that 95 per cent of respondents had experienced either physical, sexual or both types of violence by either partners or non-partners and this, from the age of 15 years. Lifetime prevalence of intimate partner sexual violence was reported at 36 per cent. Physical violence among even partner women was 45 per cent.

There are regional disparities with Bukedi Subregion registering the highest intimate partner violence, standing at 48 per cent, followed by Acholi Subregion –

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, she is saying "Bukedi" not "Bukedea" – *(Laughter)*

**MS AMONGI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Bukedi has very many districts, including Tororo. It is followed by Acholi Subregion at 47 per cent - Yes, you people of Acholi are at 47 per cent. You have intimate violence. The Elgon Region is at 33 per cent, and South Buganda is the lowest at 8 per cent; so congratulations, South Buganda. Madam Speaker, I will not talk about Teso.

The survey further revealed that 47 per cent of women face economic violence while sexual violence by non-partners from the age of 15 years stood at 55 per cent, with 14 per cent perpetrated by close relatives. Emotional violence stands at 55 per cent.

According to the Uganda Annual Police Crime Report of 2021, a total of 16,242 cases of gender-based violence and violence against children were reported; 8,065 of those were cases of domestic violence; 6,838 were cases of defilement; 749 were cases of rape; 223

were aggravated domestic violence; leading to death; 114 were cases of indecent assaults, and 39 were cases of child abduction. That is what is in the Uganda Police Annual Crime Report.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to constrain efforts to curb gender-based violence, considering the extent to which all forms of violence escalated during that time, but especially teenage pregnancy and child marriages, perpetuated by confinement and economic hardship. Most of these were also by close relatives.

Honourable members, I wish to inform you that the objective of the campaign this year will be:

1. To raise awareness on gender-based violence against women and girls; its implications to families, communities, and overall national development;
2. To mobilise our partners and stakeholders, especially men and boys, male engagement to take action and prevent violence against women and girls and resist the rollback on women's rights.

Madam Speaker, I think we need to thank Hon. Sarah Opendi because she did this very well this morning and mobilised her spouse who has been with us since morning.

3. Also to advocate for strategic -

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, that is violence. Leave Hon. Sarah's spouse out of this. *(Laughter)*

**MS AMONGI:** Madam Speaker, the third objective is to advocate for strategic actions, including increased long-term, sustainable and flexible funding from the Government, the private sector and other donor partners to end violence against women and girls.

I wish to inform you that this year's national launch of the 16 days of activism campaign will be held at Imperial Royale Hotel in Kampala City tomorrow, 24 November 2022. This event will be marked with a limited number of persons due to the Ebola outbreak.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development with the UN family development partners, and non-state actors will later organise a number of activities during these 16 days of activism across the country.

Madam Speaker and honourable members, it is my humble appeal to all of you to participate in this campaign through the various events being organised at the national and district levels and also in your constituencies, as a matter that will be a priority for you during this festive season. I thank you. I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you so much for the statement, Hon. Betty Amongi, which is self-explanatory. Before you come with clarification, I just want to correct the record that the report that the Commissioner laid was referred to PAC (Central Government), pursuant to rule 174(4). Now, there is one more report he did not lay on the Table.

#### LAYING OF PAPERS

#### THE SPECIAL AUDIT REPORT BY THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON SELECT PROCUREMENT EXPENSES AND ASSET MANAGEMENT AT THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/2022

**THE SPEAKER:** We are coming back to whatever you want to say. There is a very important report on the investigation on the Parliamentary Commission.

3.32

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the Special Audit Report by the Auditor-General on Select Procurement Expenses and Asset Management at the Parliamentary Commission for the Financial Year 2021/2022. I beg to lay.

**THE SPEAKER:** That is pursuant to rule 181(3) of the rules of procedure. I am referring that to the Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises. The classified one for all ministries that get classified funds is also for the Financial Year

2021/2022. The reports are laid on the Table to the chairperson of the committee.

**MS NALUYIMA:** Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. Upon the statement, wouldn't it be procedurally right for the IT team to add the missing page? There is a page missing, from what the honourable minister was submitting.

**THE SPEAKER:** Which page is that?

**MS NALUYIMA:** The pages were not numbered, but right away, as you proceed, you will realise that from number 14, you go to the conclusion which starts with number 16. As she read, I noticed that some parts were missing.

**THE SPEAKER:** At least, you have heard it, but you can include it in the report, IT team. Honourable members, I will invoke rule 52(2) and allow debate for 15 minutes. There is a point of clarification. I would like the men to debate. Let the women first sit. Let the men speak first.

**MS CECILIA OGWAL:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have listened to the minister and I think that the report she is giving us is extremely important, particularly to people of my age. Many of the activities that the minister is talking about - sensitisation and how to deal with the violence against women and so on - seem to be at the upper strata of our society.

However, I think gender-based violence is more prevalent in rural areas. Whereas we are going to this hotel to hear about the same thing, which I have heard over and over again, can I be told what activity there is in Dokolo so that I can be part of it? That is where that rural woman, who is being abused and does not know where to go, is. What legal framework is there to defend ourselves or whatever? That is what I want to hear because all this sensitisation and talk is about elites; the people who already know. When you talk about gender-based violence, the people who are suffering are those rural people. I want that clarification. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable minister and UWOPA, why wouldn't we have this launch in Bukedea where the percentage is very high, other than us having it in an air-conditioned place?

We could also have it in Nakapiripirit where girls get married between six and 10 years. Why don't we go and have the launch in a village setting and deal with the village women and men so that you are able to tell them that what they are doing is wrong, so that they know what we are talking about?

However, when we go to an air-conditioned boardroom, they say, "They are just looking for allowances"; so, let us first clarify that. Maybe the clarification will transfer the venue to some village. Maybe just for information, there is no Ebola in Bukedea and we are ready to host.

**MS AMONGI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Procedurally, we always have a national launch and all the districts will also have district launches. Unless you want us to choose one district for the national launch -

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes. I am putting the question that we launch the 16 days of activism in a village setting.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** I am starting with the boy-child. Hon. Emmanuel -

3.39

**MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also want to start by thanking the minister for the statement. In addition, I want to thank you for driving us into relocating the launch to a rural district. I want to believe it will be Pakwach.

Why Pakwach? It is because we have organisations that are key in championing such activities. Sometimes, I feel bad when a minister is making such a statement and he or she does not recognise such organisations.

For instance, in greater Nebbi, we have Plan International, where I worked before coming to Parliament. We would have such activities in the districts where we worked, and we would drive the activities ourselves.

I would be happy to hear that as Government, we are recognising such organisations. This would actually motivate them more and where possible, get them to expand to other districts. I know for sure that we are talking about the launch in the rural districts; we are talking about activities, as *Mum* has said, that should happen in Dokolo. However, she will tell you that they do not have funds to support the districts to make sure that such activities are there.

You will find that many times, eventually it is the MPs that are called upon to contribute to those district activities to take place. Therefore, what are we not going to contribute for?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, two minutes each. Let us avoid talking for long. However, as you heard, Bukedi was being misinterpreted as Bukedea. We should launch this in Budaka where the rate is so high - Tororo is part of Bukedi.

Honourable members, let us look at how we plan to eliminate gender based violence; we need solutions. As legislators, let us not go into lamenting. Let us look at the solutions and how we are going to create awareness, how we are going to legislate to that effect, how we are going to budget to that effect. I wish I were you; when the Speaker is speaking, I would sit down. Fr Charles Onen -

3.42

**FR CHARLES ONEN (Independent, Laroo-Peece Division, Gulu City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Gender based violence affects every fibre of society and whenever it takes place, it leaves incurable scars in the society.

We need to come up with a law or a policy, which can help support the victims of violence. In most cases, perpetrators of violence are or were once victims of violence.

We have seen the effects of violence in our community and in our societies; the rampant cases of child mothers, the rampant cases of suicide - Gulu District - for example, last month we lost a doctor due to domestic violence. A former councillor stabbed a medical doctor and killed him. It also happened in Kole District and other places. How are we going to help victims of violence? We need psychosocial support to be given to victims of violence. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you so much. Peter -

3.43

**MR PETER OCEN (Independent, Kole South County, Kole):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to add my voice to say, happy birthday.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank the minister for the presentation that she has made here. Women are the ones feeding this country.

As we talk, because of the emphasis that has been put on women and the girl children, our boy children are going astray. If you go to the rural setting, the responsibilities that men used to take have been relinquished to women. If you go to rural schools, you will find that women are the ones paying school fees, buying uniforms and books for children to go to school.

This has made men fail to do what they are supposed to do. My request is that when we put much emphasis on girl children - *(Interruption)*

**MR OLANYA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The honourable Member of Parliament stated very clearly that nowadays, women are the ones paying school fees and buying uniforms.

Madam Speaker, the contrary is true in Amuru District; men are paying school fees. The honourable member should have been specific by saying "some men", but not generalising all the men in the same bracket. Is the honourable member in order to generalise that not all men are performing as far as payment of school fees is concerned? Is he in order?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, we are not talking about men from districts. We are talking about all the men. If you are irresponsible, you are irresponsible. You are leaving responsibilities to the women.

**MR PETER OCEN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the protection. As I conclude, women in my area are the ones doing business and they are doing the local business of selling dried and fresh cassava and taking it on ordinary bicycles to Lira City.

If you go to Lira main road, you will find only women going to sell cassava; you will not see the men around. I am not saying men are bad, but men should also be brought up to their responsibility. They should know what they are supposed to do. I am also a man.

Madam Speaker, whenever we empathise on girl child education, I do not want the boy child to be left behind. Let us bring these people side by side, so that we balance the equation. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.47

**MR OJARA MARTIN MAPENDUZI (Independent, Bardege-Layibi Division, Gulu City):** Madam Speaker, allow me to join my colleagues in wishing you a happy birthday.

Madam Speaker, a few years ago when I was still chairman of Gulu District, with the help of Action Aid, we opened a GBV shelter, a place where victims of violence would be given support, both psychosocial, medical, legal and so on. It also turned out to be a place where families would access counselling. It is a fact that many families require counselling services.

I would like to know from the honourable minister: I am aware that at some point ActionAid said they could no longer continue supporting the GBV shelter, which turned out to be very useful. It would be good for the Honourable Minister, to talk about that, and see the possibility of replicating such initiatives, so that people have access to such services, and victims of violence can be supported. Thank you.

3.49

**MR SAMUEL OPIO ACUTI (Independent, Kole North County, Kole):** I want to thank the minister for the statement she has given. I particularly want to draw the attention of this House to the issues of sexual violence and in regard to the police cases that have been mentioned. I have just looked at the action report from the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and it shows that in the last one year, there were 1,036 cases of rape reported, but there were only 55 convictions. That means the conviction rate is only 5 per cent. When you do the mathematics, it means it will take almost 20 years to convict a rape perpetrator.

I want to ask the minister that in this engagement, let us also include the Judiciary and justice system. Many of these cases die at the police station and don't proceed through the justice system to prosecution. We need to take very strong action, right from the magistrate's court up to the highest levels of the judiciary system. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

3.50

**MR FRED KAYONDO (DP, Mukono County South, Mukono):** Thank You, Madam Speaker. If I had powers in this country, I would pronounce this day a public holiday. If I was a religious leader, I would call this a blessed day today, because it is a day when a lady of charisma was born and that is none other than you *-(Laughter)*. No wonder, you are changing precedence that issues of gender-based violence are now transferred from air-conditioned rooms to the villages. Why wouldn't I call today a blessed day? Because history is being made, Madam Speaker.

I am not going to lament, but issues of gender-based violence and their prevention are so theoretical. They are just talked about, and they are left in good English, as the statements written here. How I wish they could be interpreted to our local languages, so that even my people from Kome can read and understand them. But we come here and make good

presentations, we do write good English and it remains here. It remains so theoretical.

It is my prayer that issues of gender-based prevention go up to the grassroots so that even my mother in Kome can get to know what gender-based violence is and how it can be fought. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** When going to launch it in the rural areas, you should be able to take reusable pads. You should be able to take some projects that help to economically empower women to those rural areas.

3.52

**MR GEOFREY KAYEMBA-SOLO (NUP, Bukomansimbi South County, Bukomansimbi):** Madam Speaker, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak about this report. It is so absurd that in this generation, gender-based violence is at a high percentage. In most cases, the girl child is cared for more than the boy child. The boy child grows up without being cared about. That is why you find at times when boys have complicated hearts, complicated acts, because every time they empower, they sensitise the girl child.

I have a friend in my constituency called Robert Ndigida, who was beaten by the woman. When we went to the police, they just laughed at him. I call upon this Government to empower the boy child in the same way they empower the girl child. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, if you remember what I said at the beginning, that when you talk about gender-based violence - you have just heard what Fr Onen said about a lady who stabbed a doctor to death. It is not about women alone, it is about boys too because they will become a threat, if they are not catered for. They should equally be catered for. They should include them in the projects. Inclusion is very important in whatever is being done.

3.53

**DR TIMOTHY BATUWA (FDC, Jinja South Division West, Jinja City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I take this opportunity to thank you for the chance to contribute to this kind of discussion, regarding gender-based violence. As one of the legislators who agrees that we should end this gender-based violence, it is in my thoughts that starting this year, we approach it from the angle of the traditional and religious practices, such that the gender-based violence that stems from the traditional practices and religious practices can be solved.

The stakeholders on the other side of the discussion are clearly known. Issues of female genital mutilation should come to an end, if we can have a fruitful discussion. Issues of forced marriage, issues of child marriage, and violence around dowry. Let us settle that aspect of gender-based violence first, at least this year, such that next year, we now venture into others. However, the theme should be around religious and traditional practice driven gender-based violence. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

3.55

**MR ANTHONY AKOL (FDC, Kilak North County, Amuru):** Madam Speaker, allow me to add my voice to others to wish you a happy birthday. By coincidence, I was also born today *-(Laughter)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Happy birthday.

**MR AKOL:** When you were introducing the people who came to witness this debate, you introduced Adokorach Judith. I worked with her for a long time on issues of gender-based violence, before I joined Parliament.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable, is that why you boxed Odonga Otoo? *-(Laughter)*. That was on a light note.

**MR AKOL:** Madam Speaker, that is gender-based violence *-(Laughter)*

The problem of gender-based violence - when you get to the root - stems from poverty. When you look critically, the areas that are ranked highest on the list are those that are the poorest in the country.

Because of poverty, you realise that even education becomes a problem and this renders the girls vulnerable to violence. Therefore, if you want to address gender-based violence from the root cause of it, you have to address the issue of poverty.

By the time we are implementing gender-based violence approaches – to ensure we stop it – there are situations where a man beats a lady and is arrested, but the woman fails to feed the family. This woman will come to you and plead that please, release him. That is why we are talking about the low rate of prosecution.

So, if we want to address this issue, we should approach it from the root cause of the problem and, to me, it is the issue of poverty. If it is addressed well – the women are placed well and are educated – you will realise cases of gender-based violence going down.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. He is talking about the enforceability of the law in place. People should also be economically empowered.

3.58

**MR ASUMAN BASALIRWA (JEEMA, Bugiri Municipality, Bugiri):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I listened attentively to the minister and I would like to find out from her the programme she has with regard to gender-based violence in places of detention - prisons and the police cells.

I have been a political prisoner and during my time in Luzira, we interacted –(Interjection) - these cases are there. The minister has not been to prison and she may not know, but these cases are there. When talking about approaches, it is an area that we need to give attention to because gender-based violence is not only outside, but also inside.

Finally, Madam Speaker, while we need to take interest in this matter, it is also important that the legislation we make engenders an agenda for gender-based violence. For example, look at aspects related to witness protection. People out there have information, especially in families, but there are no proper witness protection laws so that if people are to provide information, they are protected. As Parliament, what are we going to do about it? Thank you.

4.00

**MR CHRISTOPHER KOMAKECH (Independent, Aruu County, Pader):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker –

**THE SPEAKER:** Women, it is your day. First listen to these men.

**MR KOMAKECH:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. You cannot speak of gender-based violence and leave out alcohol abuse and substance use. Gender-based violence is only a secondary effect of the substances and alcohol abuse.

I appreciate the minister for bringing out Acholi subregion in particular. These people are known for being the most loving men and women in the country, but they abuse alcohol and substances that they consume to forget about poverty and the atrocities that they had in their region.

Alcohol causes two things, Madam Speaker: if you are a man and you consume alcohol, your libido goes low –(Interjection)- it is in the public domain. If you are a woman and you consume alcohol, your libido shoots high. (Laughter)

Now, in a situation where poverty is engraved –(Laughter)

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, he is telling you what happens in Acholi. (Laughter)

**MR KOMAKECH:** Madam Speaker, it would be absurd for us to speak against gender-based violence when we do not address the issues that really cause it in our families.

I request the minister – before we blame the men and women, what are you doing? What are you going to do to see that we address the issue of alcohol and substance abuse, especially in regions that were traumatised by the LRA rebel activities? Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, he is talking about alcohol – there is a Bill in this House on regulating alcohol consumption – and then the issues of trauma. Like what Hon. Mapenduzi said, people need to be counselled.

4.03

**MR DENES SEKABIRA (NUP, Katikamu County North, Luwero):** Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I have been very observant of the statement and I have realised that gender-based violence is at its peak in poor districts and communities – where the standard of living and level of civilisation is low.

I would like to urge the minister to come up with at least policies specially designed for such communities because once the standard of living and level of civilisation is low, we shall continue experiencing these challenges of GBV.

From the report, the levels of GBV in South Buganda are the lowest because of the level of civilisation, education and the standard of living. Thank you so much.

**THE SPEAKER:** You cannot say that because I am poor, I am uncivilised: no. *(Applause)* The two are not related.

4.03

**MR ABDALLAH KIWANUKA (NUP, Mukono County North, Mukono):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. On this issue of gender-based violence, first of all, we must appreciate that it cuts across. Whereas the statement of the minister emphasised a lot on women, many men are being battered in their houses and less attention is being given to them. Even when you go to the police, the emphasis is on women.

There is a family desk at the police. This desk, across police stations, is always manned by

women and the priority is always given to ladies. It is not a bad thing, but we should train them more to understand that gender-based violence cuts across. If it is a man who has reported, let priority be given to him and the issue addressed accordingly.

Otherwise, we should carry on the mantle to ensure that information is circulated across the country on radio stations and TVs and through NGOs, so that men, women and children can know their rights – where they start and stop. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you so much. If you are looking for somebody who is passionate, welcoming at home, humane and responsible, it is always a woman. That is why you find women manning those positions. Those are your mothers, wives, aunties and daughters.

What this House is trying to do is to protect your daughters and wives because they are the weaker side. Do you get it? A woman was created from a man's rib; so, they have to be protected.

4.06

**MR JONATHAN EBWALU (Independent, Soroti West Division, Soroti City):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you and the minister. Many people in Uganda today look up to you and I appeal to you to continue with your heart; raise many people. From the time that you donated a Range Rover to a man, I can tell you, Madam Speaker, it has raised the profile -

**THE SPEAKER:** I did not donate it to a “man”; I gave a gift to my husband. *(Laughter)*

**MR EBWALU:** Thank you very much. Madam Speaker, allow me to withdraw that statement because I would not want to encourage gender-based violence in Parliament here. But I want to thank you from the time – *(Interruption)*

**THE SPEAKER:** There is information here. Yes, the Speaker has given you information.

**MR BASALIRWA:** Thank you very much, Hon. Ebwalu, for giving way. The information I want to give is that the Rt hon. Speaker set a precedent and now the women will be giving us Range Rovers as birthday gifts. *(Laughter)* That is the information I would like to give.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, issues of my family are not subject to debate in this House. What I do with my family is about me and my family; can we talk about gender-based violence because my husband and I do not have gender-based violence? *(Laughter)*

**MR EBWALU:** Madam Speaker, I respect that, but it does not deny the fact that since you come from Teso, it has raised the profile of Teso to a very high level. And I thank you for that.

Madam Speaker, I did not hear the minister give us the statistics of Teso and other subregions; Teso and Karamoja are some of the poorest subregions in the country. It is very important that the minister gives us the statistics not only for Bukedi, but the whole country, so that we get to understand.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I would like to appeal to my colleagues, Members of Parliament, that we put a special fund specifically for women in this country, especially the rural women. Today, women are managing families; women are in SACCOs and other groups. Men have run away from their duties; they are mostly in the trading centres and then they come home.

However, Madam Speaker, this matter is not about debate-*(Interjection)* - Let me conclude and then you come in. When a poor man goes back home and he has not eaten, the children have not eaten and the woman has not eaten, I can tell you that he cannot perform his “night duties”. So, all these bring about violence. So when we talk about poverty, we need to empower our people so that we are there – *(Interruption)*

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, I am seeking clarification first of all, from Hon. Ebwalu. You know, our rules Parliament bar us from debating in parables. So, you would have been specific on which duties you are referring to -

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, that is what they called an “indoor management rule”. Go and discuss it in your bedroom and not in the House.

**MR SILWANY:** Much obliged, Madam Speaker. I first of all congratulate the women. I thank Hon. Sarah Opendi, the chairperson of UWOPA for a well-coordinated day as we start the 16 days of activism. I saw her mobilising the men; I was waiting to see the President of the Uganda People’s Congress, also mobilised by the honourable minister –*(Interjection)*

Madam Speaker, they have given me information that he was fully mobilised and I thank you, honourable minister, for mobilising the President of the Uganda People’s Congress to be involved.

**THE SPEAKER:** What information did you want to give?

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, I had already given Hon. Ebwalu the information. Now, I am making my contribution.

**THE SPEAKER:** Now, Members, I told you that I was invoking Rule 52(2) and I was giving 15 minutes. So, I was moving to this side to give the Members - can I see the Members? Only the men, please. Hon. Songa – Members, please sit down. Ministers, you will speak.

4.12

**MR LAWRENCE SONGA (NRM, Ora County, Zombo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I take this opportunity to thank the Minister for this important launch, especially when we want to curb gender-based violence. I agree with the previous honourable members that if we want to address gender-based violence in our society, we need to address the question of poverty - we need socio-economic empowerment.

Personally, I do not want to see anyone bringing a loan request here to stop gender-based violence; bring a loan request for socio-economic empowerment, which will automatically address gender-based violence. Most of the challenges faced in our society

is because people do not have livelihoods; something to survive on. So, it is very important.

Secondly, many women organisations or organisations that are promoting gender-based issues are getting a lot of funds from around the world, but what percentage is going to the rural woman in Zombo? The figures are in trillions of shillings, but whatever goes to the grassroots is very little, and that it is one root cause of gender-based violence. Let us avoid corruption so that we can address this up to the grassroots and empower our people.

I appreciate the chairperson of UWOPA and all the women; let us work together and see that even in our budget, priority is given for socio-economic empowerment. And that can only come if we put our little money in the Budget for income-generating activities to raise more revenue to fund some of these initiatives. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, if something has been mentioned, do not repeat it. We have talked about poverty as one of the causes. Hon. Ebwalu said when you go home and you have nothing in your pocket, you are not man enough.

4.15

**MR TOM ALERO (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Honourable minister, thank you very much for the statement. Honourable members, we are here to find solutions to the issues of gender-based violence, and I will straight away go to the issues of ethical values.

If we are not going to embrace the issue of ethical values that is being promoted by Hon. Nsaba Buturo, then we may not find any solution of ethical violence.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, can we use the school setup; the role of the head teachers, senior women teachers, male teachers, the matrons, the prefects and so on and so forth for sensitisation, mobilisation and education of the masses? The cultural leaders and religious leaders should all be involved.

Madam Speaker, there is suppression, exploitation – especially sexual exploitation - discrimination of the women at home and in workplaces. Issues of lesbianism, bestiality and homosexuality should all be avoided because this is the discrimination we are talking about. This is real exploitation because how do you leave a woman and you go for a man instead? (*Laughter*) – So, you leave a woman for a man - that is a homosexuality. This is all related to gender-based violence. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. There is a point of clarification from Hon. Jonathan.

**MR ODUR:** Madam Speaker, I will now raise a procedural matter. The statement from the minister is clear. We are dealing with the launch of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. My understanding of gender-based violence is that these are actions or violence meted on a person after first determining the sex of that person. If you look at the person and find it is a man, you will not go ahead but because it is a woman, you do it.

Wouldn't it be procedurally right, Madam Speaker, that you guide Members that we restrict ourselves to the theme of the day and on another opportunity, we can come back here and talk about other issues so that we are relevant to the statement the minister presented?

**THE SPEAKER:** The theme of the day is for us to unite to eliminate gender-based violence.

**MR ODUR:** I do not want to mention the specific areas that I felt are outside, but listening to the debate from Members, they are kind of skewed from the core topic.

**THE SPEAKER:** Some Members are giving a maiden speech.

**MR ODUR:** Okay.

4.18

**MR JAMES MAMAWI (NRM, Adjumani East County, Adjumani):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to thank you, and the minister,

for directing us to speak in view of rural areas because most of us come from there.

When we went for recess, I got one of the unique questions when I had a meeting in one of the villages. Men were asking me why it is “women empowerment” and not “men empowerment”. I deliberately answered this that men are born when already empowered. However, I said that I will also take this to the government and see what to do.

Therefore, empowerment and gender-based violence are different things. What men know is that empowerment is only for women. We need to talk along these lines. We need the minister to help us. Whenever there are issues of empowerment, we need to involve men either in meetings or in training. They need to understand what is meant by gender-based violence.

When we had a statement here - even when you read through the report, you see violence against women and children, but men are not mentioned. I read one version here.

The second issue is, I want to concur with –  
(*Member timed out.*)

**THE SPEAKER:** Oh, finish. I am told that it is a maiden speech.

**MR MAMAWI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to concur with Dr Batuwa on the issue of addressing gender-based violence with regard to looking at the aspect of traditional, religious and community leaders at large. If you do not do so - in the previous years, if an elder spoke, everybody listened. However, looking at the current situation, whatever advice you give to any woman or man is disregarded; they take their own decisions in regard to management and other related issues.

Therefore, I want the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to help us to empower our elders - our traditional leaders - so that they are able to address these issues of gender-based violence. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, as we even speak about gender-based violence and that kind of thing, some women are also big-headed. We need to be submissive. (*Applause*)

4.21

**MR FRANCIS ADOME (NRM, Moroto Municipality, Moroto):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to contribute to this sensitive topic -

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, listen. I was given that advice by a *Senga* called Ethel; that you need to be submissive, irrespective of your position.

**MR ADOME:** Members have mentioned very many issues that are directly attributed to the escalation of gender-based violence in this country, but I want to bring your attention to the issue of mental health. Given the fact that there is a big challenge, in terms of development - most of our areas in the country are still underdeveloped. This has affected people mentally, causing a lot of stress. That is where, as Government, we need to put a lot of emphasis. I am 100 per cent sure that some of these cases can be attributed to that.

We should put emphasis on budgeting, and putting up facilities that can address issues generally in all regions, especially in hospitals, because we do not have that service. Let us look at recruiting personnel that can be able to assess and also help in making people cope with these issues. Thank you.

4.23

**MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I may also add the voice of the people of Padyere County, Nebbi District, to wish you a happy birthday.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of November, we celebrated the 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our king of Arur, Rwoth Ubimu. I appreciate our Kingdom because for the second time running, the theme has been one: “Empowering the girl child and ending early pregnancies.” That plays a very big role

in our communities. It brings us back to the point whereby traditional and cultural leaders can play a vital role in educating our masses and the community.

Secondly, most of the shelters we have in our districts have already lost funding. When most of our girls who are in marriage are chased away by their husbands, they cannot go back home because the parents also chase them – *(Member timed out.)*

4.24

**MR MAXIMUS OCHAI (NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and happy birthday. I take this opportunity to thank the minister for the statement. I would like to make my contribution on one thing: prioritisation.

Putting on my economic lens, I would like to treat gender-based violence as a development challenge that not only affects the productivity of labour by the victim, but also that drives away investment resources towards health, justice and police services.

What could be the root cause of gender-based violence? People have talked about poverty, but in my view, poverty is one of the ultimate consequences of gender-based violence. Therefore, the root cause is discriminatory cultural norms, treating the girl child as inferior to the boy child. In that regard, what could, therefore, be the solution? In my view, I think we need to – *(Member timed out.)*

4.25

**MR ALBERT LOKORU (NRM, Tepeth County, Moroto):** I join the rest of the Members to wish you a happy birthday. Madam Speaker, gender-based violence is real in the various societies we come from and it is just because of lack of knowledge of rights by both men and women. In the rural areas, even when people's rights are violated, they are not able to defend themselves in the courts of law.

The other aspect is moral decay. I come from Karamoja where elders preside over matters of society, but as a result of this, the elders are no longer respected – *(Member timed out.)*

4.27

**MR JAMES KUBEKETERYA (NRM, Bunya County East, Mayuge):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to contribute to the minister's statement.

The causes of violence in homes stem right from childhood when parents are looking after their children. Sometimes, parents quarrel openly when the children are watching and this is a common norm that causes violence. When these children grow up, if the father was violent, the child will also be violent.

I would also like to make a proposal to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. We have traditional chiefs or leaders in this country. Make it a policy that every clan meets at every end of year because those values can be very good to our society and they can make some kind of inventory to your ministry because the local leaders – *(Member timed out.)*

4.28

**MR DONALD KATALIHWA (NRM, Mwenje County South, Kyenjojo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. You guided that we need to come up with solutions to the problem of gender-based violence. However, before we look for solutions, we need to assess previous efforts.

For the 15 years that I was in a civil society organisation, we used to have a lot of interaction with the Government. Whichever programme would come on board, they would say, "Gender mainstreaming..." and provide a budget line.

My question to the minister and the other Members here is, have we done an assessment or an evaluation of this gender mainstreaming that we have been doing for the last 15 years to ensure that we come up with a solution?

We are talking about girls; even last week in my district, there was a girls' summit talking about girls. However, we are looking at this problem and we can – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** What were you saying?

**MR KATALIHWA:** Madam Speaker, we are talking about the problem of gender-based violence and we cannot solve it without looking at the root cause. Who is this person bringing the problems to the women? We also need to focus on the men as well. As we hold the girls' summit, we also need to hold a boys' summit so that we solve this problem of gender-based violence. I beg to submit, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Impact assessment of the previous years and also looking at the root cause.

4.29

**MR RICHARD OSEKU (NRM, Kibale County, Pallisa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and happy birthday. The mischief has been understood: it is gender-based violence. The laws have been put in place. I come from a point of view that the problem is the enforcement of the laws, which is lacking.

I just want to say that the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development should come up with a master plan. Let us have special courts to deal with this issue; to enforce the law on gender-based violence so that we deter culprits who prefer to do this in society. The current way that the police investigations are done is not sensitive to this. Therefore, we need a special approach to this; that we have special courts that instantly deal with – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** I said at the beginning that we have many laws, but what is lacking is popularising these laws and enforceability. Since they are not being enforced, people continue doing whatever they are doing because nobody has gotten punished.

4.31

**MR ALEX RUHUNDA (NRM, Fort Portal Central Division, Fort Portal City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want us to refer to best practices and I come from the Tooro culture. We, the Batooro men, treasure our women.

I would like to know the statistics because I see that other tribes have been raiding Tooro because we produce very good women.

Madam Speaker, the reason I am emphasising this point of culture is, if you listen to the cultural orientation of our children, the importance of keeping a peaceful home between a man and a woman is being emphasised. If you listen to all the cultural songs of Tooro and to our functions, you will find that this is being promoted at every function. That is why you find that among the Baganda, there is less violence because it is almost similar.

Therefore, I think we need to carry these practices to other tribes where this is probably lacking, so that people can understand the importance of having a good wife and a good family. I think this term of “gender-based happiness” must be emphasised; from gender-based violence to gender based happiness. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

4.32

**MR NOAH MUTEBI (NRM, Nakasongola County, Nakasongola):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development for the presentation.

As we discuss gender-based violence, we cannot leave out attitude change in our youths. When you go to a number of trading centres in our country and look at our youths who are out of school, you will find that they waste much of their time discussing politics. They discuss the World Cup and who is powerful in the area. At the end of the day, when they go back home to their wives and children, they have no money. When they reach home and the women ask for the money that they are supposed to ‘leave on the table’, you will find that, that money was not left there and that will be the beginning of the quarrel.

Madam Speaker, as we look at gender-based violence, we must also look at attitude change in our youths. I beg to submit.

4.34

**MR PIUS WAKABI (NRM, Bughaya County, Hoima):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The biggest cause of violence in our homes is stress. If we can have a solution to the challenges which cause stress, for example, the traffic jam in Kampala – *(Laughter)* - by the time you reach home, you do not want to speak to your wife.

Another challenge that causes stress to Ugandans is the high fuel prices and the high cost of education. We, men, prefer taking our children to expensive schools and yet we cannot afford them. In the end, it causes – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** It is a maiden speech, switch on the microphone.

**MR WAKABI:** Another challenge, Madam Speaker, is politics. Ugandans are good at politicking and it causes violence at home. You find a woman supporting another candidate against the husband's preferred candidate and this causes violence. We need to get a solution to the challenges causing stress. I thank you so much, Madam Speaker.

4.36

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to affirm my commitment to the fight against gender-based violence because I truly believe that gender-based violence in any form by anybody is wrong and should be fought.

I want to congratulate the minister for the statement, and state that this House has actually passed enough legislation to help the ministry and the Government to fight against gender-based violence. For example, we have passed the Domestic Violence Act, the Female Genital Mutilation Act, the Children's Act, and the Trafficking in Humans Act; all these are legislations that we can enforce, to fight against gender-based violence.

What then is the missing link? I think a number of Members of Parliament contributed to this; poverty as one of them, moral values in our community, and I think as parents, we need really, to start from the children, to teach them the right values, to respect almost all genders in our society.

Therefore, I want to thank you also for the statement that you made, which is biblical; that each one of us in our homes, if we took our marriages - especially the Christians, the vows we take, that men should love their women, and the women should submit, I think most of the problems would be resolved. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you so much.

4.38

**MR MEDARD SSEGGONA (NUP, Busiro County East, Wakiso):** Madam Speaker and honourable colleagues, I join the rest of my brothers and sisters that have thanked and congratulated the minister upon the statement. In the same faith, I want to thank my sister and member, Hon. Sarah Opendi, who is my chairperson; for information, I am a member of UWOPA. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, I had prepared a written text, but in concurrence with what has been submitted by my honourable colleagues, I will not waste time. I only want to add by saying the following:

One, when you talk about a woman, I do not see the woman. I see my mother, I see my wife, I see my sister, and finally, I see my daughter.

The Government on your left supports all efforts aimed and intended to raise the standard of living of our citizens, men and women inclusive. We, therefore, wish to pronounce ourselves by stating that we congratulate all participants in this effort.

We observe that gender-based violence cases reported and investigated have increased by 4 per cent, from 38,651 to 40,258 cases between the years 2015 to 2016 (Uganda Police's Annual Crime Report, 2020).

We also note that 22 per cent of the girls and women aged between 15 to 48 experienced sexual violence and 13 per cent and this translates into more than a million women exposed to sexual violence every year, in Uganda. This is alarming and catastrophic.

I agree with Hon. David Bahati that we passed numerous legislations in this country, but the implementation is still at its slowest.

We call upon and encourage Government to announce the budget in defending the rights of those that have been subjected to gender-based violence; men and women.

Madam Speaker, one day in my constituency, an LCI Chairman put up his hand and asked me to propose a law that protects men against women beating them and we had just passed the law against domestic violence. To me, that pointed to the lack of information in our population and, therefore, calling upon the Government and all players to invest in awareness. *(Applause)* Because people think that when we talk about gender, we are talking about only the woman and not everyone else.

We must recognise the gaps that exist in empowering laws like the Land Act, if we are to promote gender equality.

We have limited capacity in the Ministry of Gender, the police and the Judiciary; I am talking about both financial and technical. Therefore, we need to invest in awareness and training in those key institutions.

We need to structure a percentage of at least 10 per cent of every concerned sector's national budget, to cover the programme, and to fight against gender-based violence.

We need to increase facilitation of more staff in the police, the Ministry of Gender, and the Judiciary, to handle gender-based issues, as a way of promoting and enhancing equality. We need to construct gender-based violence shelters in all districts of Uganda, to handle cases of gender violence.

We need to preserve the chambers in all courts, and all districts of Uganda to handle the increasing cases of gender-based violence.

We need to establish rehabilitation; counselling and psychosocial support centres in every district in Uganda, to handle gender-based cases and increase awareness. We need to invest in supporting all efforts by religious and traditional institutions as a way of increasing awareness.

We need to reintroduce The Sexual Offences Bill and make provision for stringent and attendant punishments arising out of sexual offences against not only women, but men. We need to revisit our policy on equality.

Finally, Madam Speaker and colleagues, in joining the colleagues that are celebrating this, I want to propose that for once, we encourage our police to allow all of us participate in these activities in our constituencies.

My concern and worry is that when we take up, especially the Government on your left, when we take up this mantle of organising functions in our constituencies, we are likely to be met with brutal violence, and yet this is a national concern, and it is the best way that assures us of stabilising our country. You cannot have a stable country without stable homes.

Let me reassure you, Madam Speaker and colleagues, of our commitment, at least from this Government on your left that I lead for these few days, that we are committed to all efforts and we are happy to work with Government in eliminating all forms of gender-based violence. *(Applause)*

I want to join the rest, but in my case, once again to wish you a happy birthday.

A way from this microphone, I would say happy birthday to you my daughter. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you so much, daddy, away from the microphone. That is a very enriching message from the shadow

government. I wish we could all borrow a leaf from what Members have said. I loved the Member who talked about over drinking - that was Hon. Komakech: why don't we regulate drinking? We have the laws.

Hon. Bahati talked about the laws. Why don't we popularise the laws so that people know the do's and don'ts? We do budgeting for all these agencies that do the gender-based violence activities, but the money ends up being eaten? Why don't we look at the people who take the money?

Why don't we unite, as legislators, and fight against gender-based violence? We are the voice of the voiceless. As it has been said, let us create awareness. People lack information. Let us create awareness about the laws. Let us create awareness about the implications of the acts that people engage in. Let us do continuous legislation on the same and provide money, as a House, for these institutions.

We should also make sure that the law is applied to everybody, not discriminatively. If it is a woman in the wrong, she must be punished. If it is a man, then, he should be punished too. We are not living in a static world: we also need to make sure that our laws are changed from time to time to fit the changing environment.

Of course the issue of counselling is very important. Hon. Komakech said that people from northern Uganda, after the war, had that effect. They need to be counselled.

Most importantly, without having a strong woman in UWOPA, we would not be debating this. We want to thank you, Hon. Sarah, your executive and all the UWOPA members – okay, I want to thank the husband. *(Applause)*

I thank your neighbour for ensuring that he gives you the courage to do the work and represent the UWOPA team very well.

On a sincere note, we are grateful as the Parliament of Uganda, the people of Uganda and the UWOPA members.

We also thank the minister for her statement. Minister, that is a very good statement. How I wish we could popularise the laws, create awareness and make sure that the NGOs and the bodies handling gender-based violence do it in a transparent way.

4.49

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker for -

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Sarah, one minute.

**MS OPENDI:** Madam Speaker, I will use one minute to thank my colleagues for standing with me on this matter. I request colleagues not to stop at just talking because the problem we have in dealing with this challenge in this country is funding.

The law enforcement agencies – while police have created the family unit, they lack funding to support those involved in the investigations. Also, we need the shelters – safe houses – for these victims of gender-based violence. We also need funding to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

They have a programme where these women, who have faced this violence, can actually be skilled so that they can move out and be self-reliant. However, without funding, that cannot be achieved. I thank colleagues and I also thank you, Madam Speaker – *(Interjections)* - no, not safe houses.

We need homes for the victims of violence, especially when they are in court. They cannot stay in the community when they are being harassed. I thank colleagues and hope that during the budgeting process, we shall prioritise this matter and provide funding in a phased manner. We can start in a few regions, where violence is highest –

**THE SPEAKER:** Maybe, we also need pro bono services.

**MS OPENDI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We were actually the sponsors of the Legal Aid

Bill in the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament. I thank Hon. Aogon and hope that this House can also pass that Legal Aid Bill because it will go a long way in helping the poor to get free legal services when they are in court. Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I wish you a happy birthday.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Sarah.

4.51

**THE CHAIRPERSON GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Flavia Kabahenda):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish you a blessed birthday.

I take this opportunity to thank and congratulate the minister upon the very first statement on the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence – coming from the recommendations I made here in the report on gender-based violence from the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development.

There are two things that I did not hear very well from colleagues. One of them is parenting. If we are going to continue, in this country, to have fathers and mothers who are not parents, we are going to keep with this problem.

Madam Speaker, we visited the remand homes in this country. In Kampiringisa, there were 194 remandees, but only four were girls. In Fort Portal, we met 75 remandees and in Masindi, there were 55 remandees, but no girl. These are the boys who are expected to marry our children.

Madam Speaker, if we do not take care of these boys and we think that because they do not get pregnant, they cannot get spoiled, we are not going to have responsible men heading homes. Therefore, this Government must invest very seriously in the boys, if we have to emancipate women.

Secondly, Madam Speaker –

**THE SPEAKER:** Actually, it is not that you did not hear well. It was not mentioned – the issue of parenting. When you concentrate on the

girl child, you are going to have irresponsible sons-in-law.

**MS KABAHERENDA:** Madam Speaker, that is my fear. However, if we can invest in awareness throughout this country as a mandate of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development – now that we have entered the budgeting process, we need to give enough appropriation for awareness.

The justice centers are far from the clients. Even when people encounter this violence in homes, for people to start trekking - I want to give an example of Karamoja. In Napak, if people are going to find the justice center in Mbale and someone has to carry witnesses every time and the court procedure is so long - I think let us talk about getting the justice centers nearer to the people.

Madam Speaker, I thank everybody here. Honourable members, I congratulate you upon the 16 days of activism; we are just beginning.

I would like to implore all Members to find some kind of celebration in the constituencies and take the message down so that everyone is made aware of this.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let us find some kind of activity.

**MS AMONGI:** Madam Speaker, I thank all the Members who have contributed because it has been a united voice and, importantly, a united voice from the male parliamentarians. *(Applause)*

I also thank the acting Leader of the Opposition for all the support that he has assured this House of, in respect to implementation, support for financing, issues around GBV and all that. Leader of the Opposition, I thank you that on a matter which is crosscutting like this, you have brought us together on key issues that need to be done.

Madam Speaker, I want to say that all the issues that have been either proposed or requested, for example issues that require the ministry

to give a substantive response - For example, Hon. Basalirwa asked on issues of detention and prisons. What is the action plan for the ministry? It is elaborate.

I pledge that I will bring a comprehensive statement on the actions being taken, including the financing, programming and the fund, which is now a grant from the World Bank, called Growth and Opportunity for Productivity Financing for Women (GROPFW) - so that we are able to know the programme we have for addressing poverty and socio-economic aspects of women and the community.

On the issues of action on gender-based violence shelters, we have about 17. We will bring the list. We will bring national statistics and all the other issues that have been requested for.

Madam Speaker, I submit that we will bring the detailed programme here.

**THE SPEAKER:** Have you finished?

**MS AMONGI:** Yes. I beg to request that I come back with the details later. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Honourable members, you have heard the minister's commitment that she is going to come back with action plans on what Members have requested for. We want action taken on what has been raised. We expect a report from you, to that effect.

As has already been said, let us not do the lamentation; let us do the real work. Let us create awareness. Let us make sure we do good parenting. Let us ensure that the laws that are in place are popularised. Let us ensure that we are an example to the rest.

On that note, therefore, I thank the team that was up and has left. I thank them for being here and thank all the Members. Tomorrow, we will look at the action-taken reports; I hope you have read them. As it is in the book, where you

find that some issues were not captured, please get the issues and we will seek for answers or responses on the Floor.

Tomorrow, we have one item on the Order Paper. Actually, we shall pay tribute and then have the action-taken report by Government and for the entire week, we shall have one hour to debate on actions taken. Every day, we shall have that item on the Order Paper.

I now adjourn the House to 2.00 p.m. tomorrow.

*(The House rose at 4.59 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 24 November 2022.)*