

**PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA**

**Tuesday, 20 April 2021**

*Parliament met at 2.53 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

*(The Speaker, Ms Rebecca Kadaga, in the Chair.)*

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I welcome you to this afternoon sitting. I would like to reiterate the timelines for the Budget of 2021/2022. You may recall that on Wednesday, 17 March 2021, I communicated timelines for the expenditure consideration of the Budget for the Financial Year 2021/2022, when I tasked the sectoral committees to table their reports on the Ministerial Policy Statements for the Financial Year 2021/2022 by today, Tuesday 20 April, 2021, to enable their timely referral to the Committee on Budget for harmonisation and report back to the House.

I note that some sectoral committees have not been able to meet this timeline and I hereby direct that the processing be expedited before the entities so that the committees report by Thursday 22 April, without fail.

As you will appreciate, honourable members, by the 7 May 2021, we ought to have wound out work here. Therefore, we need to finish the budget and the pending legislation.

I would also like to urge the sectoral Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development to expedite the revenue Bills. My initial directive required that they report by 14 April but they have not been able to do this. I, therefore, would like them to move quickly.

Honourable members, you are aware that the efficiency and effectiveness of committees of the House directly correlate with the work of the plenary. Therefore, I urge the chairpersons and members of committees to take cognisance of these timeliness to enable this process end by April 2021.

Secondly, I have been informed that the Uganda Police Force has promoted over 3000 police officers to various ranks within the Force. Some of them have had more than a five-year wait to achieve this. As you recall, honourable members, this matter has been raised very many times on this Floor and I am aware that many of the promoted officers have stagnated for over a decade. Promotions are a vital motivation for many of these officers, who serve diligently to protect law and order in our society.

Therefore, I would like to urge the Inspector General of Police to work expeditiously - because if you are to take the numbers, there are over 11,000 police officers who were recommended for promotion. This means that only 27 per cent of those have been handled and we still have very many officers waiting with uncertainty. Hence, I urge the Inspector General of Police and the police authority to address the plight of those still waiting and believe that they deserve promotion. This will help them to be more motivated and more responsive in the interest of this country.

Thirdly, I would like to remind the Committee of Physical Infrastructure that the Real Estates’ Bill is now over 45 days in the committee. They should expeditiously handle it and present it to this House.

I have also heard that our “safe hands goal keeper”, Denis Masinde Onyango, has since, 12 April 2021, retired from international football. He has been our goal keeper and captain of the national football team. He still plays with this club in Mamelodi Sundowns in South Africa. He has made several appearances for the Uganda Cranes. He first made his debut in 2001 when he led our team against Cape Verde.

Onyango will be remembered for his tremendous contribution to Ugandan football. He has led the Cranes to two African Cup of Nations Finals in Gabon for 2017 and 2019. He has also been the African player of the year in 2016, when he guided the Mamelodi Sundowns to their first total CF African Champions League.

He is an exemplary professional footballer, who has diligently served the nation and inspires many budding footballers and sports lovers in this country. At an appropriate time, I look forward to an opportunity for us to formally pay tribute to Denis Onyango for his dedicated and distinguished service to the nation. Thank you very much.

Honourable members, there are just a few matters of national concern. Hon. Etuka, please, take up two minutes.

3.03

**MR ISAAC ETUKA (NRM, Upper Madi, Arua):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of urgent national importance; in relation to the World Bank funded Agricultural Cluster Development Project, being implemented in the refugee hosting districts.

The Minister of Agriculture gave Interim Planning Figures (IPFs) to the 16 refugee hosting districts for rehabilitation of road chokes under the World Bank funded Agricultural Cluster Development Project. These districts include Bugiri, Namutumba, Gulu, Madi-Okollo, Maracha and Yumbe, among others.

The affected districts submitted the list of the roads to the ministry but the ministry did not make any communication to these districts until they advertised in the *New Vision* of Monday 21 December 2020, inviting the bids for the roads to be constructed in the districts.

Most of the priority roads submitted by the affected districts were left out on the list of the roads they advertised. In this respect, Madi-Okollo District was given an IPF of Shs 4.5 billion for the construction of roads but out of the roads that were advertised by the Ministry of Agriculture, only 24.9 kilometres were advertised, costing Shs 4.5 billion.

My prayers are that:

1. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries produces the loan performance report to this august House, because a number of loans have been abused in this country.
2. The ministry should liaise with the respective district local governments to revisit the list of the roads considered for construction.

I beg to pray.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the Ministry of Agriculture should within a fortnight, present to this House, a list of loans as requested by hon. Etuka.

3.02

**MS ROSE AYAKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Maracha):** Madam Speaker, the matter of national importance I am raising is about the massive depletion of the forest cover in the West Nile subregion. According to the survey that was carried out in March this year, it was revealed that about 40 per cent of the central forest reserve has been depleted.

According to the information, twice as much as this amount of 40 per cent has also been depleted in the community lands and in private land. The rate of depletion is very high. The persons involved in this are people who are cutting trees for charcoal and timber for commercial purposes.

In addition, because of the high rate, they are not mindful about species that are valuable especially the Shea nut tree, which is supposed to be maintained because of the vulnerable nature in which it is. As a result, we now have a depleted forest cover. The consequences are; distorted rainfall patterns and the water table is getting deeper and deeper. Some boreholes, especially in my district are not producing enough water for consumption at the domestic level. Therefore, it is important that the ministry sets its feet on the ground, address this matter because the people who are felling the trees seem to be very notorious and do not respect any authority. They do it with a lot of impunity.

I pray that the ministry takes action on this matter and ensure that the people involved in the illegal logging of trees, especially in the central forest reserves and the community lands, are brought to book.

I also pray that the ministry urgently calls for stakeholders’ meeting so that the districts in West Nile sit for a consultative meeting and discuss this matter in detail so that this issue is addressed appropriately. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, as you may recall, during the last session, we had a very lengthy debate on protection of the Shea nut tree. Honourable minister of Environment, you can hear that even the forest reserves and the district reserves are gone; what do you have to say to hon. Ayaka’s proposal?

3.06

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT) (Ms Beatrice Anywar):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank my honourable colleague for raising that pertinent issue. The depletion of our environment cover is not only limited to West Nile. However, for you to raise it is a welcome move. This problem cuts across the whole country. I have stood here and asked us to join hands and address this issue.

One of the problems is that some of these tree covers are on private land. The owners do not even want to listen to issues of conservation. As a Government, we are trying to see how the trees on private land can benefit the owners. We can engage them in carbon trade so that they benefit and stop cutting trees. We are trying to engage the private tree owners to reserve the existing trees.

However, as a ministry, we have been arresting people. The specific ones of West Nile that my colleague has raised - we even travelled with the European Ambassadors and other stakeholders- the CAOs and the First Deputy Prime Minister was there with us. We agreed that people who are degrading the environment and those burning charcoal - actually, as we were leaving the meeting, we found a lorry packed with charcoal and we had to arrest its occupants. We are continuously arresting people - there is a lorry we just impounded.

I just want to say that we need a stakeholders’ meeting as a follow-up; we shall gladly have it. However, as long as Ugandans do not wake up and protect our environment, the destruction –*(Interruption)*

**MR FUNGAROO:** Thank you, honourable minister, for giving way. Madam Speaker, the problem in West Nile on the depletion of the forests is not with private landowners; it is with the issue of enforcement. It is a Government issue.

Nowadays, people who cut big old trees, which are endangered - even the Shea nut trees - are conniving with security people. If you see the trucks, they are associated with the armed forces - either police or the army. For example, in West Nile, we have the Kei Forest Reserve and another in Obongi. We saw police officers including the DPC of my district conniving with the people who were trading in this and they protect them. In Moyo, there are cases that are recorded at police. Therefore, the issue is not the owners but rather the Government failure from the side of enforcement. Where do you complain? This is where the problem is madam minister.

**MS ANYWAR:** Thank you for the information, hon. Fungaroo. Madam Speaker, we see this evil happening in our society. We have courts of law; nobody is above the law. We can coordinate and have these people arrested. Right now, I have just received information of a loaded vehicle (UAV 819T) that has been impounded. I was just speaking to my Executive Director; we just impounded it and we are also looking for the people behind it. It is true that sometimes our officials are part of them and we have arrested them.

Therefore, I would say that the fight is on. If anybody has this information, please, colleagues, let us pass it on. As my colleague has just stated, we can gladly go across again. However, we need local participation. You should not see a vehicle being escorted by either the army, the police or RDC and keep quiet. Technology has helped us. We can report this and bring to book those who think they are above the law.

We are ready to deal with those who are arrested -

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, the people of Uganda would be happy to see you net a big fish, prosecute and imprison them so that we know that you are taking action.

**MS ANYWAR:** Let us name the big fish; let us have that evidence and we shall prosecute them. That is my plea to colleagues. Thank you.

**MR FUNGAROO:** Madam Speaker, there is some information –

**THE SPEAKER:** No. We have talked about this matter. Let the minister arrest some people and prosecute them. That is what we want.

**MR ATIKU:** Madam Speaker, the issue of the causes – the drive to cut trees –

**THE SPEAKER:** We know that one.

**MR ATIKU:** The demand for charcoal –

**THE SPEAKER:** We know that electricity and others are not enough. You arrest them and we start from somewhere. We want to see somebody big arrested.

**MR ATIKU:** There are also alternatives from the Government’s side, which they are not –

**THE SPEAKER:** We are not in a policy meeting. You will speak to them when you meet them in the policy stakeholders’ meeting. Let us listen to hon. Zaake.

3.12

**MR FRANCIS ZAAKE (Independent, Mityana Municipality, Mityana):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Being my first time to attend Parliament since 14 January 2021, I wish to use this opportunity to congratulate you and all honourable members who made it to the next Parliament.

**THE SPEAKER:** Welcome back, hon. Zaake. We are happy to see you.

**MR ZAAKE:** Thank you. I have come to present a matter of national concern. It is about the health situation of National Unity Platform (NUP) supporters in prisons, especially in Kitalya, Kigo, other military detention centres and safe houses.

After several hurdles, several NUP leaders and I have tried to access Kitalya Prison but we have always been denied access. Having tried several times, yesterday, I was granted access to see some NUP supporters and I managed to talk to them.

I confess that most of our comrades from NUP are doing badly health wise. Many of them have stomach complications, skin rash and typhoid due to lack of water supply in that prison. I also wish to report that many of the members of NUP in that prison have diseases. For example, the Personal Assistant to hon. Kyagulanyi Ssentamu, Don Sheriff Najja, has liver complications but he was taken to one of the clinics in my constituency for just a scan. Thereafter, they gave him panadol for the pain. That was very bad. I think these people require urgent medical attention.

The second problem I would like to inform this House on is that most of our NUP comrades who are in that prison were imprisoned without being tried in any courts of law. They were put under military detention and they have been denied bail. Up to this time, they have not been tried anywhere.

Madam Speaker, I pray that, first and foremost, the Minister of Internal Affairs should come to this House and explains why the NUP supporters especially the ones in Kitalya Prison are being tortured to that extent. He should also let this House know why they have not been tried in competent courts of law and why they are being kept in prison for all that long without access to medical attention.

I also request Government to explain why civilians are being tried in military courts in the absence of their lawyers and relatives. They should also explain to us why, as the leaders of NUP, we are being turned away from accessing those people. To me, it was really a hustle to see them.

I pray that these people are released unconditionally because they have no crime. If they have any crime, let them be presented in competent courts of law. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, last week, while you were away, the Minister of Internal Affairs came here and presented a long list of people who are in prison. The Shadow Minister for Defence requested for time to look at that list to compare notes with what he has so that we can identify who is who, and who is where. Therefore, I think – Clerk, how much time did we give hon. Kivumbi to look at the list? The issues you are asking are the same things, which are still pending.

Can we ask hon. Kivumbi to expeditiously work on that list and give us a report by Thursday so that we can now proceed on this matter of hon. Zaake?

3.18

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Ms Betty Aol):** Madam Speaker, what hon. Zaake raised also needs the attention of the Committee on Human Rights, in order for them to visit these prisons to assess the situation of Ugandans there. Other than waiting for that list to be verified, the responsibility should be given to either the Committee on Human Rights or the Human Rights Commission – I do not know whether they are doing their work. How can people suffer in prison like that?

It is important for us to take it on while we wait for hon. Kivumbi to bring the report on Thursday. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** I know that the committee is already doing some work but we can also ask them to add this issue on their to-do list and make a visit to Kitalya Prison. Thank you.

3.19

**MR JAMES KABERUKA (NRM, Kinkiizi County West, Kanungu):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter concerning *Emyooga.* This matter is all over the country but particularly, for Kinkiizi County West, we received money in December last year. Kinkiizi County West has 18 groups.

While *Emyooga* was a catch-word in the campaigns, this money has become a nightmare to the groups. I have received complaints from the women entrepreneurs group. Each group is supposed to get Shs 30 million but allow me to express my concern that women entrepreneurs group in my constituency has 2,500 members and they are supposed to share the promised Shs 30 million.

The Government had said there would be no collateral security demanded from members who will be lent this money. However, the Micro-finance Support Centre through the commercial officers have issued verbal conditions that the members of the groups should also get collateral security. In addition, the members of the groups have been told to subscribe and pay membership fee, equivalent to Shs 25,000.

When you divide Shs 30 million with 2,500 members, if they were to be lent this money, each member will get Shs 12,000 after paying a subscription fee of Shs 25,000.

I would like to draw your attention to these suffering communities so that we get an explanation from the Government whether *Emyooga* was intended to improve the livelihood of the people by giving Shs 30 million to each group in the constituency or this was another gimmick.

When they change rules, they should do formal instructions. We would like the minister of finance to formally issue a statement on how these people can use this money.

I also pray that the Government brings a paper here presented by the minister explaining how this *Emyooga* should operate nationally. In addition, my constituency should get a statement of comfort on how these boda-bodas, women and produce buyers can survive. They have already subscribed and they are telling them to save 30 per cent of Shs 30 million in their account without -

I pray, with due respect, that the minister and the Government should be fair to these *wanainchi* who have been lured into this venture. I beg to pray.

**THE SPEAKER**: Honourable members, on the Floor of this House, we have expressed disquiet about the bureaucracy involved in the *Emyooga*. Nevertheless, let the minister of finance come and explain.

3.23

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank hon. Kaberuka for this important information and indeed, as you have said, we had a meeting here and we have made several statements to this House.

Last time, you instructed the minister for microfinance to come and hold a committee meeting and he invited all Members who wanted to listen, learn more and give in new ideas. He came and we had a very good interaction with members of the committee.

At no time should we say that the money, which was appropriated by this House to support household income in our communities be called a nightmare. It is not a nightmare, only that there is some misinterpretation. This money is meant for groups that come together under a common enterprise. It is not for sharing. This is working capital for groups who want to improve their household incomes. It is not supposed to have collateral. A group is enough collateral for that money.

Therefore, we are sending a message from this House and after here, we will be able to communicate to all commercial officers and microfinance support centres in our regions that no collateral should be asked for this money. If this money is used very well, it can actually improve the household incomes of our communities.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I would like Members of this House to support this programme. Where there are weaknesses, let us address them because we are the ones who appropriated this money. Shillings 260 billion was appropriated by this House. Let us -

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, did you say that you have already held that meeting? We had discussed the stakeholders meeting here; did it take place between the ministry and the committee members?

**MR BAHATI:** Yes, the minister, hon. Kasolo, came here and he had a meeting in this very Chamber as you instructed.

**MR OKUPA:** Madam Speaker, the directive you gave was for the minister to come here and address all the Members of Parliament. However, the minister is telling us that the minister decided address a committee. I do not know which committee he interacted with. Your direction was supposed to be to Members of Parliament.

The *Emyooga* encompasses all the constituencies and districts because its regulations and guidelines are very unclear. What hon. Kaberuka stated is what is happening all over the country.

**MR BAHATI:** To correct that, Madam Speaker, we made a statement to this House and after the discussion in the statement where probably hon. Okupa was not present, the Speaker directed that the minister should come and meet with the committee and whoever has views or questions should come and attend. He actually said, “let us have it in this plenary venue” and that is what we did.

However, we shall attend to the issues of Kinkizi West tomorrow and see whether we can improve the situation over there. Let us support this programme. It is an important programme. The household incomes of our people should be key to our programmes. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. *(Members rose\_)* Honourable members, we have had many meetings on *Emyooga*, please.

3.27

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Ms Betty Aol):** Madam Speaker, on the ground, some of us are being “roasted” because we appropriated this money from Parliament. Why is it that the money is not working? I do not remember putting this money to *Emyooga* and yet, the timing was so bad; during the time that we were all geared for elections. The target was also very bad. They were told to just form a group of 30 members and people formed groups.

**THE SPEAKER:** What do you propose now? We appropriated the money and it went. What do we do?

**MS BETTY AOL**: Madam Speaker, Parliaments need to sit down and review this *Emyooga*. They talk of *Emyooga* and yet, another model is coming up. It is very unfortunate. We need to concretise some of these programmes for our people to benefit better.

We do not have to experiment in the whole country. If we are to experiment, it should be piloted in very small areas and then. you roll out to the country when it is successful. If it is not successful, you can disband it. Thank you.

3.29

**MR JAMES BYANDALA (NRM, Katikamu County North, Luweero):** Madam Speaker, this *Emyooga* programme is very good but the problem is that the message they have sent out is different. In Luweero, they were talking of giving money to a district. They went to other places and said they were giving constituencies. Regarding the enterprises, they said, “no, there are 19 –” There was nothing like procuring coffee seedlings and what not. That is what they told us in Luweero. Let the Government come out with a clear message of what is in *Emyooga* so that it is the same message across the country.

In Kabarole, they say something else, in Luweero or Kamuli they say something else and this will confuse us. Give us the same message so that we understand what this programme is. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I would like to give the following ruling. After we finish the revenue Bills, I would like to instruct the committee on finance to convene a meeting and all the Members of Parliament should go and attend to give your issues so that we have a direction on which way to move. Otherwise, each week, somebody is going to bring something.

Therefore, I am giving notice to the Committee on Finance; soon after the revenue Bills, convene a meeting over that issue so that we can listen to all the problems and resolve them.

3.31

**MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am concerned that Namboole, which is our stadium meant to support us when we are hosting international games, is out of use. I have been seeing in the media that FIFA has put a ban on the activities in Namboole most especially hosting international games. I do not know whether that applies to local games.

This perturbs me because it comes at a time when our icon, Denis Onyango, is retiring. Does it mean that the Government is retiring from supporting Namboole at a time when Onyango is retiring? I am getting concerned.

Madam Speaker, you know how you have supported sports. This House supported the She Cranes, you have given the Parliamentary team all the necessary support of this House. At this time, we have a new minister for Sports and it seems somebody is trying to let him down.

Ministry of Health has been using this facility; I am told it was ringfenced for COVID-19 issues, are they the ones who have undone Namboole? I am here to demand for a statement from Government-before I complete let me first get this information.

**THE SPEAKER:** No honourable members, we may take a lot of time. The Minister of Sports is here, I do not know whether-

**MR AOGON:** Madam Speaker, I demand that the minister comes with a statement on issues surrounding Namboole. What is taking place there. I thought that it was a facility that generates its money internally.

**THE SPEAKER:** Minister of Sports, I have seen you, what is happening in Namboole?

3.33

**THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Hamson Obua):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. In response to the issue raised by my colleague on Mandela National Stadium, I state the following;

In the month of February 2020 immediately after my appointment, I was sent on a mission to tour Mandela National Stadium for and on behalf of the Minister of Education and Sports.

We reported and recommended renovation and upgrade of Mandela National Stadium to an international acceptable standard. In the months of March, April and May 2020, a team of inspectors were commissioned by the Confederation of African football and the Federation of International Football Association to inspect all the gazetted sports stadia under the mandates of FIFA and CAF.

In the case of Uganda two stadia were inspected, Mandela National Stadium Namboole which is a public facility and St. Mary’s Stadium Kitende which is a private facility.

In the report of the CAF inspectors later on after touring and inspecting all-over the world and within Africa in those three months, Mandela National Stadium was not approved for hosting international games.

For the case of Uganda, it was only St Mary’s stadium Kitende that was approved by CAF and FIFA subject to rectification of certain areas. That is the reason why during the Africa Cup of Nations, all our games were played at St Mary’s Stadium Kitende.

In the months of June, July 2020, Mandela National Stadium was handed over, on the request of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uganda, as a COVID-19 treatment centre. To-date, it has not been formally handed back.

What has the Ministry of Education and Sports on behalf of the Government of Uganda done on this state of affairs? In line with the National Building Code, 2019 and Uganda Public Service Standing Orders; Section (n)-(a)18, our senior minister wrote to the Ministry of Works and Transport - because under the National Building Code, all public infrastructure is a mandate of the Ministry of Works and Transport - to constitute a team to conduct a needs assessment for the upgrade and renovation of Mandela National Stadium. That technical team was constituted and they did a comprehensive needs assessment, reported back with their BOQs on what Mandela National Stadium required in the short term, medium term and long term.

As the Ministry of Works and Transport prepares to present a Cabinet memo on this particular subject matter, we at the Ministry of Education and Sports have factored in this year’s budget what Mandela National Stadium requires in the short term but it falls under unfunded priority because the indicative planning figures could not accommodate what National Stadiums requires.

One week ago, we presented this before the Parliamentary Committee on Education and Sports and made a passionate appeal if funding could be found, then we need to move and handle what Mandela national Stadium requires in the short term then the team of inspectors would come back.

In the circumstances, Uganda has only St Mary’s Stadium Kitende and if the team of inspectors who are again doing inspection now for the World Cup qualifiers do not approve it, but it was approved earlier on, I want to put the country on notice that we will be left with no option but to host all our World Cup qualifier games in one of the countries outside Uganda, I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Extremely sad. Please, minister help us not to get there, it will be too much for us to borrow a stadium in Tanzania.

3.39

**MR COSMAS ELOTU (NRM, Dakabela County, Soroti):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance and very urgent; regarding lack of a Government aided school in one of the sub-counties in my constituency.

Arapai sub-county is one of the largest sub-counties in the country I would say, with a population of over 74,000 and over the years Teso College Aloet for some of you who may be knowing is in Arapai sub-county but as we all know, Teso College Aloet is a national institution and cannot serve the best interests of the peasants in our set up.

We had a private community school but because of the current situation caused by COVID-19, most of the private schools have closed and Dakabela Community S.S which was part of that establishment has not managed to weather through the same system.

I have brought this issue a number of times with the authorities, particularly Ministry of Education and Sports, I have written quite a number of letters, exhausted all the avenues in trying to remind Government that it is a policy that every sub-county must have Government aided secondary school.

I, therefore, ask the House to support me and compel the Minister of Education to support the people of Arapai, a very large subcounty, never divided since colonial time but lacks a Government aided secondary school.

As I said earlier on, even the one community secondary school is coming to closure and the whole population will not have any secondary school in Arapai Sub county, thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Can I ask the minister of education to take note of that urgent request, Arapai 74,000 people, no secondary school. When can you come back to us with a solution?

3.42

**MR FREDRICK ANGURA (NRM, Tororo County South, Tororo):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I thank hon. Elotu for raising this very important issue.

Before the minister of education responds, we have traditional subcounties that are big. In my constituency, about five subcounties do not have secondary schools. This is a very serious issue that the ministry should consider. The policy that was agreed upon for every subcounty to have a secondary school should be taken seriously, for the good of our children who walk long distances to access education.

No wonder, many times, some of my people are referred to as smugglers because where there is no secondary school, children resort to anything that can keep them going. The minister should take note of that. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.43

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (PRIMARY EDUCATION) (Ms Rosemary Seninde):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I thank the colleague who has raised this concern. I want to make it clear that as a ministry and Government, we respect that policy and we have done our best to ensure that at least, we have primary and secondary schools respectively in those subcounties and parishes where they are not.

Let me make it very clear to this House. You will agree with me, colleagues – that in the process of splitting districts, subcounties and parishes, sometimes the numbers reduce and while we still handle those, the numbers of subcounties and parishes will increase because of new splits of the various local governments.

However, I assure this House that it is still Government plan to ensure that we have a primary school in every parish and a secondary school in every subcounty. Some time back, we shared with this House a list of the subcounties where we have built secondary schools and where schools are being constructed.

In case it is required by this House, we can still re-submit it for the Members to look at them to appreciate what Government is doing and the gaps we still have, in terms of subcounties and parishes that are still missing out on this.

Madam Speaker, we shall factor in the concern of the colleagues as well. I know that all my colleagues here have similar concerns. It is a concern of the entire country.

Government pledges to do her part. As money comes, we are always ready to make sure we fulfil the requirements of that policy. Thank you very much.

**MR KISA:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to seek clarification from the honourable minister.

There are subcounties without secondary schools and yet, money has been sent to the districts for them to have those secondary schools constructed. I have an example of the subcounty where I come from – Nawampiti Subcounty. Money was sent last year but to date, the ministry has not constructed the secondary school.

What is the procedure? When we have money lying on the district account, what should be done?

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** You are lucky. At least for you, the money has come. *(Laughter)* Honourable minister, tell us about Nawampiti?

**MS SENINDE:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. In the case of such a district, I assure my colleague that the ministry will find out what has gone wrong. All I know is that the problem in some districts could probably be the issue of procurement. We are going to find out what went wrong in that district. If the money is there, what has happened? We are going to follow it up, Madam Speaker.

I thank the honourable colleague for raising this. I also request other colleagues with similar cases to let us know about them. Of course, we monitor but in case there is a concern, that is a shared responsibility, colleagues. Let us all have an eye on the infrastructure development featuring in our areas. If it is started on and you notice something wrong, please, let us know. We shall always be there to act. Thank you.

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE COMMEMORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR DAY - 1 MAY 2021

**THE SPEAKER:** Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development -

3.48

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (GENDER AND CULTURE) (Ms Peace Mutuuzo):** Madam Speaker, as you are aware, on 1st May every year, Uganda joins the rest of the world to commemorate the International Labour Day.

On this day, we recognise the workers and employers for their contribution to the socio-economic development of our country.

The International Labour Day is a gazetted public holiday in Uganda. Every year, ceremonies are organised at national and district local government levels. This year’s national celebrations will be held scientifically at State House, Entebbe, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and we shall follow the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) prescribed by Ministry of Health. His Excellency, the President, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni will grace the celebrations as the Chief Guest.

All local Governments and Kampala Capital City Authority have been informed and requested to mark the day, in accordance with the COVID-19 SOPs.

The theme for the International Labour Day 2021 is “Enhancing Innovation for Increased Employment Creation and Labour Productivity: A Sustainable COVID-19 Response.”

Honourable colleagues, the measures taken in Uganda and around the world to control the spread of the COVID-19 have posed serious challenges to majority of the businesses in our country, regardless of size. This is coupled with a real threat of significant decline in revenues.

The negative impact of COVID-19 in the world on work has manifested in the following ways:

1. Lay-offs and collective terminations;
2. Non-payment of wages and reduction of wages; and
3. General erosion of livelihoods, especially for vulnerable groups such as women and persons with disabilities, unprotected workers, migrant workers, among others.

In light of the impact of COVID-19 on businesses, adoption of innovative ways is critical to job creation and enhancing labour productivity. This year’s theme has, therefore, been chosen to heighten national consciousness about the important role that innovation will play in increased job creation and labour productivity during and post-COVID-19.

A National Organising Committee (NOC), chaired by the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development was constituted to prepare the function. A webinar discussion on “enhancing innovation for employment creation and labour productivity: a sustainable COVID-19 response” will be organised.

A high-level ministerial visit to selected factories within greater Kampala, to ascertain compliance to labour standards will also be conducted.

The national celebrations will be broadcast live on most television stations beginning at 8.00 a.m. on 1 May 2021.

Madam Speaker, I would like to invite you and honourable colleagues to join the workers and employers in your respective districts, cities, and municipalities to commemorate the International Labour Day.

Let me also take this opportunity to wish you all happy Labour Day celebrations. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you for giving us early information on the proposed celebrations. Honourable members, it was for information purposes and I do not know whether there are any comments.

3.52

**MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach):** Thank you for this opportunity, Madam Speaker. Honourable minister, thank you for your statement.

Honourable minister, you ended by inviting us to join the workers in our districts to celebrate this day. However, in your statement, I did not hear a thing about your guidance to the districts. How are they going to celebrate this day? I had taken it that even in our districts, we are going to just sit and watch them on television to see what the President is going to say. If that is the case, do I need to go to the district to participate?

I thought you would give some kind of guidance to the districts and we would hear it from you. Then, we can see which part to take in the participation in the district. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.53

**MR STEPHEN KISA (NRM, Luuka South County, Luuka):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement. The minister has invited workers in this country and those who provide the jobs to celebrate the International Labour Day but he is inviting them when, up to now, the teachers, particularly those of early childhood development; the nursery school teachers and their proprietors, have no earning.

We do not know whether they are part of the workers in this country or the owners and proprietors are part of the people going to enjoy the celebrations of the Labour Day. We need to get a correct picture so that everybody in this country feels that he or she is part of the labour force and is worthy to celebrate the International Labour Day. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

3.55

**MS HELLEN ASAMO (NRM, PWDs Representative, Eastern):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the brief statement she has given us.

We are aware that the vulnerable groups of labourers suffer. Both Bills regarding labourers were returned to this Parliament, that is, the Minimum Wage Bill and the Local Content Bill.

The other day, I saw H.E the President signing the oil agreement and I think that is where the innovation - as the statement goes – that our people could benefit our people as labourers. I am not really content to understand how we are going to benefit, as labourers, especially those of the low cadre.

When COVID-19 broke out, those categories of people were the first to be fired from their jobs and they are suffering. Women and the persons with disabilities have no jobs. How can we, through innovation, bring these people back to understand and appreciate that they are not prisoners in their own country? Go to the sugar factories and see how our people are suffering. I think we prefer investors to the Ugandans.

I would like to pray that as we celebrate this important day, Parliament gives the labourers these two laws. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.57

**MR GAFFA MBWATEKAMWA (NRM, Kasambya County, Mubende):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I wish to thank the minister for the statement and the invite, as we shall go virtual. How I wish, as we celebrate the International Labour Day, we would think of Ugandans who worked during elections, mainly the Local Defence Forces (LDUs) who have never been paid.

We should also think of the people who acted as scouts during the just concluded senior four examinations. We should be thinking of people who were chased from the gold mines in Mubende, specifically in Kassanda and are also trying to earn a living but they were never attended to. We should think about people working in modern slavery called, *Kyeyo* abroad, who are suffering and cannot be attended to by our Missions abroad.

We cannot close our eyes to celebrate the International Labour Day when our people, who fought for this country, including the “General” who is taking a nap *–(Laughter)–* the veterans. There are people who lost their husbands during the NRA war but have never been paid. Some veterans were retired but they have never got any money. They only enjoy promises when it comes to time for campaigns and they are asked to open bank accounts.

Honourable minister, how I wish you would come and say that due to COVID-19, we are going to save a lot of money for celebrations and intend to pay the categories of people that I have mentioned above. Thank you very much. Otherwise, there is no need to celebrate this day when our people are still suffering.

4.00

**MS VIOLET AKURUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Katakwi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would also like to thank the minister for the statement on the celebration of the International Labour Day.

I rise to speak for the Ugandans that are distressed abroad. Due to the externalisation of labour, we have had very many Ugandans, like my colleague has said, doing *Kyeyo* or trying to make ends meet out there. They are taken there with different terms like to be housemaids or work in hotels. However, when they get there, whatever they are given to do is different from what they were promised.

Most of these Ugandans are in the Middle East and we have heard quite a number of cases about them. I thought the ministry of gender would come up with serious and stringent policies on the externalisation of labour.

Our Missions abroad have had a lot of challenges to address issues affecting these girls that are taken out there. Some of them find their way out there but then they meet challenges and want to get back home, they cannot. In most cases, we are told that their passports are withdrawn from them. Once you do not comply with whatever you have been told to do, it becomes a very big problem. Some have found themselves in our Missions out there trying to seek for assistance but the Missions are constrained to help them.

I would like to call upon the ministry of gender and all relevant stakeholders. It is high time, as we celebrate this International Labour Day, we looked into our labour force out there. I know some of them are doing good work. There are a lot of remittances back home.

However, when it comes to those that are taken and not given what they expected to get, then country needs to come up with very stringent policies to help these boys and girls that go out there looking for jobs. We do not have to lose out.

Otherwise, for us to celebrate the International Labour Day when we have very many Ugandans distressed because they are not getting the right jobs or they are not given the jobs that they hoped to go and do out there; then we might miss a point. I just wanted to call upon *–(Interruption)*

**MS NANTABA:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for giving way. I would like to give information. As we celebrate the International Labour Day, this Parliament should know that there are children being employed in sugar cane plantations today.

Recently, I arrested a lorry that was carrying children who were between seven and fifteen years. The lorry was heading to a sugar cane plantation. We impounded the lorry belonging to Kakira Sugar Factory. I ensured that these children were taken to police. I arrested the man who was in charge of the deployment of the day, but before I reached home, police had released this man. The children were left at the police station because the parents had not been informed that their children were at the police station in Galilaya, Kayunga.

I, therefore, would like to request that when the minister is addressing labour issues in this country, especially when we are celebrating, let her be reminded that children, now that they are not in school, are being exposed to this inhumane exploitation. Children of eight years, carrying slashes, pangas and all other equipment - this was on television.

However, surprisingly, the police released this man and never took this matter to court for him to be prosecuted. He has actually continued employing babies - I call them babies because a child of eight years is not old enough to work in gruesome and inhumane employment areas, like a sugar cane plantation.

Women are raped in those plantations. Young boys of 12 years take *waragi* there. They are given 2000 or 1000 a day. After getting paid, they use the same money to buy *waragi*. I actually found them with packs of *–(Interruption)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Point of Order

**MS KAMATEEKA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Member on the floor is a member of Cabinet. *(Interjections)* Yes, she is a member of the Cabinet. We would expect her to come and tell us how she has moved Cabinet to act on these issues that she has observed, rather than come here and lament with us. Is the Member in order?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, the honourable member is not in the Cabinet. She is a backbencher. *(Laughter)* Please, conclude.

**MS NANTABA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker for updating the Members. Even if I were still there, it does not take away my right to represent my people because I am a Member of Parliament and it is at this platform that my people should be represented. *(Applause)*

I have brought my issue on the Floor of Parliament because the Minister intends to celebrate a day but she has forgotten that there are people deemed to be employed, yet they are simply exploited. Besides, they are not supposed to be employed because they are under age. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, although you submitted in another Member’s time. Please, conclude. *(Laughter)*

**MS AKURUT:** I would like to thank the Member for the information that she has given. The point is that, indeed, there is child labour and I know we have laws on child labour.

I think the biggest challenge country has is the implementation of these laws. We are not biting enough to see that the culprits employing children are brought to book.

Madam Speaker, I as conclude, I would like to make an appeal to the ministry of gender that the issue of externalisation of labour has to be taken very seriously, in terms of having stringent laws, in terms of operationalisation of the laws as regards externalisation of labour so that our people do not suffer at the hands of foreigners. I beg to move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you hon. Akurut for the matters you have raised on the externalisation of labour. Although hon. Nantaba smuggled a contribution, nevertheless, the matter she raised is extremely important, especially speaking to the issue of child labour, absence of inspectors and failure of our legal system to protect the young people.

Honourable minister, I think it is a matter you need to take up seriously. This is because, one, in this COVID-19 pandemic, many children are really idle, Others are getting pregnant, Others are going to cut sugar cane when they are under age. This is a very serious issue.

4.09

**MR PATRICK NSAMBA (NRM, Kassanda County North, Kassanda):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the time you have accorded us to make a few comments on this statement. I would like to begin by thanking hon. Mutuuzo for coming up to alert the House and the people of Uganda, about the forth-coming Labour Day. Many times, people forget that that day actually exists. This is a good reminder that those celebrations are there.

Over a time, this day has become a ritual and it is high time we made it meaningful so that the people of Uganda expect Government to come up with policies on that day that can be announced, especially about the challenges that they go through.

Madam Speaker, currently - I think hon. Mutuuzo highlighted the impact of COVID-19. It has created unemployment in the country. There is a very big chunk of Ugandans who were earning at night but they no longer earn. There was a big group of people that was running businesses but no longer do.

Therefore, hon. Mutuuzo, on that day, kindly come out clear on the policies you are adopting to deal with the unemployment created by COVID-19. We will be attentive and we would like to hear policies around the rights of workers in this country. People are being mistreated. People who go to the Arab countries are being mistreated East, West and North. The worst thing, however, is that even those who are working in the industries in the country are being mistreated. They have no rights at all.

So, on that day, be kind, come out strongly and address the issues relating to the rights of the workers in this country. On that day, we want to hear Government coming out strongly on matters to do with local content. These matters are very serious and very dear to us.

Every day, Government is very happy to announce many new investors but they never talk about the matters to do with local content. Why would foreigners come and take jobs when we have local workers who can do those jobs? We want to hear you come out clearly to instruct the local institutions to prioritise Ugandans in whatever they do.

Where we do not have the skills, let us hire foreigners. Where we have the skills, let us use Ugandans. On the day Government will make a pronouncement, we want to hear them speak about what they are doing. For example, from what you did in the oil sector recently, tell us how many jobs you are creating and what the qualifications are. The universities and everyone else will hear and prepare themselves. However, when you come out to celebrate the International Labour Day only, that is where we miss the point.

What hon. Akurut talked about here is quite important. We want to hear the minister of gender coming out strongly to put up stringent measures about our people. The majority of the jobs are being created by Governments in Arab countries. That can be attested to by what goes on at the airport; the majority of the people leaving Uganda are going to Arab countries to work as maids.

We want to be sure that our people are protected. They go abroad not because they want to but because that is the only available opportunity for them to earn a living.

I will end by talking about the looming problem in the country. The ministry of finance is continuously stifling the agriculture sector. We are farmers and this Government knows that 68 per cent of Ugandans earn their living from agriculture.

However, continuously, the ministry of finance is removing money from the coffee sector, which employs most of us in central Uganda. Once they continue doing that, the sector is not going to grow. It is not going to employ people – *(Interruption)*

**MR AOGON:** Madam Speaker, my issue is that it is not just the coffee sector alone. I am also hearing a whisper that the money for UWEP is being taken away to the parish model, which is something I do not understand. Which model is this? *(Laughter)*

4.15

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Ms Betty Aol):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the minister for the statement she made. On that day, we will be very happy to see the minister and other stakeholders participating in State House on television discussing how they are going to reduce the many weaknesses mentioned including corruption. Because of corruption, in order for the ordinary person to get a job, he or she has to spend some money.

I do not know if you people do not get information about this. Two days ago, I was sitting with a reverend and he told me how after giving some money, they would still miss out on the jobs promised.

Honourable minister, I would like you to focus more on the reason this Minimum Wage Bill is not working for us. Also, I would like you to focus on how we can have more effective labour officers. Do they feed you with information from the districts? In some districts, the position of the labour officer remains vacant for a long time. You know districts are vast. Probably, one day, we want to see a situation where you have more than just one labour officer per district.

That is why, sometimes, the people run to where they should not be running. In the past, I used to hear of industrial courts. I do know whether these industrial courts are still functional.

It is good for us to celebrate Labour Day on 1st May but we should take stock of the very many challenges, which bedevil the country as far as labour is concern. It is very easy to be innovative and create jobs but it is also very easy for these job creators to exploit Ugandans if we do not have regulations in place to protect the vulnerable people.

I side completely with the people who made observations on our people being given secondary treatment instead of being prioritised. Whenever our people have skills, expertise and knowledge, why should we prioritise foreigners above our people? Our people should first get jobs before we think of foreigners. Let us take stock of those.

When we celebrate the HIV/AIDS day, we usually assess the fight against the virus and how the fight can be intensified and we look at the challenges involved. Related to that, we also need to know the problem in the labour market. We would love to watch you talk about those problems while highlighting how you are going to handle them through policies. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourablemembers, let me remind you that this House had enacted a law on the minimum wage but it is the Cabinet, which rejected it. We had enacted that law on behalf of the population.

4.19

**MR LYANDRO KOMAKECH (DP, Gulu Municipality, Gulu):** Madam Speaker, I join in to give a word or two as regards International Labour Day that is sometimes called International Day of the Workers.

I listened very carefully to the statement of the minister. The word, “celebrate” comes from a Latin word, “*celebrari*”, which means to assemble honour, achievements and milestones. What is happening on 1 May 2021 in the context of Uganda? I think this is a day that, for the first time, we should mark and not celebrate. The budget that is prepared for that day should be handed over to support the children that are in distress as a way of marking that day. I do not see any interest in having wine and other drinks in any place. We should just mark the day.

Madam Speaker, the issue of workers in this country is painful. Uganda Police Force has just announced that they upgraded the Uganda Police Force in terms of promotion but last night, as I drove home, I met a sergeant of Uganda Police Force who has served for 37 years as a sergeant. He is left with only two years to retire, yet he has a degree. We have Uganda police support staff here that have masters degrees and bachelors degrees and they are constables of the Uganda Police Force and many of them have never been promoted.

Therefore, this should be a day of reflection from the Government of Uganda, looking at the situation of the labour force. Go to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for example. In that ministry, there is a challenge - we are now very happy to be exporting house girls and yet, the labour force that is here can still be exported as a very high-level breed.

Why is Ghana and Nigeria doing it in the international organisation? Why doesn’t Uganda have a strategy through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to also take our labour force that are highly qualified for big jobs?  Why are we zeroing down and concentrating on very low paying jobs outside this country? These are things the country should reflect on.

This is a day that should be taken very seriously; it should be for thinking and not for celebration. We are a developing country and therefore, our strategy for development must be taken more seriously than just happiness. I beg to stop here, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

4.23

**MR GEOFFREY MACHO (NRM, Busia Municipality, Busia):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for her very good statement concerning this day. I was tickled by hon. Nantaba, who is a backbencher like me, for her good statement, for fighting the rights of the children. Many times, she has talked about the plight of vulnerable children being exploited by people in the labour market. I have a very sad report to give that it has been almost three years; we have racket of people who are smuggling Karimojong children to a market called Majengo in Nairobi where they are paraded and sold in the market as if they are selling goats in the name of child labour.

It has not ended at that, the leftovers - because they pick healthy children - those who are not healthy are sold to Somali Militia groups to be used as labourers in their training camps. This issue has come out many times and the Government should pick interest in this matter.

As that is continuing, we have a challenge of child labour in the country, originating from the limestone mines in the whole of Karamoja sub-region. When an operation is done now, we find almost 5000 children crushing stones for sale.

It has not ended - almost 80 per cent of homes in eastern Uganda have child labourers in the name of cattle keepers, who hail from the Karamoja subregion. I, therefore, request the Government to pay attention and stop this because it is becoming chronic and we might end up losing a certain generation of people in that part of the country.

However, I would like to thank the minister for her submission. Although I expected to hear a lot concerning the labour of the people in the private sector - COVID-19 affected almost the whole country but the border districts and particularly Busia, most of the markets were closed. Sofia Market is closed to date and it had a population of more than 1000 workers.

As a response, when we moved this, the Government told us that they are going to give this as a package. Up to now, I am still looking for the stimulus package that the Government talked about, although I hear in the corridors that it was given to rich people to build arcades in Kampala. We would like the planners of this country majorly the ministry of finance to also plan for people in the private sector because that is the work they do.

I support my colleague who said that let us mark this day; get this money and give a donation to women who are vulnerable and they have not benefited from the stimulus package so that they can begin or support their small-scale businesses to help them have a livelihood and this will benefit their families further.

Madam Speaker, sometimes there is delay by the Government. Rt hon. Prime Minister I would like to thank you for the statement you gave here during the Iddi Day but I will not go into that because the Speaker has been a defender of all the workers in this country.

However, we would like the Government to put special attention to the people who are not on salaried employment but are working with bare hands in the private sector, carrying out small-scale businesses. They are almost everywhere but we have neglected them and we keep taxing them almost on a daily basis. Moreover, they have many burdens and needs.

**THE SPEAKER:** Please, conclude.

**MR MACHO:** Lastly, Madam Speaker, I would like to summarise by requesting the Government that I see the NSSF Bill being killed midway. I suggest that if the Government loves its workers, let the President ascent to this Bill so that Ugandan workers enjoy their sweat when they are still living. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and I wish you success in your upcoming elections. My vote is yours.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Honourable members, I know these are interesting issues but we have other work to complete. Hon. Macho has raised an important issue concerning the stimulus package. Minister of finance, last weekend, I received a very serious complaint from one of the leading farmers in Uganda to the effect that the stimulus package was given to only Kampala-based companies. He said that no one from outside Kampala accessed that package.

Therefore, I would now like the minister of finance to lay on the Table here the list of those who benefited from that package so that we can know how the people of Uganda benefited. We want the list of those who benefited from the stimulus package. I do not know whether the minister has something to say in conclusion of the debate.

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (GENDER AND CULTURE) (Ms Peace Mutuuzo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the issues you have raised and the support you have given to workers by raising a number of concerns. I will begin with why we do celebrate. Even within the lockdown, when our economy was affected and businesses were affected because of COVID-19, we still have a reason to smile because we are alive.

One, we had frontline workers that did a tremendous job like the doctors, police which kept law and order, Electoral Commission and women who were in the markets even within the COVID-19 lockdown; they worked day and night to ensure that they supplied the materials we needed for survival and sustainability.

Therefore, not all is lost and there is reason to commemorate this day because on that day, is when we take stock of our achievements, the opportunities and the gaps and we also rise a number of measures through which we can put an end to some of the gaps that arise during the period.

On the issue that was raised by hon. Nantaba and hon. Macho, I would like to remind my colleague hon. Nantaba that she should have reminded me with a phone call so that we garner massive support instead of just reporting to police and thereafter keeping quiet. You saw them the following day being released and you wait for the International Labour Day to raise this matter?

I would have been happier if you had raised that matter then so that we support you to ensure that the culprits are handled in accordance to the law.

Madam Speaker, issues of minimum wage have been raised and Cabinet guided the ministry of gender to develop an analysis; case by case of every institution, organisation and companies that are employing our people so that we critically examine the implications of minimum wage to the investors and employment.

The ministry has already generated the data and we shall submit it to Cabinet for further guidance. We would like to encourage whistle-blowers. Child labour and forced labour have become a big issue within this lockdown. Children are back home but factories are not sparing them.

We are moving to the factories and plantations; we have a number of cases that we have submitted and the commercial courts are doing a great job. Last year alone, they were able to offset 6,000 cases and this year, by the beginning of April, about 4,000 cases were also concluded.

We believe that we can work together so that our children’s safety is enhanced and also curb corruption. It takes two to be corrupt; the giver and the taker.

National Development Plan III has one of the strong pillars to do with mindset change. This is where we are going to encourage and sensitise the masses against corruption; to be contented with what we have and if we have to get anything more, we should work for it.

The rest of the issues will be handled on the International Labour Day but allow me to highlight something about some institutions that are still under lockdown, like the hotels, performing arts, the creative industry and bars that work in the night or evening hours.

We are uploading an online platform for virtual operations to ensure that we continue observing the SOPs as we wait for a time when a majority of the citizens in this country will be vaccinated so that we do not pose a danger to health, to the people we have struggled to save by maintaining the lockdown for this long.

I beg to submit and thank you for the time and attention you have given this very important topic.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON SALARY ENHANCEMENT FOR MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL STAFF AND TAXATION OF LUNCH ALLOWANCES FOR HEALTH WORKERS

4.35

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, on the first part of this question, as I stated last time, we are still finalising all the pending issues in the Budget process and I request that we make a statement on Thursday about salary enhancement, not only for Makerere University but others on how we have finally handled.

On the second part of this statement, which is taxation of lunch allowances for the staff, I would like to inform the House that according to our Income Tax Act, all allowances are taxed and it is by law, unless this is changed or exempted by this House.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister of gender, sorry to come back to you. Hon. Ongiertho had asked you how we will participate in the district celebrations. You have invited us to go back to our districts.

**MS MUTUUZO:** Madam Speaker, each time we commemorate or celebrate international gazetted days, we have a national taskforce but also district taskforces that are headed by Chief Administrative Officers.

The Chief Administrative Officers and the labour officers have been given guidelines to ensure that there this commemoration is done under the guidelines of SOPs and in accordance with the standards for celebrating gazetted days. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Members will make their choice on whether to go or watch on television.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE LACK OF PUBLIC ROAD EQUIPMENT IN THE DISTRICTS OF RWAMPARA, KARENGA, OBONGI, KWANIA, KAPELEBYONG, KALAKI, KITAGWENDA, KASSANDA, BUGWERI, NABILATUK, KAZO, KIKUUBE AND MADI-OKOLLO DESPITE THE APPROPRIATION OF SHS 47 BILLION IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/2021.

4.39

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, on the appropriation of the said amount of money where you requested the ministry to make a statement, we note that Shs 53.1 billion was appropriated in the Budget and programmed for release in the fourth quarter of the Financial Year 2019/2020 for the procurement of road equipment.

However, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Government faced significant resource constraints and was unable to fund the Budget as planned given the need to mobilise funds to fight the pandemic.

This activity unfortunately remained unfunded. Nevertheless, as a strategy, Government, through the Ministry of Works and Transport, allocated Shs 14.53 billion in the current year 2020/2021 of which Shs 10.498 billon has been released toward maintenance and repair of old equipment for redistribution to the district. In addition, new districts were encouraged to share road equipment with their mother districts in order to keep the roads motorable.

This confirms the statement that we earlier made that the previous year of 2019/2020. This Parliament appropriated Shs 53 billion toward this activity but because of lack of cash and given the pandemic that set in, we were unable to fund this activity and this Financial Year 2020/2021, we did not budget for this money; we only gave money for maintenance of this equipment. So, these districts will be programmed in the mid-term, as we settle in and as our situation improves.

I thank you, Madam Speaker.

4.41

**MR PATRICK NSAMBA (NRM, Kassanda County North, Kassanda):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. This time, I am not going to thank the ministry of finance.

These districts receive money and our complaint is that we have been coming here, requesting for what is due to us because other districts received road units. That is the policy that a district should have road units.

Madam Speaker, the minister has not provided a solution that we needed to hear. Their saying that they have released Shs 10.49 billion or they have changed to repairing of old equipment; I do not think that is what we or new districts deserve.

The Ministry of Works and Transport wrote to them, indicating to them that the procurement process had already taken place and concluded. All that is required is for them to deposit money. He should come out clearly to say that, “ministry of works, kindly, cancel the procurement because we are not going to procure road equipment for these districts”.

I would be happy to hear the minister saying that in this Budget, he has provided the money that will be used because it is Shs 53 billion. If they have already provided Shs 10 billion, there is a balance of Shs 43 billion, which can be provided and we know that this matter will be settled by July.

This is April. In July, this can be settled, if the ministry of finance chooses to provide the Shs 43 billion that is missing on this budget. However, when you say that you are providing Shs 14.5 billion for repairs and you are silent on the procurement, it implies that you do not want the new districts to get road equipment.

The other thing that the ministry communicated is that in their wisdom, they think we can keep borrowing from other neighbouring districts or the parent districts. It is almost equal to impossible, Madam Speaker, because you advised the same at one point in time. We asked the engineers and districts to borrow but they could not get because even in those districts, their equipment is being used to work on their roads.

There is no way the ministry of finance can sit there and keep saying, “borrow”, when what they are talking about is practically impossible.

We are in the budgeting process. Let the minister find the Shs 43 billion. Let the already released money go to procurement and not to repairs and the balance be provided in this Budget or a supplementary can come through. We are ready to support it and procurement for these road units are done. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any response to that proposal, minister of finance.

**MR BAHATI:** Madam Speaker, we need to be truthful here. This coming financial year, in terms of the resource envelope, will not accommodate this expenditure because as you are aware, we recently passed a Bill here for another arm of Government that now requires an extra Shs 500 billion.

Therefore, for the Budget we submitted and the resource envelope we have, hon. Patrick Nsamba; we can accommodate this in the next financial year 2022/2023 because –*(Interjections)*- In the meantime, those newly created districts can be using tractors of the existing neighbouring districts.

This resource envelope is not elastic; it is limited. We are just coming out of a pandemic and so, there is so much we can do with the limited resources we have.

Thank you.

**MR PATRICK NSAMBA:** Madam Speaker, the same minister has created something he calls “a parish model”. In that parish model, he is trying to bring up something new. Can he confirm that there is no new, wasteful expenditure in the next Budget that we cannot get the Shs 43 billion?

Are we really proceeding well, when the minister is telling us that in the new Budget that was laid here, there are no new lines of expenditure? This one was already there; you simply stifled it. You never wanted us to have this road equipment.

Honourable members, kindly, support us on this matter because the honourable minister is trying to nearly tell lies about the impossibility of getting us Shs 43 billion to get the road equipment for new districts –*(Interruption)*

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Thank you, honourable member. The minister must be truthful on this. When new districts are not given road equipment, they are going to be hiring out different companies to grade their roads.

The reason Government bought road equipment for other districts is to avoid borrowing so that they reduce on their expenses. If you do not provide for a new district to match with others, you are not fair to them, honourable minister.

At the end of the day, you will still use the same people who have built bad roads using their companies to make these people suffer. If you have given them new districts, why don’t you give them all the facilities they need?

Madam Speaker, we must begin copying our neighbouring countries like Tanzania and Kenya. When they create a new district, it is given all the facilities that make it match with the other districts, to the extent of even constructing headquarters for them. For us, it is about politics and winning votes.

Honourable minister, please, be fair. You are from Kabale; you know how poor the roads are. You have road equipment but they are not functioning well. What will happen to those districts that do not have a single road unit and yet, they are newly created?

I support what you are saying, honourable member, other than going out to borrow and hiring, which will be more expensive and Government is trying to dissuade us from that in some instances. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

4.49

**MS CONNIE GALIWANGO (NRM, Woman Representative, Mbale):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to give information that last week on Friday, I had a roads committee meeting – and I am the chairperson. The engineers indicated that all the equipment of the city, which was formerly for the municipality, cannot be used again because it has highly depreciated.

Unfortunately, the city has got too stretched. A number of subcounties – It was initially three subcounties and it is now 12 and all of these go to the city to use the same equipment. They now cannot go further to do the work they used to do in the three subcounties.

Therefore, it is important that a new set of equipment is procured, so that the roads can look like those of a city and others of other new districts. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, I really think that this idea of borrowing from the mother district is not feasible because if I am the mother district, I have no obligation to give the children. I have my own roads. How do I say that, “Okay; you are in Mbarara for six months; you are in Rwampara for three months and then go a bit to Kazo.” I do not know how that is possible.

4.50

**MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach):** Madam Speaker, I want to build on what my colleague, hon. Galiwango, has stated. All Members of Parliament are members of district road committees. We know our roads and we know how much equipment we need. Therefore, it is going to be unfortunate to be called upon to help another district, when our own roads are in dire need of that equipment.

I would like to ask our minister to please do these people a favour and make sure they get their own equipment. We neighbour Madi-Okollo in Pakwach and at some point, they had requested that our equipment goes to support them. In the process, as a committee, we sat down to recall this equipment because our own roads required them urgently.

In this kind of circumstance and like my colleague, hon. Galiwango has stated, it is just not possible because this equipment is required in their districts. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

4.52

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Ms Jenipher Namuyangu):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate that we may have a limited budget. We tried to advise the districts to share this equipment with the municipalities but it did not work out.

The minister is aware that this money is given in quotas and even subcounties get some road fund. So, it is not feasible that the districts can share equipment. They risk losing the money back to the centre but also the work is enormous in every district. Therefore, the best option would be for us, as Government, to look for money and give equipment to those new districts.

4.53

**THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE (Mr Robert Kafeero):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. This matter has been pending for quite some time. As the House may recall, we appropriated money in Financial Year 2019/2020 but which the ministry of finance, up to now, has not released to the Ministry of Works and Transport, even when the procurement process was completed by the named ministry of works.

In our meeting recently with the ministry, we got updated that they are not only 13 but 14 new districts, including Rukiga, which had not been created at the time of the initial funding request. Therefore, the actual money needed now is Shs 56 billion for the 14 new districts.

A more lasting solution to this problem is to agree that during consideration of the budget of the next Financial Year 2021/2022, we appropriate Shs 56 billion for the acquisition of the new road equipment. The minister should commit to this Floor that this time round, they will release that money.

However, on the issue of sharing equipment, even now, some of them, like excavators are at regional level and not every district has them. They have to be shared by about five districts or even more. So, we need to ensure that both the new or more districts utilise this facility. *(Interruption)*

**MR AOGON:** Madam Speaker, I represent a municipality. We would like the chairperson to come out clearly and explain - of the proposed Shs 56 billion, are you taking into account the affairs of municipalities - because we are suffering? You have heard from members that we should not pass anything for the sake of passing. You must include the municipalities; Kumi Municipality is suffering.

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, Busia Municipality and all the municipalities submitted – because when districts were given equipment, municipalities were using district equipment. We had received a promise from the chairperson himself here that all the municipalities in Uganda are going to be given road equipment, including Busia Municipality.

I am, therefore, seeking clarification from the minister and the chairperson on their stand on that matter. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MR MWIRU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am at a loss. My understanding of Parliament is that when we pass money through the Budget, we pass an Act of Parliament called the Appropriation Act; the ministry of finance is supposed to take heed of the Appropriation Act.

However, I have seen the minister of finance, probably having forgotten the objective of creating the road units, doing force on accounting and reducing expenditure – for his purpose.

I wonder whether it is procedurally right for us to even start debating whether the ministry of finance should release the money or not. My understanding is that once we vote for money and it is passed in this House, the ministry of finance has no power to settle a budget and decide on what they will release without coming back to Parliament. I seek your indulgence on this, Madam Speaker.

4.57

**MR FREDERIC ANGURA (NRM, Tororo South County, Tororo):** Madam Speaker, as the minister comes, I would like to appreciate the concerns around road equipment that has been raised. Honourable colleagues have talked about road equipment per district, which is good, including municipalities. However, it is unfortunate that the minister is not coming out to support the appropriation that was passed here.

I would also like to bring to your attention – when we talk about road equipment and roads in the districts – you have known me to complain on this Floor all the time - because of the division of Tororo, it is now a district of 48 subcounties.

As I wait for the division of the district, we have been requesting for additional two units to that district. When works on roads start, we wait for two and a half years before a single equipment goes round the district to come back to the subcounties. Many subcounties have had their money returned time and again because of the size of the district; it is a single equipment and providing for breakages among others.

As you budget for additional units for the new districts, consider Tororo, which is waiting to be divided into another two units so that we can see value as we wait. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I do recall that when the issue of the size of districts came up, His Excellency, the President said the bigger districts should get two sets of units. I do not know whether that is happening.

4.59

**MR ABRAHAM BYANDALA (NRM, Katikamu County North, Luweero):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Every district needs road equipment but in the circumstances the minister says that he has no money, we have to find ways of moving.

First of all, it is wrong for a district to return money to ministry of finance because the ministry of works authorises you to hire private equipment to come and use that money in the meantime, before you get your own money.

Secondly, the leadership in the districts have to cooperate more. There is no district that is given money for maintenance and operation to run that equipment for a full month. The money we release to them cannot run or maintain the operation for a whole month; it is impossible. It is very little and the equipment, ideally, remains idle.

These districts are just hiring this equipment to private people but if there was a good working relationship between the leaders, they would work and see how they share.

In the absence of enough money, the ministry of finance could provide some little money maybe to buy the most essential; for example, a grader, for each of these districts. Otherwise, most of the work is done by graders. The excavators and others can be in the regional pools. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable minister, can you, please, conclude?

**MR BAHATI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. On the issue of hon. Mwiru, after Parliament has appropriated money – Hon. Mwiru, you know that we are running a cash budget. Therefore, once Parliament approves the money, it will depend on the cash collected. If the cash is not sufficient to fund all the money that has been appropriated by the Parliament, then we shall fund up to the tune of the cash that we have.

However, we need to remember that during the months of March, April and May 2020, we were going through very difficult times during the pandemic. The revenue had reduced.  We had to cut out some expenditures and one of them was those that had gone into procurement. We actually thought that it would take more time. So, it is one of those that really suffered.

I would like to agree with hon. Byandala that maybe in the meantime, since we are still in the budgeting process, we can look at the middle ground. If we can buy a grader, then the full unit could come in the subsequent year and help these new districts. That can work in the meantime, if Members support it. We can do it since we have these two weeks to look at the budget so that we make these difficult decisions together.

We have made a proposal here at Parliament. Let us look at it together and make very difficult decisions together. Otherwise, there are very many priorities that are not funded, yet they are needed. Therefore, we have to make a choice and this will be one of the choices to make. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item no. 3(4)

STATEMENT ON THE REPORTED DEMARCATION AND ALLOCATION OF PLOTS OF LAND TO VARIOUS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS AT THE FORMER NAKAWA–NAGURU HOUSING ESTATE

**MS KISEMBO:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of procedure. Last Thursday, you directed the ministry of finance to come to this House today and update us on the payment of farmers for tobacco about the Memorandum of Understanding that had to be signed with the companies of tobacco.

Now that the minister of finance is here, wouldn’t it be procedurally right that he updates the House especially, the farmers, who are busy listening and waiting to get the answer from the minister on when they should be paid?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish that sometimes, you would come to my office and tell me what you expect, which is not on the Order Paper so that I can make time for it. Let us finish with ministry of lands and then, we shall come back to the ministry of finance.

**MR OKUPA:** Madam Speaker, the matter of demarcation and allocation of plots of land to various private individuals at the former Nakawa-Naguru housing estate came sometime back and it was referred to the committee. The committee is in the process of concluding a report on the same matter. I am surprised that the minister is jumping the queue.

On 25 February 2021, at 9.00 a.m., the honourable minister presented a submission to the committee. On the same date, Uganda Land Commission presented a status report to the committee on Naguru and Nakawa land.

I do not know whether it is procedurally right now for the minister to jump in now, when the committee is yet to conclude and bring the report. There are documents that we asked the minister to submit to the committee in order to conclude the report. I am seeing the minister on the Order Paper ready to submit. Procedurally, I do not know how the committee is going to report on this matter.

I thought the report would come first. Then, if the minister has issues, which are not sorted, she would be able to respond to the committee. I am not surprised that they are jumping the queue.

From our preliminary investigations, there is a lot that meets the eye. The chairperson of the committee is here and we had shared with him, when we saw the Order Paper. He said “what is the fate of our report?” Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the minister is responding to a request I made as a result of public outcry.  No one at that time informed me that there is work, which is on-going. This is why I asked the minister to tell us what is happening. Who is the chairperson of the committee? Where do we stand?

**MR KAFEERO**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Indeed, this matter is before the Committee on Physical Infrastructure. We held a meeting, which was attended by a huge delegation led by the honourable minister, Beti Kamya, that was also attended by the Uganda Land Commission.

In that meeting, we needed more documents from the ministry and I am here to report that the minister submitted a huge yellow file with very many documents and priority on almost all the pages, which we are studying and we are about to conclude our findings.

Madam Speaker, we have very interesting findings. How I wish our committee would be given time to finalise so that we handle this matter comprehensively. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, you know the public is not privy to what you have been doing in your committee. This is why they have been raising questions about what is happening. I think the minister should report to us on this one.  Otherwise, it does not preclude you from reporting on the issue that you are handling. If there is something extra, we need, we shall also send this to the committee. Please, report, honourable minister.

5.08

**THE MINISTER OF LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (Ms Beti Kamya):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate my colleagues who raised the point of procedure. I was going to seek guidance from you whether I should go ahead and make a statement, when two weeks ago, we presented a similar statement to the committee.

**THE SPEAKER:** The committee has not yet reported. This House does not know what you discussed there.

**MS KAMYA:** Madam Speaker, the same Clerk to Parliament who invited us to go and meet the committee is the same Clerk who invited us to come here. I was going to seek guidance from you whether we should not wait for the report. If it is your indulgence, I would request that we wait for the committee report.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssekitoleko, when do you propose to bring this report? You know we have hardly one month.

**MR KAFEERO:** Madam Speaker, I would like to undertake that immediately after the presentation of our report on the ministerial policy statement, we shall be able to present the report, which is in its final stages of consideration.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay. I have instructed that you bring in your report by Thursday, so that they go to the Committee on Budget.

**MR KAFEERO:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** The matter is deferred to abide by the outcome of the reports of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure.

There was the issue of the payment of the tobacco farmers. After Item no. 04, I would like to bring forward Item no. 15, because it is also related to the budget. Let us have the short answer on the issue of tobacco farmers.

5.11

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, on the issue of tobacco farmers, as you recall, this House approved Shs 11 billion. I have confirmed that we have released it to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, which is the one supervising the farmers on this issue. It is a trade issue.

Yesterday, we again wrote to them saying they that they should move very quickly and pay the farmers even if they have not finalised the issues of the companies. Since we know that the companies are credible, we will finalise their issues later.

Therefore, I will keep in touch with the Members of Parliament from Bunyoro on this matter. We shall arrange a meeting on Thursday with the Members of Parliament from Bunyoro and we will update them together with the ministry of trade.

However, we have released the money and it is with the ministry of trade. It needs to verify the farmers and pay them as we work out with the companies.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, may I also propose that you also have a separate meeting with the Members of Parliament from West Nile, on the same issue.

**MR BAHATI:** Okay, Madam Speaker.

LAYING OF PAPERS

LIST OF REGISTERED ENGINEERS GAZETTED TO PRACTICE ENGINEERING IN UGANDA IN THE YEAR 2021

**THE SPEAKER:** Is the Minister of Works and Transport present?  Let us go to Item 4(II).

5.13

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, I beg to go through all of the reports and then lay them at a go.

I beg to lay the list of registered engineers gazetted to practice engineering in Uganda, in the year 2020/2021.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, the list is now available for your perusal and advice.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEALTH SERVICE COMMISSION FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 2019 TO JUNE 2020

5.14

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the annual report of the Health Service Commission for the period July 2019 to June 2020.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the report is sent to the Committee on Health for perusal and report back.

THE NATIONAL PLANNING AUTHORITY ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2019/2020

5.14

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the National Planning Authority’s annual performance report for the Financial Year 2019/2020

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the report is sent to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development for perusal and report back.

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR UGANDA NATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH ORGANISATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED, 30 JUNE 2018

5.15

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the report of Auditor-General on the financial statements for Uganda National Heath Research Organisation for the year ended 30 June 2018.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the report is sent to the Committee on Public Accounts - Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises.

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR UGANDA NATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH ORGANISATION THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

5.16

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the Auditor-General’s report on the financial statements of National Health Research Organisation for the year ended 30 June 2019.

**THE SPEAKER:** The report is sent to the Committee on Public Accounts - Central Government.

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR KAPCHORWA-SUAM KITALE AND ELDORET BYPASS ROADS PROJECT THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

5.16

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the Auditor-General’s report on the financial statements of Kapchorwa-Suam Kitale and Eldoret Bypass Roads Project for the period ended 30 June 2019.

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR UGANDA NATIONAL AIRLINES COMPANY LIMITED

 THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

5.17

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** I beg to lay the Auditor-General’s report on the financial statements of the Uganda National Airlines Company Limited for the year ended June 2019.

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR MASAKA – BUKAKATA ROAD PROJECT (PROJECT ID NO.0746) UNRA

 THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

5.17

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Finally, I beg to lay the Auditor-General’s report on the financial statements of Masaka – Bukakata Road Project under UNRA for the period ended 30 June 2019.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, all these reports are sent to the Committee on Public Accounts - Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises for perusal and report back.

REPORTS OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR BUTABIKA NATIONAL MENTAL REFERRAL HOSPITAL, KIRUDDU NATIONAL REFERRAL HOSPITAL, MINISTRY OF HEALTH, UGANDA BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICES, MINISTRY OF HEALTH – GAVI, THE VACCINE ALLIANCE CASH GRANTS TO UGANDA, UGANDA HEART INSTITUTE, MULAGO SPECIALISED WOMEN AND NEONATAL HOSPITAL, CHINA UGANDA FRIENDSHIP HOSPITAL – NAGURU, UGANDA CANCER INSTITUTE, KAWEMPE REFERRAL HOSPITAL, UGANDA AIDS COMMISSION, UGANDA ROAD FUND, THE MULTINATIONAL LAKE VICTORIA MARITIME COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT PROJECT ON THE ADF LOAN, UGANDA NATIONAL AIRLINES COMPANY LIMITED, ALBERTINE REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (IDA LOAN AGREEMENT CR 54060 – UG), MASAKA-BUKAKATA ROADS PROJECT, HEALTH SERVICE COMMISSION, THE ROAD SECTOR SUPPORT PROJECT 4 (RSSP-4) KIGUMBA-MASINDI-HOIMA-KABWOYA ROAD PROJECT (ADF LOAN NO.2100150028796) PROJECT ID NO.P-UG-DBO-021) UNRA, NORTH EASTERN ROAD-CORRIDOR ASSET MANAGEMENT PROJECT, KAPCHORWA – SUAM KITALE AND ELDORET BYPASS ROADS PROJECT AND UGANDA DEVELOPMENT BANK LIMITED (UDBL) THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020/

4.18

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Madam Speaker, it is a very long list. I beg to read through all of them.

**THE SPEAKER:** Read all of them and then lay them all at once.

**MR BAHATI:** I beg to lay the following Auditor-General’s reports on the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2020 for:

1. Butabika National Mental Referral Hospital;
2. Kiruddu National Referral Hospital;
3. Ministry of Health;
4. Uganda Blood Transfusion Services;
5. Ministry of Health – GAVI (the Vaccine Alliance Cash Grants) to Uganda;
6. Uganda Heart Institute;
7. Mulago Specialised Women and Neonatal Hospital
8. China Uganda Friendship Hospital – Naguru;
9. Uganda Cancer Institute;
10. Kawempe Referral Hospital;
11. Uganda AIDs Commission;
12. Uganda Road Fund;
13. The Multinational Lake Victoria Maritime Communications And Transport Project on the ADF Loan;
14. Uganda National Airlines Company Limited for the years ended 30 June 2020.
15. The National Drug Authority for the Financial Year ended 30 June 2020.
16. Uganda National Roads Authority for the year ended 30 June 2020.
17. The Albertine regional sustainable development project for the period ended 30 June 2020.
18. The Masaka-Bukakata Road project for the year ended 30 June 2020.
19. The Health Service Commission for the year ended 30 June 2020.
20. The Kigumba-Masindi-Hoima-Kabwohe Road project under the loan of ADF for the period ended 30 June 2020.
21. The North Eastern Road Corridor Asset Management project for the year ended 30 June 2020.
22. The Kapchorwa-Suam-Kitale and Eldoret bypass road project for the year ended 30 June 2020.
23. Uganda Development Bank Limited for the year ended 31 December 2020.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. The first five items from will be sent to the Public Accounts Committee - Central Government. The rest will be sent to the Public Accounts Committee - Commission Statutory Authorities and State Enterprise for perusal and report back. Thank you.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT TO HALT THE MERGER OF THE UGANDA WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME (UWEP) WITH OTHER WEALTH CREATION FUNDS

5.23

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Ms Betty Aol):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to move a motion for a resolution of Parliament to halt the merger of the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) With Other wealth creation funds; moved under Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure.

The motion reads:

*“WHEREAS the Uganda Women and Entrepreneurship Programme is in conformity with the national, regional and international commitments and obligations on gender, equality and women empowerment;*

*WHEREAS the Uganda Gender Policy (2007) prescribes interventions that improve the earning potential of women and respond to the diverse livelihood needs of women and men;*

*NOTING that the Uganda Women and Entrepreneurship programme was initiated to address issues of limited access to affordable credit, limited technical knowledge and skills for business development, limited access to markets as well as information regarding business opportunities;*

*WHEREAS the programme is envisaged to increase participation of women in business development, increase their income, livelihood security and overall quality of life;*

*AWARE that the Women Enterprise Fund Programme has always had limited funding and advocacy to increase budgetary allocation to the programme has not been considered;*

*NOTING that the programme has been performing well under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and generalising it will push many women to withdraw from it due to excessive competition with other wealth creation funds;*

*FURTHER NOTING that the programme has created jobs for women reaching over 166,742 women and more than 587,055 dependants have benefited through multiplier effects of household, community and macro levels;*

*APPRECIATING that the programme has funded a total of 13,822 projects with an average of 10 projects per parish in all local Governments across the Country;*

*AWARE that the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme is a woman economic empowerment programme that fits within the mandate of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development;*

*AWARE that in the Cabinet meeting of 15 March 2021, Cabinet approved amalgamation of eight wealth creation funds including UWEP, into a single pool to be implemented under the parish model, under the Ministry of Local Government with effect from 1 July 2021.*

*Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Parliament of Uganda duly convened and sitting today as follows;*

*That the Government of Uganda leaves the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme the way it was and monitoring should be done by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.*

*Justification:*

*1. To promote women empowerment by improving their access to cheap credit for entrepreneurship;*

*2. That the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development transfers back the Shs 32 billion to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development that was to be monitored by the Ministry of Local Government.*

*The justification is that it is the ministry in charge of the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship programme.”*

I beg to move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is the motion seconded? *(Members rose\_)* It is seconded by several Members. Please, justify.

**MS BETTY AOL**: Madam Speaker, I will concentrate more probably on Gulu because I am a Woman Member of Parliament for Gulu District. However, knowing very well that in the Eighth Parliament, we started struggling for a special fund for women to empower women, we are still in a patriarchal society. And when we go to our Constitution, you will find that women still deserve affirmative action.

In the Ninth Parliament, we continued to struggle to create a special fund for women. We were very grateful to the Government that it also heard our cry for our women who would find it very difficult to compete normally with the men either in the bank or elsewhere that a special fund was created for them.

In the 10th Parliament, implementation started. Since the implementation of this UWEP started, the impact on the ground is enormous. If you compare with other special funds, like the Youth Livelihood Fund, the women have been reliable. They have been able to repay their money in good time. A very good percentage of them and the effect of the money on the population is visible; in the families and their areas, districts and the nation at large.

Women are the pillars of families, when they have resources in their hands, education becomes easier for the children. We heard that this money was going to be merged with the Wealth Creation Fund. It will stop being a special fund for women.

Some of us went out sensitising the communities that men should not have their names on this form; if men get their names on the forms, they will get banned and it will not work since this is especially for women.

Even if it is especially for women, men benefit a lot, because they rely on women at home. Now, this special fund, which empowers women and is dear to our hearts is functioning well. If anything, we should be pleading for the increment of this fund other than removing it from the very work that it is doing.

We have international laws; the Beijing Platform and the Convention of Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. We want to empower women so that they also rise up and come close to standing side by side with men. We also have our laws in the Constitution; why should it be done at this time?

That is why I have come up with a motion that we halt this merger, which has already been done and give back the women their fund. If we were kind enough to women, the way we have been, we should be thinking of adding another Shs 32 billion on what was located for UWEP.

We request the Government of Uganda to be kind and give back the women’s special fund. Thank you, Madam Speaker, for standing with the women. You have always stood with the vulnerable people of Uganda.

This affirmative action should not be removed; we should get the Shs 32 billion back to ministry of gender, so that they give it to UWEP and it continues to exist.

We have not felt the presence of this wealth creation in the communities; they bring useless seedlings but this women’s fund is very strong and has real impact on the ground. Thank you.

5.35

**MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to second the motion. Allow me also to thank hon. Aol, the Leader of the Opposition who brought in this motion. I believe in her capacity as the Woman Member of Parliament for Gulu.

This has been very disturbing news and I am very grateful that it has come in form of a motion and thank you for making this a priority. Notwithstanding the benefits of the parish model, I want to liken this situation that Government is trying to bring about to me being a mother.

As a mother, I want to compare this situation to where you have little food in one bowel and expect the younger and older ones who are strong, to compete for a fair share of the meal.

This is not possible; you will be subjecting the younger and the weaker ones to starvation. I can see a similar situation or scenario under the parish model where you expect the young and weak to compete for this small meal.

I also want to remind my colleagues as we debate this that as a young children growing up, we used to have a situation where you would be served meals in one bowel but our mothers were very wise. They would pick pieces of meat and serve them to each child because they knew that every child had different potential; some were strong while others were weak.

Much as we are celebrating the success of UWEP, few women benefit because the fund that have been allocated is so small so few women groups are benefitting.

This is a struggle itself; what if it comes to the parish level where they have to compete with men, other funds like *Emyooga* and Operation Wealth Creation already have their own challenges.

I implore the Government of Uganda to leave UWEP the way it is. We can implement the parish model but with other projects. With this, I want to state very clearly that on my behalf and on behalf of the women of Amuru and the women of Uganda, I stand strong and support this motion and plead with the Government to halt this merger and protect this special fund for women.

For long, Government has been saying that they have a lot of support from women and this is the time we want to see - do not bite the hand that feeds you. Women have ensured that this Government is strong and this is the time to pay back.

Thank you for giving me this time to air my views and second this motion through zoom. I was unable to come to Parliament for reasons beyond my control and I wish the rest of the House to strongly support this motion.

5.39

**MR GAFFA MBWATEKAMWA (NRM, Kasambya County, Mubende):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also rise to support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, to keep UWEP as an independent programme for women. Allow me to inform you that even these proposing a parish model are not sure how it is supposed to operate.

I thought a parish model should provide a framework for implementing programmes like the one of UWEP. However, according to people who are agitating for a parish model, it is as if they see it as a programme. I think they could be confused. Even if UWEP is still under the ministry of gender, they can still scale it down as a parish model but when it is still an independent and separate programme.

I received calls this morning from women in both Kasambya County and Igara West –*(Interjections)*- and the other one. Even youth –*(Interjections)*- Ever since they heard of this, the majority – even men – actually think that they are now going to benefit from this parish model; that the money is no longer set for women only. This is wrong. We cannot compete with women favourably. Let this programme stay where it has been because it has been successful.

Madam Speaker, I propose that before disorganising this well-performing programme for women, we give it time to first study the so-called proposed parish model. I, therefore, support the motion by the Leader of the Opposition that UWEP should be removed from the schedule of the programmes to be amalgamated under this model, that has not been tested and well conceptualised. I thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

5.42

**MS HELLEN ASAMO (NRM, PWDs Representative, Eastern):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am a member of the National Women’s Council Executive and we are part of the drivers who wanted this fund to come, on affirmative action, for the women. At that time, it was very difficult for women to get money from banks and microfinance institutions and we all clapped.

In the history of Uganda, the only programme that has paid back money into the revolving fund is the Women Enterprise Fund. *(Applause)* It had 70 per cent recovery. We have always heard that *Entandiikwa* money has been eaten but not the women’s fund.

Women hold this fund dearly. This fund has got women of different categories; those who have not gone to school, women with disabilities, women with HIV within the same category. There is already specificity for them to get the money.

What I do not understand is, what do you mean by local Government because women are already in the local groups? They come from the villages, form their groups and come to get money through the rightful ministry. What structure does the local Government have? We have the women council and, in its form, if a woman chairperson of a subcounty does not sign that group, it does not come. Are we transferring the women council to the local Government? I need clarity on this.

The whole of last week, I was not here. We have consulted the women. I moved in the whole of Eastern Uganda. We were in Kapchorwa, Teso, Busoga and Bukedi. The women are saying, “Leave us with our money.” Can the Government explain, after giving affirmative action, why you are removing this? We do not want to say we shall not benefit from others. I will give you an example.

When you give out Operation Wealth Creation funds, very few women get that money. However, this women fund is for the poor of the poorest. Taking it to put into a parish model, where the chiefs – who were already dealing with our women last time – will say, “Before I sign, pay this”.

We have now taken direct support so that the local women are put in charge of the fund. Before they get stabilised, we are removing it. Can the Government tell us where we are putting the structure of the women councils?

Women form 51 per cent of Ugandans. How can you mistreat them? I call this mistreating, taking us back to square one. Women are able to take children to school and they are providing for their families.

In fact, they tell you that the women are very now happy because I asked some of them, “You have come from the subcounty. How has this fund helped you?” They said, “No, we have changed. Just look at the way we are dressed, the way we are caring for our children, how we are caring for our families.”

This fund has reduced domestic violence, Madam Speaker. However, we are now taking it back to a fund, where Mr X will have to accept Madam Asamo to go and get the money and he is the one monitoring you. This House should be the last to accept that the money moves to the Ministry of Local Government.

For the women fund, I beg that this House does not approve that Cabinet resolution, until they have come to give us their framework of how the money is handled.

We always like rushing things without consulting. We always rush things without educating the people who are beneficiaries and we simply sit somewhere and think we are going to do that. We have not consulted the women and as women of Uganda, we shall not accept it. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I also want to know how many *Gombolola* chiefs and parish chiefs are women in this country so that they take special interest in the issues of the women.

5.46

**MS NOELINE KISEMBO (NRM, Woman Representative, Kibaale):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I rise in support of the motion raised by our colleague, hon. Betty Aol. This fund for the women should remain independent. It cannot be merged with other funds as it will not be effective.

Madam Speaker, I have witnessed that this money is reaching out to the lowest woman in the village; the poorest of the poor, like my colleagues have stated.

Merging the funds will make it very competitive for the women and it is likely that the women are going to lose out completely. This is an affirmative action for the women. They have been given an opportunity to have their own funds. It has done wonders in the women groups down in the community. We cannot merge it.

My prayer is that on top of refusing to merge it, we should also urge Government that this fund is increased. At the moment, it is very small that many of the women are not able to access it because of the size of the envelope that we have.

I strongly support the motion that we keep this fund of UWEP independent and also increase it so that our women are able to access the benefits that go with it. It has raised a lot of innovation among the women. With the little funds they get from the groups, they are able to do so many enterprises and it has improved on household income.

Knowing that women carry the bigger burden down in the community of looking after the families; paying school fees, buying books and everything, it is important that we leave them empowered to manage their fund. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

5.49

**MS PAMELA KAMUGO (NRM, Woman Representative, Budaka):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I rise to support the motion, moved by the Leader of the Opposition, not to allow the amalgamation of the UWEP fund with other wealth creation funds.

The Cabinet decision to merge the UWEP Fund with other wealth creation funds is suspect. Members of Cabinet have just returned from campaigns and I can bet that none of them have read about this parish model and conceptualised it.

It is possible that the technocrats are taking advantage of the Cabinet to rush this decision for selfish motives.

Madam Speaker, we have a good number of women in Cabinet but it is to my dismay that they have chosen to keep silent about the women fund. I would like to ask whose interests they are serving. Have they just decided to abandon the women in their constituencies *– (Interruption)*

**MS ANYWAR:** Madam Speaker, I painfully have to bring my colleague and daughter here to order. Cabinet sits and makes concrete decisions; we debate and analyse them. Many of those decisions have benefited this country.

As women members of Cabinet, we have been in touch with the women. We have brought this House laws that have favoured the women and we still stand with them. Is it in order for my colleague and daughter to assert that the women Cabinet ministers do not care about colleagues, when we are the ones in Cabinet pushing for affirmative action, which has benefited this country?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the difficulty about that is that it is clear that when this decision was taken, it seems the women members also agreed. That is the problem we have.

**MS KAMUGO:** Madam Speaker, I thank you very much. Honourable minister, the reason I got concerned is because you are sitting in Cabinet and we have a good number of women but you did not pronounce yourselves on the UWEP funds, which is a special fund created to support our women. You have chosen not to pronounce yourselves and you probably have your own reasons as to why you have chosen to keep quiet.

Madam Speaker, I would like to say that let us not merge this UWEP fund. We should leave it to be monitored by the mother ministry, which is the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

I beg to submit. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

5.52

**MR RICHARD OTHIENO (NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is very unthinkable that my Government would even imagine removing the women fund. If you look at the NRM support base, it is anchored on the women. I would have expected my party to have been the first to protect the interests of the women.

That is the reason why I rise to support this motion. We should not, under any circumstances, allow the funds for the women, which have worked very well, to be taken into a programme or project where nobody knows its works.

As we speak now, we do not know whether this is a strategy or a programme. All these ministers cannot tell us. We have had meetings with Ministry of Finance but they have failed to explain what this parish model is; they do not know it.

We met with Operation Wealth Creation under the Ministry of Agriculture and they said that this programme has been taken to the President’s office, which is going to do oversight. The Ministry of Finance said that it is the one in charge. The Ministry of Local Government is not even aware of how this money is going to be used. But that is not the major issue.

Madam Speaker, I do not think that this money was removed in good faith. If the Ministry of Finance is interested in creating money for this, why is it that it targets only programmes that fall in other ministries and adds more money to those that fall in the Ministry of finance?

I can cite two cases. Right now, there is a problem where the Ministry of Finance is going to oversee the implementation of NDP 3. They have added over a trillion more into that programme. Why didn’t they remove this Shs 400 billion from that programme anchored in the Ministry of Finance? However, they targeted the women’s money.

This House should interest itself in Vote 130 of the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance officials put money there. They do not touch it but remove money from other entities and put it there. Why is it that whenever money is cut from other ministries, that Vote 130 is never touched?

I have a belief that something does not add up in this. I think this House should stand its ground; our women deserve better. There is a colleague who said that this money should be increased and I think that is what we should even discuss. How much are we adding to this money? That is what this House should focus on.

By the time we pass the final budget, personally, I will pass a motion here that we want to see the money for the women increased from what it is now and not removed.

Madam Speaker, before Government tells us about the parish model, there are two things that should be cleared. Who is in charge? Which entity is in charge? Is it the President’s office, the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Local Government?

The President’s office has said that they are the ones in charge; they are on record when they appeared before the Committee on Agriculture. Nobody should deceive anybody here -it is not the local government in charge.

The Ministry of Finance has told us that this is a programme but it is more of a strategy. If it is a strategy, why don’t you then say whoever has interventions should go and do it at the parish level? What is wrong with that? Must you remove money from entities?

If it is the Ministry of Water, Ministry of Education or any other ministry, they should say that all the interventions should be at parish level. Why must you remove from entities so that you are the ones now to implement? Do you mean that they cannot do it at parish level? Is it a strategy? Is it a programme? If it is a programme, why don’t you come up with the *– (Member timed out.)*

5.58

**MR HENRY KIBALYA (NRM, Bugabula County South, Kamuli):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I join the colleagues in thanking the Leader of the Opposition. If anything, this country would be very cautious on issues concerning women. If anything is to be done, we must increase money in any programme that affects women.

I wonder where the Minister of Finance comes from in his district. In the district I come from, particularly Bugabula South, men have abandoned their responsibilities. They have left them in the hands of women, who are suffering.

I am soon coming up with a motion here to ask Government to provide money for widows. If they are crying about the women fund, I am coming to ask for money for widows.

Madam Speaker, women fund must not only be doubled but tripped. We provided money for Youth Livelihood but at the end of the day, these youth only feed from their mothers. Women are running families and educating children yet here we are with Government talking about the parish model.

I have a parish chief who does not know me. In my sub-county, I cannot even point out one parish chief but they are there. What do the chairperson LC II and III do?

Madam Speaker, where did the Ministry of Finance carry out the research from before they can share with us how the Ghana Parish Model succeeded?

When the President talked about the Covid-19 vaccine recently about how Ugandan scientists were developing one, he said they would first test it on animals and other animal species before it comes to human beings. Where have they tested the parish model first for us to copy from and to convince us it will work here too?

Women in my area have Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA), which has not worked very well because of lack funds and support. I would expect Government to support such with some more money so, they can be empowered because as it is normally said, “Educate a woman, educate a nation.” When you empower a woman economically, you would have empowered the family and everybody else.

Therefore, it is the role of Government to come here and think how to best improve the women fund instead of diverting this money into wealth creation. What is wealth creation, Madam Speaker?

The other day the President promised sanitary pads to the girls. However, instead of Government increasing the money for the girls to buy sanitary pads, as they increase money for women to do this and the other, they are telling us to shift money from the gender sector to something not clear.

Madam Speaker, if I will be the last person here to fight that, I will do it. Otherwise, I put the House on notice that I will be coming with a motion to request for money for the widows to help them; we need to empower them to take care of their orphans.

6.02

**MS JANE AVUR (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also want to thank the mover. I stand to support that UWEP fund should not be merged with other wealth creation funds.

First, UWEP fund has performed. We are informed that at least recoveries are up to 87 per cent. This is not comparable to other funds like the Youth Livelihood Fund and the would be *Emyooga* fund.

This fund is easily accessible by women because the requirements are quite flexible compared to if they are merged. Women will not be able to access this fund so easily.

The fund has also helped the women to borrow cheaply compared to the high interest rates on money borrowed other financial institutions, and because they lack other requirements like collaterals.

Madam Speaker, as other members have stated, we would rather at this point be talking of increasing funding to UWEP. Just last week, I watched on television a group of women in Kampala advocating for a stand-alone bank for women. If at that level, women are finding it hard to access funds from other financial institutions at fair conditions, what about the women down there in the rural areas?

Whereas the parish model may not be good, I would strongly support let the women fund, remain the women fund.

When you go to the countryside, unlike NUSAF and Youth Livelihood Fund, you will simply find sign posts. Otherwise with UWEP, you will find human beings testifying to you how this it has helped them to take care of their families, to pay school fees and so on. I, therefore, support that this fund remains a stand-alone fund. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. As I invite Hon. Jovah Kamateka, let me remind the Minister of Finance and the Government about Article 14 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women in particular the duty to take care of the rural women; it is a convention you signed.

6.05

**MS JOVAH KAMATEEKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Mitooma):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to support the motion and to thank the Leader of the Opposition for bringing it. I would also like to point out that the motion deserves a place in the Guinness Book of Records seeing the praises that the Leader of the Opposition has heaped on Government for the success of this programme.

She says, “We are grateful to Government for hearing our cry and putting the programme in place. Since the implementation of UWEP, there have been enormous improvements.” She has also noted that it is in line with the regional and international obligations signed by the Government and that it has created jobs among other things. We want to recognise that the House indeed, across the divide, does observe the tremendous improvement that has been made by UWEP. We thank the Government for putting this programme in place.

As colleagues have said, it helped us mobilise savings by the women. They now know that they could work hard - first, participate in food security for the home, then be able to participate in income generating programmes together with other women.

Therefore, UWEP has increased household income. We are here crying about the so many girls who have got pregnant and got out of school during Covid-19. The solution would be us to give the women more support and empowerment. They can now fend better for the girl child. They are able to buy sanitary towels for them, for example, and be able to provide necessities to keep the girls out of the temptations to go out with men who make them pregnant.

Madam Speaker, I also support colleagues who say that this programme should remain a separate programme. It has helped us realise development, right from the home because the women are responsible for providing food in the majority of homes.

Indeed, it has helped them work in partnership with their husbands not in competition, to ensure that the welfare of the home improves and the children go to school.

I want to thank the Government for starting up the Parish Model. This means that actually a lot of money is going to be put into this programme. However, we would like to propose that UWEP remains and then the women can get 20 per cent addition to the UWEP because they have been faithful and the fund has realised potential and improvement.

6.09

**MS AGNES AMEEDE (NRM, Woman Representative, Pallisa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I also thank the Leader of the Opposition (LOP) for the motion.

First, UWEP is a very good project because it is reaching the ordinary woman. Today, women have taken on a lot of community work that was inherently men’s role. Unfortunately, the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development is not here. I would have tasked her to do a study in this. Why have many men in the communities neglected their cardinal duties and left them to women? This is something that women pull me aside and tell me, over and again, whenever I am in the communities.

UWEP in Butebo District registered dismal returns because of the minimal amounts of money that was given. I would encourage the Government to leave this fund as an affirmative action because women suffer a lot of issues. Women have no means to access credits formally, for the obvious reason that they do not have collaterals. Most of the collaterals in the villages are lands, and most women do not own lands.

The *Emyooga* Project was looked at with suspicion because people have registered several groups, but they have not been able to get money, including the Youth Livelihood Fund. It took a lot of sensitisation for people to buy into the *Emyooga* programme. Unfortunately, the people in Butebo had not got this money and something else was coming up.

My question to the Government:  where is this pilot of the parish development model? Many times, the Government rushes to implement programmes without proper data or study. I would implore the Government to assign the rightful political supervision of this money.

In my view, much of the corruption and poor service delivery in local governments is due to lack of political supervision. The civil servants are not working closely with the politicians. There are a lot of secrecies surrounding the Government programmes. Can we be more transparent? Can we create responsibilities and obligations around these funds? Otherwise, this fund will go to waste just like – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Conclude.

**MS AMEEDE:** I support the Government merger of the many affirmative programmes. There were programmes running in the Ministry of Local Government and some were running in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development but nothing is coming out. I give an example of NUSAF. A lot of funds have gone into NUSAF countrywide, but what is there to show off? Can this fund be studied further so that when it is being implemented, there is a chain of deliverables?

If you are going to give a parish to grow maize, where are they going to sell it? If they are going to keep cattle for milk, where is the milk going? Let us have the whole chain developed. Thank you.

6.13

**MS NORAH BIGIRWA (NRM, Woman Representative, Buliisa):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for granting me the opportunity to express my views on UWEP. We are aware that UWEP is a brain child of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. The ministry has been the line ministry under which UWEP has been operating.

It is in this current Government that the economic status of women has been elevated, and more especially, through UWEP. It is also very evident that through this programme, the women’s spirit of entrepreneurship has been raised. We, therefore, want this spirit to continue being elevated since this programme has put us at a higher level.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has been carrying out Monitoring and Evaluation of UWEP countrywide. I have been sitting on the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development for quite some time. We have moved almost to the entire country, trying to look through all the Government programmes. We found out that it is only UWEP, as a component, that has been very successful. It is, therefore, very important that the Cabinet and Parliament ensure that the project of UWEP remains under the docket of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

The only thing that we need to do, as Parliament and Cabinet, is to ensure that we put in place strategies or policies that can improve the performance of UWEP at the local levels. This can be done by ensuring that the revolving of the UWEP fund goes up to the local woman in the villages.

We have a number of success stories under this programme. For us who have been on the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development have seen these success stories. Why can’t we proceed with these success stories to make sure that the Government increases the funds so that we find how best we can improve on UWEP.

It is through UWEP that our women today have been encouraged to save at the lower level. The women have been able to get involved in financial literacy. More women in Uganda have been empowered through these financial literacy training. It is, therefore, my prayer that the Government of Uganda, through Cabinet, ensures that this merger does not exist, and UWEP remains under the mother ministry; the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. I beg to submit.

6.16

**MS ROBINA RWAKOOJO (NRM, Gomba West County, Gomba):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Government for UWEP because I have seen increased financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills amongst the women in Gomba West County and other constituencies.

The programme has given women something to do. They are no longer mocked as being idle and rumour mongers. They have a lot to do. There is improved health for families. Children eat and dress better. The children are also able to attend school. Women pay back the money in time, and they put the money to good use. They have acquired assets among other things for the families.

Unfortunately, there has been suspicion from men. Generally, we know that it is men who have been the bread earners. I, however, do not see a problem with this programme. I think sensitisation is lacking, and I know that there has been mishandling of the programme by some of its managers. Can these mistakes be corrected rather than the fund being taken away from women?

Let the parish development model continue since it targets the women at the lower level. However, can we get the funds from the other programmes? Thank you.

6.18

**MR STEPHEN MUKITALE-BIRAAHWA (Independent, Buliisa County, Buliisa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving this important matter time on the Order Paper. I also thank the Leader of the Opposition for presenting a bipartisan matter, which affects our mothers.

Parliament has been put on spot as those who passed the Public Finance Management Act. In terms of oversight work and budget discipline, if we start allowing reallocations and budget cuts, then as Parliament, we are in problems.

I request that if there is an issue of policy incoherence or review, such matters should be brought to the Floor of Parliament. That is why two weeks ago, I had said that there are very many mixed messages coming from the Budget Framework Paper. The supplementary budgets are in the Committee on Budget, in the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. *Emyooga* is being discussed in the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. Therefore, you find that Parliament has been divided to be ruled.

Therefore, I would pray that we hold onto our guns. If you add up the monies which have been scattered in all these other projects, we would be having a women bank as early as yesterday; a cooperative bank long ago; if not revamping even our Rural Development Bank and the Rural Farmers Scheme.

Therefore, the issue of focusing and concentrating resources needs to be brought here. Now, robbing Nyakato to pay Isingoma - because we are taking away from the women. I do not know if somebody making noise somewhere solves a problem. Making noise does not solve the problems at all.

The Cabinet should rethink about this issue, because even *Emyooga* was yet to be understood. And now the Parish Model; is a whole debate. Is it a delivery mechanism? Is it a policy review? We agree at some point how to move.

We cannot have this NDP III - we are trying to finance is year two of the NDP III. Therefore, the incoherence really disturbs and you would wonder how we intend to achieve.

We have previously been discussing here. The same Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development was raising the issue of exportation of labour; where our daughters are being exported as “slaves” - this results from these challenges of not being able to keep them at home.

I do not know why - I was here when NSSF was removed from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Now, again the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has nurtured the most successful revolving fund.

Madam Speaker, as I conclude, I would like to plead with the Cabinet, because I have heard that none of these sectors has consented. The Public Finance Management Act, the entity you are taking money from, must consent. I have heard from ministers and permanent secretaries complaining here, that their money has been taken by permanent secretaries.

Therefore, who is going to implement this project where both the political leaders and the experts are in opposition or up in arms against the programme? Is that uncoordinated movement of troupes within my NRM Government? God forbid. Can we reorganise ourselves and have mergers, restructuring and industrialisation at once. We can then know what to follow. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

6.22

**MR RICHARD OSEKU (NRM, Kibaale County, Pallisa):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I personally rise to support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, in support of this fund remaining and not be merged with the proposed Parish Models. What I am going to say are experiences that I have personally met, in as far as this fund is concerned.

As leaders, colleagues, you know that many times we have had to intervene in trying to solve the community problems. However, recently my experience is that because the women have attained some level of empowerment, they have embarked on some of the developmental activities within the families and in the communities.

I would like to point out the issue of shelter, construction of homes in families. The women now come to us leaders saying, “I have gone this far, can you kindly help to top for me some five iron sheets? I am about to complete a house.” This is a sign that there is a lot of achievement through this fund; revolving among the women. Therefore, we need to support this fund to remain as it is and stop the merger.

Madam Speaker, the issue of the Parish Models is not bad perhaps, but unfortunately, even as leaders, there is nothing yet we know about it. However, of recent I have come across a correspondence from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) in the districts. They are asking the CAOs to compile information regarding the availability and ownership of land in parishes, in order to facilitate work or the intentions of the Parish Models.

This is a very big threat for women, because it shows that there is a likelihood that accessibility may be tagged to availability and ownership of land. We know how our women are not well advantaged in terms of possession of land and even availability of land for them.

It is for this reason that I suggest that, as a Parliament and as representatives of the people - we know that women comprise the majority of the population of this country. They are the ones who are most involved in the production chain, especially in agriculture and now agribusiness, where they had broken ground for the beginning to get into commercial agriculture; which everyone is advocating for, including the leader of this country that we should move away from producing for the stomach and produce for money.

Madam Speaker, with this fund, I would like to say that we need to support this motion and let the Government take heed and let this fund be as it is. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

6.25

**MR ANTHONY AKOL (FDC, Kilak North County, Amuru)**: Madam Speaker, let me to thank you, first of all, for allowing this to be on the Order Paper. Let me also thank the Leader of the Opposition for bringing this very important motion.

Madam Speaker, my father died when I was in primary four and I was raised by a woman. Because of that, I know how a woman struggles to raise children in this country. I know how women struggle to make families feed. How they want to make sure that things are done in the families the way they are supposed to be done.

I, therefore, would like to take this opportunity to tell the House that, if you want to develop this country, the most important thing to do is to target the women. That is why I spent more than 10 years working with women and children, before coming to this Parliament.

Madam Speaker, I read extensively about this programme. And I heard Hon. Bahati say that, by Parish Model, you will reach 68 per cent of the population; the local people on the ground. That is what I read! The best way you can reach the local people, most poor people in the country, is through the women.

In one of the projects I implemented, women were saying, “The approach you are using to give us help, is doing good for us.” The men were also saying that it is okay; it is good and “we also want to get involved”. However, when we tried to involve some in a few groups that do research on, that is, the areas we started implementing with men, the programme collapsed.

Therefore, as we talk here, the issue is very clear that the implementation of UWEP has been the most successful programme that the Government has come up with *-(Applause)* Now for that matter why do we merge the programme that has been successful? There must be a reason why you want to merge other programmes that are not performing; what is the reason why you would think that UWEP, which is performing well, should be merged and end there?

I would think that this is something that is being smuggled for a reason which is known to the few people who are doing it. This is because, when we were handling the Budget Framework Paper, there was nothing like the Parish Model; where did it come from? How did it get itself to the national level, and we are talking about it? How? That is the question that is very important.

When you ask the Ministry of Local Government, they are not aware of it. When you talk to my local governor at the local level, they are not aware of it. Therefore, who is going to implement; it is the office of the President and Operation Wealth Creation. Are they the ones who are going to implement even at the parish level?

Change is good and change will only be embraced if you sensitise the people, and they are aware of what is coming in. The best you should have done about the Parish Model is to start sensitising the local Government level and leaders.

We should be aware of what we want to do and appreciate it then it will succeed but if you want to put the country into trial always – *Emyooga, Entandikwa;* and we are not seeing success!

That is why, honourable minister, you say that Cabinet made a good decision. Yes, you have been making good decisions but here you have failed and we are saying, no, it will not work for this country. Thank you.

6.29

**MS CECILIA OGWAL (FDC, Woman Representative, Dokolo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am very surprised that it is the Leader of the Opposition who brought this motion. I would have expected this motion to have been brought by members on the Government side because I have been almost a permanent and almost the longest face in the Opposition since the NRM came to power.

I know that in every election the NRM comes up with a manifesto and I take trouble to read very carefully the NRM manifesto and other parties’ manifestos and platform. But if you care to look at the manifesto of NRM of 2016 election, it was very well structured and they brought out specifically mentioning the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) fund.

I was very happy that in the budget of 2015/2016 we were able to roll out UWEP to cover the entire country. I thought NRM was waking up to address the gender imbalance by empowering women.

Unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition is trying to cure the weakness of the NRM and I do not know whether there is any talk between the Forum for Democratic Change and – Madam Speaker, I also request you *- (Interruption)*

**COL RWAMIRAMA:** Madam Speaker, it is true, NRM has brought gender imbalance to zero almost; *(Interjection)* it is also true and on record we are also targeting women at parish model. I want to make a clarification to confirm that it is the NRM Government that has brought women far from where they were in terms of gender imbalance.

**MS OGWAL:** Madam Speaker, as I was growing up, I was told never to start debate on a matter you do not understand very well; and I would like to advise my dear son on the other side that we have been discussing the issue of the parish model and we feel that maybe we should keep quiet about it for now.

We are extremely embarrassed that the team we called “experts” to help us understand the parish model has so far failed to explain – I do not want to go into that matter and I do not think there is anybody from that side who can stand and face us and say, “This is the parish model that we want to pursue.”

I stand here to say that if the Leader of the Opposition would agree, I would move an amendment to include the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE) fund also be removed from that omnibus fund, which they are talking about because both the SAGE and UWEP funds address the plight of the most vulnerable women in our community.

I want to draw the attention of the Prime Minister – who is here with us – to the East African Community and African Union gender policy. I am specifically addressing this information to the Leader of Government Business who is busy talking to the Minister of Finance and I may not get their audience. *(Laughter)*

I draw their attention to the East African Community and the African Union gender policy that compels the member states to make accountability on how far they have implemented on women empowerment, particularly addressing the income generating aspect of the economy.

We keep lamenting about the plight of the rural woman, and we are the same people now saying the UWEP should be managed in another model when model UWEP has been doing very well.

There is something very wrong with the way the Government is being run. I thought that Government should target *Emyooga* fund. This fund where the ministry has issued a statement to say that they much institute forensic audit in the way it has been used, but there has never been any query on the implemented UWEP fund.

I want to understand, what is going on? If UWEP fund was failing Government, that would have been a very strong reason for diverting it to another area. For now, let help our vulnerable women in the rural area and plead with the Government that the SAGE and UWEP funds must be kept within the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development so that they can help Parliament to monitor the progress we are making toward women empowerment.

When you empower women, you would have reduced domestic violence; empower women, you would have reduced rampant poverty; you will see the economy improving right from the lowest level of our community.

It is a community-based kind of transformation of our economic lives. So, if we want Uganda to shine in terms of women empowerment, we should never even think of touching the UWEP fund. It must remain within the gender ministry, be monitored and evaluated as to how many women have benefited, what is the impact of the UWEP fund to the rural women, that should be our pride.

Recently, Gambia and South Sudan came to study the model of Uganda in the women empowerment; people are talking about us positively in the way we are empowering women but instead we are the same people locking the women out.

I am pleading to the Prime Minister who is here to ensure that we keep our UWEP in existence. And as a member of the Budget Committee I am also asking the Minister of Finance, who is present, to increase funding on the UWEP so that more and more women can benefit from that scheme. Thank you.

6.38

**MS ROSE MUTONYI (NRM, Bubulo County West, Manafwa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for having brought this motion; and whoever brought the idea of merging the UWEP funds with the parish model – if they are here – I think they have seen the atmosphere in the House. I have not seen anyone who has come up to say they should be merged.

I am wondering who complained about this UWEP fund? Did the districts complain? Did we – the representatives - complain? Even the policy makers have not been complaining. They have been applauding the women. They have used the funds well; they have been good at paying back. So, what is the problem?

I am surprised that it is this very Government – which I love so much – that brought about affirmative action, in order to uplift the women, that is trying to abort it. If we take the UWEP funds away from the women, what shall we leave them with?

Madam Speaker, when a programme begins, it behaves like a new born. It comes with flu, diarrhoea and fevers until it outgrows that stage. This UWEP programme has come a long way - it had issues. It has been panel beaten and is now beginning to walk and somebody somewhere is saying, “We remove it from the women and bundle them into the parish model”, which we do not understand.

When you call something a model, it means it is good and you have seen that it is good. However, who has seen this parish model as being good? I have not seen it.

So, if we have not complained, honourable members, why should we have the women swim in the sea, yet Government itself had put the women in a pond – because in a pond, you do not mix species of fish? They are now pushing the women into the sea. The sea has sharks. It has – what is this big fish? – the Nile Perch, which is going to swallow the tilapia.

So, why don’t we leave UWEP with the women? It has done very well. Madam Speaker, my district has not complained, so I do not know where the complaints came from. Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is here crying over the resource envelope for the road units and they are the same people spreading money into the wealth creation and now the *Emyooga*; it had not even taken root.

They are already putting UWEP into the parish model, which we do not understand yet. Why don’t we let this child grow; and it is growing so well?

Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister is also here. Please support us –*(Laughter)­*- and let us leave UWEP funds in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and let the women continue practising the affirmative action of the Government of Uganda.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

6.42

**MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi):** Madam Speaker, the worst thing is for anybody to come and demolish a school where you have been studying or close it. Years after, you then try to refer to history but you do not have a school –*(Interjection)*- make it a polling station or something else; you would not like it.

I say that because if other countries have been coming here to learn from Uganda about UWEP and then we decide again to wipe out the fund, which has been doing well, what are we doing?

Madam Speaker, I have an issue. We started with this Operation Wealth Creation. We have moved; we now have operation *Emyooga*. We are now moving to operation – this one of the villages – parish model. I do not know whether something is going wrong somewhere.

First, when we talk about issues of women, there are specific; they are special; they are unique. Even when you go to schools, particularly boarding schools, you find that there are girls’ dormitories. Boys do not sleep in girls’ dormitories. Those are unique for the girls.

When you go to sports, there is women football. We talk about games; there is netball for women. Why are we touching on women issues all the time?

When you people who are in the army see us talking about issues of the army and Generals, you say, “Leave issues of Generals to Generals”. Today, these are issues of women; you want to touch them. You do not want to leave issues of women to women. Why? Why are you touching on women matters?

Madam Speaker, we would like to get the *Hansard* of the Cabinet, so that we know which of the women were there and did not speak for women. Somebody seems to be laying a trap against the women. So, of the female Cabinet ministers, the ladies there, who did not do their job?

I think it is very important that we do an audit. You should not sit there for the sake of sitting; we need a voice for the women to be heard. We should also find out, of the men who sit in Cabinet, who spoke for the women. That is very critical, Madam Speaker.

By the fact that nearly everybody is well informed about it shows you that what we are saying is the correct issue. I beg you, Madam Speaker, to give me enough time as possible because I have a lot of issues to say.

First of all, when you look at the House, nearly everybody has supported the motion. I have not heard a single voice saying – If you look at the members who have not yet contributed – I have already seen from their faces – none of them is about to say no to this. *(Laughter)*

From the way the Prime Minister has been seated –*(Laughter)*- from the posture and the way he has positioned himself - he usually does not sit in that manner; but today, he has, because he supports our position.

I have seen Gen. Ali seated with a positive attitude –*(Interjection)*- yes! I think that is very critical. Let me first take information from Hon. Oseku –*(Interjection)*- even the minister, Hon. Anywar –*(Interruption)*

**MR OSEKU:** Thank you very much, Hon. Aogon. Madam Speaker, the information I have for Hon. Aogon is that while His Excellency the President was campaigning around the country - when he was in my region, I happened to be his translator.

He spoke about the UWEP and Youth Livelihood Programme. What he said was that these programmes were good. The only problem was that it is only a few who have benefitted so far. He was saying that, “You should elect your Members of Parliament, who should come and help me to ensure that they pass more money and we give to these programmes”. *(Applause)*

For that matter, honourable Prime Minister, you need to remind yourselves in Cabinet, including His Excellency the President, that he made this commitment to the women.

Thank you.

**MR AOGON:** As I request you, Madam Speaker, to understand, you know that information was highly valuable and he has consumed enough of my time. So, I request you to be considerate –*(Laughter)* –

**THE SPEAKER:** Other members want to speak too.

**MR AOGON:** Madam Speaker, the issue of UWEP is a matter that is so close to our hearts. We cannot let the women struggle against the men. Even when you would let people play football and they would say, “Today, women and men are playing football on one pitch.” But what used to happen is that for the men, they would tie their hands behind their backs, so that they play favourably in a balanced manner. Otherwise, things cannot work out.

Even when you talk about eating, just put food on one plate and say, “Start”, ask me which side falls first, in terms of the shape of the bread or *kalo*. You will see that the men will finish it first.

Madam Speaker, it is, therefore, my humble plea that Government listens to us. These things of making Parliament appear like we are just in comedy, yet actually we are doing work here which is for Ugandans, is not good.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I shall want the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to assure me that UWEP has been removed from the manifesto on which the President of Uganda was elected. Have you amended the manifesto?

6.49

**MR PATRICK NSAMBA (NRM, Kassanda County North, Kassanda):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for according time to this motion. Many of us have been pained by the Government decision to take away money from some agencies. Madam Speaker, I will come before you tomorrow on the issue of the coffee sector, which has been affected in the same manner.

I would not wish that we come up to say that the parish model is bad before we even understand it but the approach they have used has made us hate it before we understand it. Once you touch critical sectors and propose a model, say a parish model, before you even explain it to people, you attack critical sectors that people have fought for. People have fought for women emancipation in this country and this fund is one of the key things that come out to show that some people are doing some work here to fight women. That is where you begin to touch -

We have the coffee roadmap for 2025 and the Government has promised Ugandans that they want to export 20 million bags but now you come up and touch the same. We will not then focus on how good the other proposal is because you have chosen to touch where people have their inspiration.

The parish model, where they think they can take this money – We have 10,595 parishes in the country. The money that has been proposed to send to local government is Shs 465 billion. When you do the simple mathematics, even what has been hyped as the parish model – the money that can reach a parish is Shs 43 million.

Madam Speaker, let us look through this. From Shs 43 million, you have to give seeds for coffee and maize, pick heifers and set up a SACCO. It is purely not feasible under the circumstances.

I would like us to remind ourselves that recently you spoke about the government policy of doing away with health centres II, which are at the parish level. This indicates that if the parish level was to function, you are looking at the parish taking services to the people. However, you have backtracked on health saying it is not affordable to have health centres at the parish.

We have members here who have spoken about schools at sub-county level. Unless it is something else like creating jobs for some people, especially the way they are doing it by creating work for the army people and trying to militarise everything these days –

If we are talking about a serious parish model, let us increase the money for UWEP and ask the administrators of UWEP to provide the services of UWEP at the parish. Let us increase the money of UWEP and it should come in as partners in this model. Ask them to come and provide the service at the parish level and not this business of saying that they should bring our money and throw it to thieves and they run away with it.

Madam Speaker, we will not accept that. We ask this Government to respect women; to love them, support them and ensure that the matters – This is the only thing they can talk about in terms of their empowerment. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

6.54

**MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to support this motion. I sometimes think the success of UWEP has been embarrassing these people and that is why they want to mix it with other programmes that have failed, and those that are almost dead on arrival. Is there anything we can talk about *Emyooga* now? The desire to mix UWEP with these programmes is like hiding the embarrassment they have had with the success of UWEP.

When we talk about the parish model, I ask myself who is going to be responsible for its implementation at the parish level. Is it the civil servants?

Recently, we went for a NUSAF review meeting in West Nile and one of the things that came out very clearly from the district leaders and Members of Parliament is that NUSAF has essentially failed in a lot of its areas that they thought would benefit from. Why? It is because they were also targeting civil servants to support the implementation of these programmes. These civil servants are supposed to do very many things and a lot of times, they have been removed from their cardinal work, probably as parish chiefs or sub-county chiefs, and are now running the different programmes.

I would like to believe that we are looking at civil servants managing the parish model. If we are honestly looking at them, are we not even going to confuse them more? You are trying to bring them up to learn *Emyooga* and now you are bringing the parish model. I would like to believe that these civil servants eventually get confused. At the end of it, the programmes fail because the people who are supposed to implement them do not understand them; they understand half of this and half of that. At the end of it, they have not understood anything and these programmes fail.

Minister Bahati, you have resources in this House. There are people here who have taken part in programme implementation at community level and they know the things that work. Why don’t you tap them to help in the planning process so that when you come to this House, you can present something that members can agree to as workable in our communities? I thank you, Madam Speaker.

6.57

**MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam**): Madam Speaker, I would like to start by thanking you for giving me this opportunity. I would like to specifically thank you for being at the forefront, ever since I joined this august House in the Ninth Parliament together with my fellow women Members of Parliament supported by men, of ensuring that the women of this country also deserve a special fund, which we called UWEP. Madam Speaker, I would like to salute you for that!

We had many workshops regarding this fund because the women were not receiving this fund. I remember very well that it was not any other ministry but the Ministry of Gender, which was the brain behind this money. No wonder the women have done tremendously well.

I would like to ask the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development that the only way we can thank the Ministry of Gender, which has done very well and thank the women of this country is to only increase the money to the women fund.

Madam Speaker, as a country, we have made very serious strides towards political empowerment of women and in decision-making. We have not performed well in the area of economic empowerment in this country. Many women in this country know that when a woman wants to get credit, they normally ask for security. The only security that we have is land and yet women do not have land. The only hope that the women of this country have been having is UWEP money, however, we want to disorganise it by saying that we are taking it to the Ministry of Local Government.

Madam Speaker, in this House, we have seen and read so many reports implicating the Ministry of Local Government about the much corruption going on there. I would like to ask; is this where you want money for the women to be housed, honourable minister?

Secondly, at global level, I want to state that as a country we have established this fund. At regional and international level, on the obligation on gender equality, women economic empowerment to which Uganda is party to, we are always expected to report periodically.

All our neighbours including Rwanda, Kenya, South Sudan, and Ethiopia among others have strengthened the women funds. It is unfortunate that we do not have the Minister of Gender in the House at the moment. However, I would like to pose a question; what will she be proud of and what will she be reporting on at an international level, if we remove this fund from the Ministry of Gender and take it to another ministry?

Finally, I want to note with a lot of sadness that much as we have really done so well in other aspects, economic empowerment is the centre of women empowerment as far as we are concerned as a nation.

I urge and would like to plead with the Government represented here by the Prime Minister and the Minister in charge of Finance that if you empower a woman economically, you have empowered the whole nation because she will not eat the money alone; children, men, political activities, health will benefit and everything.

I plead with you to let the women fund be where it is. We only demand that you increase this money and let it be in the Ministry of Gender so that we clap for you loudly as women of this country. I do not know where you are getting this motivation. It is not from the women because they are very comfortable and they have done tremendously well. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** As, I invite Hon. Bahati, I wanted to remind the Government about ten days ago, the Minister for Gender tabled here the periodic report to United Nations for the first time since 1979. I am sure that in that report, he must have been reporting to the CEDAW Committee in New York that we have empowered the women with this fund. I am quite sure that the report is there and I will ask the Committee on Gender - because I sent it to their committee to look at it. Now that he has just reported and then we destroy -

7.02

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the members for this important debate about issues of women and support for women.

Madam Speaker, out of the 8.5 million households we have in Uganda, 3.2 are in subsistence economy. As you are aware, out of the 3.2 million, 2.4 are in subsistence farming. They farm, get something to eat but leave little for the market.

Madam Speaker, as we have discussed this issue, we have made good progress in the fight against poverty. In 1986, our figures were at 56 per cent below the poverty level. We should be proud, despite the challenges that we have that we have been able to cut this figure in a single generation to 21 per cent.

However, we still have a challenge and I think is the most important challenge that we must address as a generation to lift the people who are in subsistence economy into the money economy. Therefore, any effort that support a pathway that will get people from poverty and subsistence level is supported by our Government.

Madam Speaker, I come from an area- we use Lake Bunyonyi and one time you were there, I know how sometimes it is difficult to swim against a current. I can see and hear the current of the mood in this House and I do not want to attempt to swim against the current of the mood.

However, I really want to invite you to join our boat and I want to shade some light to demonstrate to you that the current proposal of the Parish Development Committee is not scrapping, is not removing the money for the women instead, it is increasing the money for the women.

How is it doing it? Madam Speaker, I want us to ask ourselves, where are the women that we are fighting for? Where do they live, what is the current mechanism of UWEP? The money is at the district but supporting projects in the parishes.

Our thinking under the Parish Development Model, which has six components – production, marketing, which has mindset and financial inclusion, which we are targeting this financial year and we are providing Shs 450 to Shs 490 billion. In addition, what we are suggesting is that instead of the money for the women remaining at the district let it be at the parish. How? We are suggesting that money that is going to be at the parish, we are saying that let us begin with 45 million, let 30 per cent of this money be reserved for the women. Now we are talking about Shs 32 billion for the women.

However, if you put the formula we have in the current Parish Development Model, the money for the women will jump from Shs 32 billion to Shs 150 billion. I think we need to continue discussing this and understand.

Therefore, to really plead with the members that when we come to concluding-

**THE SPEAKER:** But, honourable minister, with whom have you discussed this strategy?

**MR BAHATI:** Madam Speaker that is why *–(Interruption)*

**MS OGWAL:** Madam Speaker, I think the minister is actually saying that all this discussion, which has taken the whole afternoon, has gone to waste and yet it has been very constructive, meaningful and informative. I think the Government should have congratulated the Leader of the Opposition for having brought this motion.

Madam Speaker, the minister started by saying he is going to increase money on UWEP. Now he goes on to say parish model and the same minister knows that when the concept of *Emyooga* was brought to Parliament, they had told us that every constituency will get I do not know how much money-

**THE SPEAKER:** 560 million

**MS OGWAL:** Yes, but then at the end of the day, we are being told that money has been eaten. Therefore, what we are telling the Prime Minister to convey to the Cabinet and the Head of the State is that we want our money to be under UWEP. Whether it is at parish level, leave the money to UWEP to structure it out to the lowest level.

In fact, I would like to inform the minister, in case he does not know, that the way UWEP money is structured in Dokolo touches the lives of LCIs because they are involved in the UWEP fund. What other level do you want, which is lower than the LC1? I will give you examples from Dokolo.

Anyhow, the clarification I am seeking is: if the minister is talking about increasing the money to UWEP, I would like to know whether it is under the current budget. Can you tell me under which ministry the fund is going to come? Can you tell me who the accounting officer for that particular fund is? Is the fund still under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development?

The reason we want it to be under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is because it will be monitored, measured, and we will know what progress we have made. The women belong to that ministry and it is where we can take our challenges.

I would like the minister, before he concludes his statement, to assure us that UWEP fund will not be touched. We also want to know how much more money has been added to what we have been having under UWEP.

**THE SPEAKER:** Can we also know what has happened to the Youth Livelihood Fund, which was moved earlier? How has it performed as we proceed?

**MR BAHATI:** As I conclude, what we are talking about is money to support women, whether it is routed through UWEP or the Parish Development Model. What we want is to lift the suffering women by improving their household income in the money economy. That is the mission we are all on. So, we are not speaking differently.

If it were possible, you would allow Government to come and explain the Parish Development Model. Thereafter, we can take a decision in the context of – (*Interruption*)

**MR PATRICK NSAMBA:** The minister has been here since we started this debate, and it was mentioned that money is moving from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to the President’s Office. Is the minister in order to discuss what is not on the Order Paper today? We are aware of the Parish Development Model and other models.

The resolution we want from you is that this money is stays under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and managed under UWEP. That is the only way we will then be sure of what we are talking about. Our point is that Government should leave the money under UWEP, give the ministry more money and ask them to deliver services up to parish level; they will be able to comply.

**MR BAHATI:** Thank you for the wise ruling on the order. (*Laughter*)

This matter is being discussed in the Committee on Budget. It has also been discussed briefly in the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. I wanted to however, confirm to this House that Government discussed the Parish Development Model for two days. All ministers are in this together. We are all looking at how to improve the households’ income. That is our proposal. If you permit, we are willing to come and discuss the Parish Development Model here and see how to improve it.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, I think you should not take Ugandans for granted. Maybe you have discussed it, but this House has not discussed this matter. That is why we are asking you – we hear of Operation Wealth Creation; we hear of President’s Office – no, please. Why don’t you give us some-

**MR BAHATI:** So, can we come tomorrow and present the model so that we take a decision well knowing what the Leader of the Opposition – (*Interruption*)

**MR OKUPA:** Hon. Bahati, you have heard what the representatives of the people have said. They represent the areas where this programme has reached. No one has complained that there has been a problem. What is that you have discovered, which you are not telling us that is causing you to shift this money from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to another entity?

The reason you put that money under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development was because of the docket of gender. The President’s Office does not have that docket. What is going to remain with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development?

The ministers from that ministry have been coming to us. Even in the Committee on Budget, no one supports this proposal. I do not know why the minister thinks he is the only one who has knowledge, and all of us who have spoken here are ignorant. What is the problem? Have you done an evaluation of this project, and where is the report that informs you to move the fund from where it is to the President’s Office? This is not the first time you are moving funds from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. What will the ministry remain with? Hon. Othieno, I take the information.

**MR BAHATI:** But you are on point of order.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, I think you can see that no one is convinced by what you are telling us. You know you cannot come and make casual comments on a serious policy issue like this one.

**MR OTHIENO:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The information I would like to give is that I sit on the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and we have been receiving ministers asking us to help them recover the money, which has been taken away from their entities to the Parish Development Model.

So, it is not true that the ministers have bought this model. The ministers are crying to all committees. They are asking committees to help them stop the Parish Development Model. That is the information I wanted to give you.

The House should note that what the minister said that the ministers have bought this idea of Parish Model is not true. No minister has bought it.

**MR BAHATI:** Madam Speaker, I was saying that despite what Hon. Othieno is saying, we are working as one Government. Actually, we propose to push the whole Government to the Parish Development Model. Parliament can agree with the proposal or improve on it or disagree with it totally. Otherwise, that is the proposal we discussed in Cabinet.

Whether the ministers are going to the committees and saying they do not agree, the President, who is the Head of Cabinet, will communicate our position.

We are willing to come and give a proposal on the Parish Development Model and you will decide whether to improve or reject it. What we are talking about, however, is that we all agree to liberate the people of Uganda from a subsistence economy. Any route that can take us through will be supported. If Parliament can improve the proposal, we will be willing – but I want to tell you that the Parish Development Model, as it stands now, is a liberating model that can be used by this country – (*Interruption*)

**MS OGWAL:** Can I give you this important information, honourable minister?

When I came in this afternoon to make my contribution, my main point was to call the Leader of the Opposition to order. I took time to speak because I was listening to what other members were saying. I realised that what they were saying was positive. As a result, I forgave my Leader of the Opposition.

I would like to find out whether Hon. Bahati is still a member of the National Resistance Movement. It is because I took trouble last night to read the manifesto of the NRM of 2016 and the latest one of 2021.

If I can remember, from pages 109 to 110 - I would like you to be specific, particularly on the latest manifesto that has given almost three long paragraphs on how women can be empowered under UWEP. Madam Speaker, what the minister is bringing here is a parish development model, which is absolutely contrary to what the manifest of the NRM articulated for its policy programme for implementation.

Why I would like to call the Leader of the Opposition to order is whether she has now crossed the Floor to help the NRM implement their manifesto. This is the reason why I am calling the Leader of the Opposition to order. In fact, the minister is saying that we have developed a different model. The other was just for vote harvesting. Honourable minister, is this what you are telling us? Otherwise, it is in your manifesto and it is documented. I have even quoted for you the pages. Kindly, go and look at page 109 onwards. I just read it last night.

**MR BAHATI:** It is only that you read it just last night. I wish you were with us all this time, you would have studied it further.

The NRM Manifesto also talks about the parish development model and even the National Development Plan III talks about the parish model. All we are saying is simple because under the parish development model, we had proposed that 30 per cent of resources going to the parish can be reserved for women. However, the difference with what you are saying is that you want to remain with the current arrangement.

We are saying: can you also think through since it is the same mission. All you want is for women to access money and even under the parish development model, they will access more. They are accessing Shs 32 billion now but under the parish development model, they will access Shs 150 billion. Now, which one do you prefer to take? That is the decision of the House but this is the position of the Cabinet. That is how we want it.

Madam Speaker, the parish development model is a liberating model. However, the final decision lies with the people’s representatives. We will wait for you. Thank you.

**MS BETTY AOL:** Madam Speaker, I would like to interest the honourable minister to see that he is left alone. We do not want this merger. We do not want this shipped from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to another ministry.

When we talk about affirmative action and then put things together, sometimes it does not work for women. We have seen this happen with PRDP, when it was put together but they said “You know, first consider about 60 per cent women”. However, it never worked. This is why it is better that this one remains on its own.

Honourable minister, you are just alone, out of the very many people who contributed to this motion. Why don’t you concede? Honourable minister, concede. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I want to propose that the minister comes to us and makes a formal presentation. Whether tomorrow or the next day, we want a formal presentation. It is not just about you sitting in the Cabinet and saying you have decided. Yes, you have decided but what about us? What about the other Ugandans? You cannot just decide.

Honourable minister, come and make a formal presentation so that we can take a decision based on correct information. Honourable members, we defer decision to this matter. Bring it on Thursday. I want a formal presentation on this.

Honourable members, the House is adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p. m.

*(The House rose at 7.23 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 21 April 2021 at 2.00 p.m.)*