

PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION - SECOND MEETING

THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2026

PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FIRST SESSION - 8TH SITTING - SECOND MEETING

Thursday, 15 October 2026

Parliament met at 2.16 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker, Mr Jacob Oboth, in the Chair.)

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome you to today's sitting. I recall that at the beginning of this 12th Parliament, I emphasised the importance of training and capacity building for all Members of Parliament. The Clerk also went ahead and made arrangements with the various committees, and these training and induction programmes have been ongoing for the last few months.

However, it has been noted that attendance has slowly declined, and this is worrying. I therefore urge Members once again to take this seriously and attend these induction programmes.

The Committee on Physical Infrastructure, Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs, Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and the Committee on Foreign Affairs all have induction programmes scheduled for the 15th to 17th of this month at Speak Resort Munyonyo.

Honourable members, this effort by the institution is of great benefit to all of us, even those who may have some experience. I personally attended inductions that I was invited to, and as it is said, learning is a continuous process. I hope that we take this more seriously henceforth. Please make sure you attend.

Those who have been attending trainings and reading hard, you have seen how they debate. Things are improving. Those who have not been attending induction and trainings, you have also seen how they debate. Things are declining on their part.

On matters of training, the Parliamentary Commission has taken a step ahead to restore the Institute of Parliamentary Studies – *(Applause)* - and at an appropriate time, a Bill will be re-tabled to establish that institute; not having anybody's name, but it will be the Institute of Parliamentary Studies, like all other Commonwealth parliaments do. *(Applause)*

We can access training that never ends. We can access the best of the best because, even after you leave Parliament, you should be useful elsewhere. In fact, as a former Member of Parliament, you can compete for Director-level jobs at the United Nations. That is one of the highest levels because your capacity is well built. Therefore, I urge you to take these trainings seriously. Thank you.

2.21

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate that you have emphasised training. It is important to add value, and it is good

this time round. When we joined in 2021, the training and inauguration were not as detailed as this time round, perhaps for numerous other reasons like COVID-19, and I do not know what else was given as a reason at the time.

It is good that this training has happened. We hope it will not end at this. I think, along the way, some refreshers are good to remind ourselves, not only for the new colleagues, but also for those of us who have been around when we interact with these trainings, and we get better. It is important that we get to do that.

Mr Speaker, it is exactly two weeks today since we expected the Government to come back to us, as Parliament, on a couple of issues we have been raising: human rights violations and abducted people. We have raised these issues and written correspondence about Sam Mugumya, Christopher Godi, also known as King Zare, Eria Jengo, a journalist, and others who were abducted and have not been produced in court.

I appreciate that the Government Chief Whip has been reaching out to the ministers in writing, saying, "This issue was raised; please prepare to respond". I have been copied in on these correspondences.

On Tuesday, the Government Chief Whip told us they will be ready with a response this week. Parliamentary week ends today, so I do not know whether she has reached out to you, Mr Speaker, on that matter, because there seems to be no indication they are ready with a response.

Finally, yesterday, Hon. Peter Ogwang, who is smart in a red necktie today -*(Applause)*- he is usually smart. It is just that today, he is a lot smarter. Yesterday, Hon. Peter Ogwang spoke very passionately about military training for young people, and he said that, "Young people need to love their country, and so they must undergo this military training".

I personally did this training years ago, *Chaka Mchaka,* and all of those drills. It is something that I am proud of, that I was happy to do; it was a good thing to do. I, however, want to encourage the Government: we need to stop looking at patriotism in light of military training. Patriotism is a broader thing. It is not enough to say that once our young people are trained, they can shoot the gun, they can goose-march, and so on, then they are patriotic. I think we make a mistake when we do that. We need to broaden this, and we need to lead by example as leaders because if you love your country, that means if you are given an office, you will execute your mandate diligently. You will endeavour to deliver services. You will not be corrupt. You will follow the law. You will observe the Constitution.

You cannot say, "I love my country, but then I do not follow the Constitution of my country, that people can be abducted and tortured instead of being taken to court". Therefore, as leaders, we should not preach water and then drink wine. As we tell Ugandans to be patriotic, let it begin with us so that they see. It should not be, "Do as I say, but not as I do". That can be problematic.

Also, some parents have reached out to me, and I am sure my colleagues have too. They are saying, "We have heard that once our children finish senior six, they are going to be taken for military training". It is confusing to them. They are wondering: number one, is this compulsory? Number two: why exactly? Some of those who have reached out are worried. They are saying, "Much of the time, when we see the military, we are afraid. Are they going to take somebody or to shoot at somebody? Now they want to train our children in military skills…" They are genuinely worried. It is a genuine concern. They are saying, "No, I do not want to see my children also abducting people", that kind of thing. What kind of training is this?

Back then, we used to have political education in school. It was a good subject. The Government scrapped it. At the time, I heard it was because young people were getting awakened about the state of the country, and so they were speaking out. I do not know why it was scrapped. It was a good nurturing into patriotism. People were being taught about the country, their roles and duties as citizens.

Importantly, we need to broaden patriotism as a training; it should not only be the military.

Mr Speaker, during campaigns, young people were being clobbered and brutalised for holding the country's national flag. We are now telling them that we want to teach you patriotism, but then, they were holding their national flag during campaigns, which should not be illegal.

As I wrap up, I saw a mistake made at one of the rallies of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) candidate. They got the national flag and replaced the Crested Crane with a picture of the chairman of the NRM. They could have done it out of love for their candidate, but that was wrong. However, if one is holding a flag, it is intact and not tampered with, why do you beat them up? Now, you are saying they should be patriotic. We need to reconsider these issues. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ogwang, I am told you are always very smart, according to the Leader of the Opposition (LOP).

MR PETER OGWANG: The biggest support goes to your sister, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Tell them.

MR PETER OGWANG: When I talk about your sister, I confirm that I am *from the Speaker and married* from Tororo. That is where the compliment must go.

Second, this does not mean red is not a national colour. It is part and belongs to all of us. I do not want to insinuate that anyone must own a colour to advance a political agenda. I want to dispel that before the Floor.

However, let me go back to the facts. First of all, I thank my honourable colleague for having undergone the patriotism, or what we used to call *Muchaka Muchaka* training. I am a beneficiary of that. I also thank him that even after undergoing the training, he chose a political party of his own. It was not mandatory that when you undergo that training, you must subscribe to the ruling party.

Friends, I want to reiterate that we need to understand that there is only one country called "Uganda," irrespective of our affiliations. You must begin to appreciate that the services the Government gives are for the citizens of Uganda.

I also reiterate that the National Service, where we undertake to take our children through teaching on nationalism, patriotism and many other subjects to understand what Uganda is, where we have come from, where we should be today and where we are going tomorrow, is one we cannot run away from. It is a constitutional command.

Therefore, if the Government has found resources, why are we not doing it? That is why my message still reiterates that for any parent out there fearing that his child will forcefully be taken for such, I need to get time to educate all on this. These children will be taught how and where Uganda has come from, where it is today and where we intend to go tomorrow.

Number two, they will be taught to love their country. Which parent does not want his/her child to love Uganda? The question of political education in schools used to be there. I am in a sector where we are transitioning from the colonial education to the competence-based curriculum, which helps us move into the 21st century.

Mr Speaker, is it bad for us to continue learning? Friends, on the question of *Muchaka Muchaka* at the National Leadership Institute (NALI), all I want us to do is to enforce the provision of the Constitution. This is about National Service, which I am a strong advocate of. If permitted, Mr Speaker, I am ready to present a paper here for us to debate on the advantages of the National Service versus what we should be. We should be ready to move forward from where we are.

My brother LOP, I congratulate you. I am happy that you are where you are because, somehow from that knowledge you picked up, you are not the same as others. I want to go on record on this. You are not one person who can

burn a tire. Never. We know each other very well. Even when we disagree, your civility is seen here. *(Applause)*

I have never seen you officially drive into a wrong area at a wrong time. You are always calm. Mr Speaker, I commend the Leader of the Opposition for having undergone the national training for purposes of development of this country. I thank you. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, to avoid talking about this in piecemeal, I would advise that before the training begins, you come and inform the whole country. Some parents may not know so tell them about the benefits of the programme, the duration, requirements and what parents should expect. Your observation about this is perfect but we shall expect you to bring up a statement. However, even Hon. Ssewungu looks like he went through that training. *(Laughter)*

MR PETER OGWANG: Mr Speaker, I want to go on record that patriotism is under the Office of the President. Where I come in is education; the area of children. That is why I said that if a budget has been found by the Office of the President, they only work as a multi-sectoral body. We might have to work directly with the Office of the President for purposes of coming up with the paper to Parliament and we discuss it.

The truth is that the programme is not something we can say we shall do in hiding. We always do our things in the open. I want to allay fears that, as of now, there is nothing and it is not compulsory.

I confirm that patriotism trainings are ongoing, clearly coordinated by the Office of the President. I have given lectures in different parts of the country on that subject matter. I commend my sister, Ms Helen Sseku, who is a director and is entirely coordinating this programme - *(Mr Ssenyonyi rose)*

THE SPEAKER: LOP, I do not think we should go that side. You have appreciated him enough.

MR SSENYONYI: Mr Speaker, allow me to appreciate my smart brother. He has made a very cardinal statement that it is not mandatory, which is very imperative. People should be encouraged, not bulldozed into doing it by force. Let it be voluntary, as you are saying. As we keep behaving better as leaders, we shall cajole young people to want to be like us and come for the training. I appreciate the fact that this is voluntary, not mandatory.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ssewungu, cadre number? *(Laughter)*

2.34

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu County West, Kalungu): Mr Speaker, by that time it was mandatory for us. We had to go there before joining any government institution. That is when I joined teaching. You could not join without a certificate from Kyankwanzi.

Mr Speaker, I remember when we had just joined this Parliament together, you used to sit around here, and we were coordinating. I was also a backbencher. We are happy with whatever is happening. I know Members are happy.

However, we still have some issues to talk about internally. Our interest is in our backbench commissioners. Last time, I asked for an internal meeting of Members, without a fourth arm, to raise issues that affect us, as Members, to our Commission so that they are handled. Unfortunately, it is not happening.

I do not want to say what is happening but Members have issues. I am not among those Members who demean the institution they are working for. The only solution is to give us room to sit with the Backbench Commissioners and tell them the challenges we are facing within our institution.

What is happening is that the commissioners are on their own, and we are also on our own. On our side, we have the Leader of the Opposition and Hon. Nambeshe and NRM have theirs. We must tell them the challenges we are facing. Mr Speaker, with your new leadership, I pray

that you give us room and I know it cannot be pushed out as news.

That is how Parliament works. You remember it was Hon. Justine Kasule Lumumba, who was the commissioner by the time we came. We sat here and they narrated what was happening to Members. Before you came in, we had a lot of conversation here. I was telling Members not to complain. I knew the Speaker would come out for us to raise this matter and we feel at par as Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Hon. Kibanda is my friend, but I would not wish to have information regarding this matter because it is a plea to you as our Speaker and it is a direct message sent for -

THE SPEAKER: I think I have heard you loud and clear.

MR SSEWUNGU: And let him take it in good spirit that I have not refused this information -

THE SPEAKER: I would like to direct the Clerk to Parliament; we cannot go out and start holding "*barazas*" when we cannot do it internally here. Therefore, we need to work on internal things. The only difference is that at least Hon. Balaam cannot come here but will be part of the "*baraza*". In an institution where there are more than two, even God is there.

However, where two or three are gathered, there are also challenges. I am very positive about getting to listen to Members, and we discuss to get to know where we want - This is not a one man's show. I direct the Clerk to Parliament to include, in the Order Paper, that we will not have it on record. We can go to the conference hall. It should be an in-house closed meeting, not during the next parliamentary sitting.

The Clerk should arrange that quickly before we break off. I think in the next two weeks we should have that meeting. Probably some of the things you are raising may be - I suspect that I have heard a few. Some of you were talking near microphones, so I heard them – *(Laughter)* - *a*nd I am willing to address it. So, honourable "elder" who was a very popular commissioner - By the way, some of the changes you see in your pay slip etcetera are partly because of him and Hon. Ogwang's time. Those were very –

2.39

MR JAMES KAKOOZA (NRM, Older Persons Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. You commented about parliamentary studies. I thank you for that, because most of the Members, some of us who are attending and getting certificates from other countries, are from Uganda Parliament, which has a very good arrangement and stature amongst other Commonwealth Parliaments.

When you framed that law in 2021, we thought we would take advantage, because attending parliamentary studies in London costs quite a lot of money. I am happy that you are bringing it back.

However, since we have established a foundation and a law, we need parliamentary studies as soon as possible. Why don't we start with that legal framework, establish it, and move on? Because of the time we spend and people coming for benchmarking from here, if we put up that establishment as we left it, although I do not know what the 11th Parliament did about it, I think we should start quickly, as soon as yesterday. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The Parliamentary Commission met and, on your behalf, decided to establish a department. We are getting back to a department and then the institute. Therefore, the institute can only come into place by the next financial year. However, right now, in training, those handling it have undergone some re-organisation, and these are not secrets.

I should have included in my communication that, beginning next week, all Parliament employees will go through what we call a validation exercise. We are being assisted by the head of public service, and they will all speak to their documents during the validation.

All that should have been in my communication, so that it is not a surprise. Beginning with the

Clerk to the gateman, whether in the Office of the Speaker or anywhere else, every person who draws a salary from Parliament as an employee is going to go through the validation exercise beginning next Monday.

Why don't we get Hon. Nambooze Betty Teddy - Oh, Government on the - but the two weeks Government Chief Whip? I am not hearing you.

2.42

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Dr Ruth Aceng): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, I indicated that the two weeks end this week, so the ministers will respond next week.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. That shows both the Government and the side pushing for this are committed, and we have it all on record. They say *"Mwanyi telimba,"* but the records here also do not lie. So, for my sister from Lango, they say "The record has captured the promise". Hon. Nambooze? The procedure? Yes.

MR KICONCO: Mr Speaker, yesterday, I appeared on this Floor and raised a matter of national importance related to the deceptive recruitment of Ugandans in the war between Ukraine and Russia, highlighting an example involving Richard Akantorana from my constituency.

In your guidance, you mentioned that the Government had taken note, but we did not have somebody from the Government side on record on this. In addition, we did not get timelines aligned with my prayer that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs give a response and a statement to Parliament.

However, allow me to add that immediately after making a statement here, I received hundreds of messages from many people who have children affected. I have, since then, received a record of 121 Ugandans who went to Russia under mysterious circumstances, of whom about 48 are reportedly dead, and three persons who are officially known as prisoners of war in Ukraine, including Richard Akantorana, whom I referenced yesterday, with about seven in the hospital.

I have also received several correspondences from the families of the victims that, if you permit me, Mr Speaker, I would wish to lay on the Table so that the ministry, or anybody you direct to respond, can assist in conclusively handling this matter.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. You are right about that. When a speaker assumes the role of a minister, that is not procedurally correct. I should have let the minister respond. However, in every bad thing, there is a good thing. You would not have had the opportunity to submit the names of 100-plus people. So, Government and Prime Minister, take up this matter.

No single country in the world would be happy to hear that even one of its citizens is undergoing what is happening. So, Prime Minister, take it up and please submit that on record. The Prime Minister should come on record, own those documents and make a statement. I think I was still suffering from some syndrome of being a former minister. *(Laughter)* Because how could I have said "the Government has taken note?" I am not Government; I am Parliament. Let him lay.

MR KICONCO: Mr Speaker, thank you for the wise guidance and possibly, God made it possible so that the voices of these hundreds of Ugandans could also be heard. Allow me to lay on the Table a list of Ugandans drafted in the Russian army under duress, which list has 121 Ugandans.

THE SPEAKER: Let the record capture this and the same be transmitted to the Prime Minister.

MR KICONCO: Mr Speaker, I beg to lay a list of Ugandans killed on the frontlines of the Russia-Ukraine war, prisoners of war in Ukraine and Ugandans hospitalised in Russian military hospitals. I beg to lay.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR KICONCO: Mr Speaker, I beg to lay a document containing details of families and their next-of-kin details for easy follow up. I beg to lay this list.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR KICONCO: Mr Speaker, I beg to lay a letter addressed to the Speaker of Parliament by families of the affected persons, dated 31 August 2026. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay a letter from families of Ugandans lured into Russia-Ukraine war, to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, dated 18 September 2026. I beg to lay.

THE SPEAKER: The one to the Speaker is dated when?

MR KICONCO: 31st of August, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: 31st of August?

MR KICONCO: Yes, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Which year?

MR KICONCO: 2026, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I plead not guilty. I have never seen it. *(Laughter)* They could have written but I never received it. Does it have a receipt?

MR KICONCO: It has a receipt. The Office of the Speaker received it on 31st August.

THE SPEAKER: I have never received it myself. I am not guilty. *(Laughter)*

MR KICONCO: Mr Speaker, I am also laying on the Table a letter from families of Ugandans affected, addressed to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was received in July 2026. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay a letter from the families of the affected persons, addressed to His Excellency the President, that is dated 22 July 2026. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay a correspondence from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by the Permanent Secretary entitled, "A Complaint Regarding Trafficking of Ugandans to Russian Army". This is a letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs going to the Head of Mission, Ugandan Embassy in Moscow. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay pictures and passports of all persons alleged to be victims of this issue that I have raised. I want to lay them collectively in the interest of time. I beg to lay.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, let the record capture that.

MR KICONCO: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to present the plight of these Ugandans in completeness as you have guided. I look forward to a positive response. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. In this Parliament, I want you all to learn from me when I take responsibility for a mistake. There is no duty on me to go on record and say "I overstepped" or "I should not have done this" but for the good of the record of this House, the Government should be able to take responsibility.

The Government here means the State. Prime Minister, please go on record and account for all those Ugandans, within the shortest time I have given you now. I do not want to make another mistake.

2.52

THE SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Dr Crispus Kiyonga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank our brother, the honourable member, for raising this matter in such detail. I want to assure honourable colleagues that today is Thursday and by Tuesday next week at the latest, we shall return with a response. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Do you have a procedural issue, Hon. Kajwengye?

MR KAJWENGYE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have also listened to my colleague, Hon. Katabaazi. This is a very serious matter. For the record's sake, we should not say they were taken to Russia by duress because duress is as if we actually know.

In my view, the record should capture that they found themselves in Russia under unclear circumstances. Otherwise, if we say - Mr Speaker, since we do not know clearly how these Ugandans found themselves in Russia – *(Interruption)*

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, I am at pain to put a point of order to a member who is a chairperson of a committee. You have given room to the honourable member and he has given all his information clearly. Acting within your powers, you have asked the Prime Minister to respond directly to this matter and he has promised that on Tuesday, he will respond to this particular matter.

The honourable member is opening a Pandora's box on a matter which is painful, by bringing in something that has been alleged by the other person, which can be handled by the Government. Mr Speaker, is the honourable Member in order to try to give us this information now yet the Government has already promised to report back on Tuesday, as per your directive? Is he the Government?

THE SPEAKER: What I have realised, from what the honourable member said - he is a diplomat by training and association; he knows the implication of certain words in our record and sought to correct them accordingly. When you say "duress", it implies the actual use of force, meaning one would have to prove they were forcibly dragged from Uganda.

However, the words Hon. Patrick Katabaazi used yesterday is that they were "lured," which sounds more accurate. So, the honourable member is purely in order to make sure that the record is straightened; that the said victims went to Russia under unclear circumstances. The record should capture that much better. We need to have people like him; experienced people. *(Applause)*

Honourable members, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation led by Ms Bracha Anganile Barnabas, the winner of Mini Miss Universe International 2026. They have come to observe the proceedings of the House. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

For some of you who cannot see them, use the - I do not know who their MPs are. Who is the father? I am told Hon. Alenyo is the father. She is Miss Universe, not you – *(Laughter)* The way he was posing for the camera.

In the same vein, Honourable members, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of Kiruhura-Kazo Kyambogo University Students Association from Nyabushozi County, Kiruhura District, who are represented by Hon. Kajwengye Wilson Twinomugisha and Hon. Ruth Rujoki. *(Laughter)* Please join me in welcoming them.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Isaac Ismail.

2.58

MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: Before the member comes, I did not even know that his people were here. Now you have seen what your Member of Parliament goes through. *(Laughter)* It is not a cup of tea. You need to support such people who can survive the fire. Yes, Honourable -

MR OTIMGIW: Thank you, Mr Speaker. A number of Members here, during the sittings, have raised the issue regarding the distribution of hand hoes. We, in this House, in December 2025, passed a supplementary budget of Shs 26 billion so that the Minister of Agriculture can purchase and distribute 7 million hand hoes to various households within the country.

Right now, everything is not clear. We only hear that the hoes are being distributed in certain districts, and we are not aware of the rest. You guided that the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should come to this Floor and give proper guidelines on how the distribution is being done, and when the Members should expect these hand hoes.

Secondly and lastly, when the minister comes on this Floor, could he also inform us about the distribution of the tractors, including the hand tractors? How are they doing it? Members should know clearly because we are the ones who budget for this money, but when it comes to the distribution, it is done silently, and we do not know. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Prime Minister, why are you clear about the request for money but not clear about the distribution?

DR KIYONGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I also thank the honourable Member of Parliament who has raised this issue.

This week, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries briefed Cabinet on the issue of the hoes. He told us which areas had been served and those which are yet to be served. I agree with the honourable colleague that the same statement should be made on the Floor of the House so we are all equally informed. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Teddy Nambooze, Woman MP, Mpigi. No more procedure; we are proceeding well so far.

3.01

MS TEDDY NAMBOOZE (NUP, Woman Representative, Mpigi): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker, for your indulgence. I rise under Rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure. In 2018, at the launch of Balamu Secondary School in Muduma Subcounty, Mpigi District, the President personally pledged to construct a 250-bed girls' dormitory. That pledge remains unfulfilled.

Mr Speaker, this school serves the whole sub-county of Muduma, making daily commuting impractical for many students, especially girls from distant villages. Efforts to improvise have not met the safety and capacity needs to manage the large number of students. As a result, we have many early pregnancies and an increasing girl dropout rate, an effect this pledge could cure if fulfilled.

My prayers: The line minister informs the House of the definite timeline for fulfilling this pledge, and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development accounts for the Shs 100 million released to the school in 2022 and later recalled at the end of the financial year. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Prime Minister? When the presidential pledge is brought here, it becomes something else.

DR KIYONGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think we have a committee here in Parliament which follows through on pledges. It may be easier, with your permission, for us to link up with that committee so that we are able to show the pledges: those which have been fulfilled and those which are pending. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Minister for Finance, what happened? They sent Shs 100 million, which you again recalled at the end of the financial year. Maybe the money was not yet used. The Member wants to know. Do you have it in your pocket now?

3.03

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi): Mr Speaker, I do not seem to have the facts about this. I may need to speak further with the honourable Member to establish the facts before I can respond effectively.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I encourage the Member to reach out to Hon. Amos Lugoloobi who is very willing to help. Next, Hon. Kayogera Yona, MP Busiki North, Hon. Amelia Anne Kyambadde, Woman MP, Mawokota North. That is how they wrote it here; can you imagine? She is a Member of Parliament for a constituency. When people see ladies' names, they assume they represent a district. Sorry about that mistake. I am apologising on behalf of the person who must be watching me and who wrote this.

3.04

MS AMELIA KYAMBADDE (NRM, Mawokota County North, Mpigi): Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, I would like to follow up on a serious matter of the Buyala waste disposal facility in Mpigi District, in light of the President's directive at the Kampala Storage Terminal groundbreaking function.

On 17 September 2026, in Namwabula in Mpigi District, His Excellency the President broke ground for the $310 million litre Kampala Storage Terminal developed by Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC). Responding to the Minister of Energy's concern about the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) waste site near the terminal, which is just over a kilometre away, the President stated that a dumping site should not be near a fuel facility; otherwise, we might have an incident like that of Kiteezi recur in case it caught fire.

Mr Speaker, KCCA has not responded because it claims the President has not given it a written directive. They have continued dumping and are even trying to expand in that area. I therefore pray that the President formally issue a written directive to KCCA and all concerned agencies, with a time-bound transition plan, because UNOC has started work on its project, and that strict interim safeguards be enforced to prevent the continuation of dumping in Buyala.

Mr Speaker, I pray that the President's Office and KCCA respond to the President's directive, because a directive is a directive once promulgated or spoken in public. I rest my case. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Prime Minister?

3.07

THE SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Dr Crispus Kiyonga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have heard Hon. Amelia Kyambadde very well. First, I am surprised that anyone, and in this case the reported KCCA, would say they want a written directive from the President.

Why do I say they are out of order? First, what the President said is a scientific reality: if the two elements coexist, you increase the risk of danger to the population. They should know that they made an error in co-locating these two flammable entities.

Secondly, once the President speaks, people in public office do not need further written directives. When you hear the President speak, check yourself and act accordingly. Let me assure my sister, Hon. Kyambadde, that I will take up this matter with the concerned people so that appropriate action is taken. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Prime Minister. Hon. Patrick Ogwang, followed by Hon. Marshall Alenyo.

3.09

MR PATRICK OGWANG (NRM, Oyam County South, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise under Rule 56 regarding the suspended road works in Oyam District, particularly Oyam South. In July this year, I raised the issue of suspended Government road works, especially on the Kamdini-Zambia-Minakulu, Minakulu-Anyeke-Loro, Loro-Teboke, and Aber-Kidilani roads.

Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister asked the Ministry of Works and Transport to begin work on these roads. Indeed, I would like to thank the Government for starting the work. However, three months later, the equipment is still lying in Minakulu, and they have covered less than 10 kilometres. The reason is that there is no fuel to operate the machines.

I got an opportunity to move with the minister of state, especially to inspect the Kidilani Road that has been cut off completely. Oyam is one of the largest districts in Lango Sub-region and Northern Uganda. Mr Speaker, motorable roads are the means through which our people send their goods to the market.

THE SPEAKER: Would you like to make the prayers?

MR PATRICK OGWANG: I pray that the Ministry of Works and Transport provides sufficient fuel to resume works on Minakulu-Zambia-Kamdini Road, Loro-Teboke Road, Aber-Kidilani Road.

Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Works and Transport is everywhere but the equipment in the stations is not okay. I pray that, if it is okay with you, the Ministry of Works and Transport provides us with state-of-the-art equipment in the upcountry stations. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Ministry of Works and Transport.

3.12

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Ali Siraj): Thank you, Mr Speaker. As the honourable member has indicated, the works on the Minakulu-Zambia-Kamdini started and progress is about 70 per cent. The works stalled because fuel for October was delayed because the release had just come in. The release has now come in and we expect that the works will be completed as planned.

In respect of the Aber-Teboke-Loro Road, the works of grading have progressed, and the remaining three kilometres to Corner Loro will be completed by the end of this week. Spot gravelling will follow immediately. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: That sounds like minister for works. Thank you very much. We appreciate that kind of – Hon. Alenyo?

3.13

MR MARSHALL ALENYO (Independent, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I want to thank you for receiving my daughter, who is escorted by her mother, Dr Rose Alenyo, to the House. Thank you very much. *(Applause)* Mr Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Now that you have introduced a third party, you are the one to ask her to stand up because I did not see her. I saw the miss -

MR ALENYO: Please, Dr Rose, stand up. Thank you. Mr Speaker, you have made things easier for me, but that is my sister.

I rise on Rule 46 on the Rules of Procedure of this House. In 1902, the first case of bilharzia was detected in the West Nile in Kuluva Hospital. After that, there have been a lot of studies on Bilharzia in this country, mostly by Prof. Ongom, who was from Jonam, Pakwach. Mr Speaker, according to statistics, seven out of 10 people who go to health facilities in Pakwach and are tested for bilharzia test positive.

Mr Speaker, whenever people report deaths to Hon. Jane Avur and me, they tell us two things: *"Ngate ngok remo";* someone vomited blood, and it is a recurrence. Over 35 people have died in the past six months. When Hon. Dr Ruth Aceng was Minister of Health, she did a lot for our people on bilharzia.

I would like to inform my dear friend, the Honourable Minister of Health, that there is a bilharzia upsurge in Pakwach and people are dying. It seems to be due to the rainy season and other factors; it is now high.

I have two prayers. First, the epicentre is around Panyimur, Pakwach Sub-county and Dei. We would like you to upgrade Panyimur Health Centre III to Health Centre IV so it can serve as a treatment centre for Bilharzia.

Second, we have the Pakwach hospital, which was supposed to have the Professor Ongom Bilharzia Centre. We are still praying that you upgrade Pakwach Health Centre IV into a hospital that specialises in treating Bilharzia in this country. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Minister of Health? He spoke like a polygamist. He talked about his ex-wife, and now I do not know - Give him so that he does not miss Dr Aceng so much.

3.15

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will limit myself to bilharzia and health centres, not the wife.

THE SPEAKER: I wanted to say that he has been missing Dr Aceng, but it seems that since you came, you have not helped him. So, please do something for him so he does not miss Dr Jane Aceng.

DR BARYOMUNSI: I want to assure my brother that what Dr Jane Aceng has, I have too. *(Laughter)* I mean my ability to support him with health services in his constituency of Jonam County. That is where the abilities are.

THE SPEAKER: You mean you could have been misunderstood for something else?

DR BARYOMUNSI: Absolutely. Some colleagues misunderstood me; my name is Chris, not Christine. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, I take note of the requests regarding upgrading some of the health centres, and I think the justification is strong and acceptable. However, most importantly, what is urgent is to address those cases of bilharzia. I convey condolences to the families that have lost their dear ones, and I will cross-check with my team in the ministry. If a team has not already gone, we shall send a team to support the district health services to contain the bilharzia outbreak, if it is there. We do community education and also provide necessary treatment for the people who are sick. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Christopher Komakech, MP, Aruu County. Can we do one minute?

3.18

MR CHRISTOPHER KOMAKECH (NRM, Aruu County, Pader): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. In Acholi, we pay dowry, and after paying dowry, you marry. The most painful thing for a man in Pader District is to walk to a hospital and they tell him that his wife has passed on while giving birth. There is a high maternal and prenatal death rate in Acholi, particularly in Aruu County, Pader District. To make it worse, one has to move 60 kilometres to Pajule Health Centre IV on a bad road, which is the Puranga-Acholibur road. My question first goes to the Minister of Works and Transport.

THE SPEAKER: I will suggest you make them as prayers.

MR KOMAKECH: My prayer goes to the Minister of Works and Transport. Roko was given a contract to construct the Acholibur-Puranga road. Up to date, nothing has been done. To the Minister of Health, how are you going to help us on the high maternal and prenatal deaths in Pader District? Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Minister of Works and Transport and then Minister of Health.

3.20

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Ali Siraj): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to inform the Member that the contract was indeed awarded to Roko Construction, but the finance ministry is still arranging the finances for the road work to commence. There is no money yet. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Health?

3.20

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and Hon. Komakech for raising the concern. I will be making a statement on the Floor later regarding the status of health services in the country but generally, what we see is a decline in maternal deaths in the country. It is unfortunate that as he reports, in Pader there seems to be a problem. I will endeavour to find out the specific issues that are in Pader.

Usually, there are three levels of delays that occasion maternal deaths. The first delay is a mother's decision to leave home and deliver at a facility. The second delay is how to reach the facility: the issue of the roads, the referral system, how the person reaches the health facility and within the health facility, if either the midwife, the doctor, blood or the drugs and the services are not available.

I will find out in Pader what the particular problem is, give him a comprehensive report, and we will work together to fix those challenges in Pader and the rest of the country. I will be in touch with the honourable Member and give him a comprehensive report on what I gathered from Pader.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. That sounds like the Minister of Health is in charge. Hon. Geoffrey Ocen, MP Kioga North.

3.22

MR GEOFFREY OCEN (UPC, Kioga North County, Amolatar): Mr Speaker, I rise to address the exclusion of Arwotcek Secondary School from the Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Programme.

In the Financial Year 2025/2026, upon request, the school was included among 100 schools to be fully constructed. The Ministry of Education and Sports team conducted a geological and geotechnical survey and then instructed that the temporary structures be demolished so they could construct the school.

However, when the project was delayed, Amolatar District Local Government budgeted Shs 600 million to construct the school: two-unit science laboratories, two classroom blocks, and a 10-stance line latrine. However, engineers from the Ministry of Education and Sports visited the district and said the USEP programme needed bare land and that the project should be relocated to another school in need.

We complied and there was a council resolution to that effect. It was unfortunate that while appearing before a committee of PAC Central, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Sports notified us that, due to demands to rehabilitate some schools, they had reduced the number of schools from 100 to 90, and Arwotcek Secondary School was excluded.

After the ministry guided that the structures constructed by the parents be demolished, after we have provided the titled land in the name of the Government, the school is now not among the schools to be contracted. The students have nowhere to study.

My prayer is that the Government should reconsider its position to include Arwotcek Secondary School in the plan for construction under USSEP because the district complied with all the requirements that the ministry wanted.

Secondly, a timeline should be given and communication be provided on when the construction will take place. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Education and Sports, this is very painful. The little they had in terms of the structure, you told them to bring it down. Was it a plan or a ploy?

3.25

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Peter Ogwang): Mr Speaker, allow me to begin by regretting the actions taken by my team at the Ministry of Education and Sports, for purposes of the record.

Secondly, it is true that under the Uganda Secondary School Expansion Project, we had initially planned to construct 116 schools across the country. Based on the available budget, we were given money for 90 schools and that put us off by 26 schools. However, I want to inform my honourable colleague that we have asked for additional funding for the 26 schools, and the school in question is among them.

I want to commit, on behalf of my ministry, that we will go ahead and fast-track that very school for construction, like the other 26, which are meant to be constructed, depending on the availability of resources. It is a priority project within my ministry for the next financial year. I thank you so much, honourable, for bringing this matter up.

3.27

MR FRANCIS AKORIKIN (NRM, Kapelebyong County, Kapelebyong): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I want to thank

the Minister of Education and Sports for the work he is doing in the ministry. Every time he makes a commitment here, he delivers.

On the same note, I am rising on a matter of part-time lecturers at Kyambogo University across the country. Kyambogo has centres in Soroti, Paidha, and Bushenyi. They have informed many of us that over 1,000 lecturers who have contracts spanning between zero and four months have not been paid for the last three months. Their working conditions are very harsh, and as a result, the lecturers have informed us, as leaders, that because of poor working conditions, the quality of service they are now delivering to the students is declining. I am worried because in my district, many of the primary school teachers are studying at the Kyambogo University Soroti Centre. If you are not paying them, we may get substandard output.

My prayer to the minister is to direct and guide Kyambogo University to pay the lecturers on time and improve their working conditions. I have also been informed by a whistleblower that they are not even remitting NSSF for these employees. It is my humble prayer that the Minister, just as you have been helping us, please talk to Kyambogo University. I thank you so much.

THE SPEAKER: They are part-time and even the payment is part-time?

3.29

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Peter Ogwang): Mr Speaker, with your permission, I have a response in writing. I do not know whether you can permit me to respond to this because a copy of this petition was given to me as a Minister of Education and Sports. I seek for your indulgence.

THE SPEAKER: Please go ahead.

MR PETER OGWANG: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to make a statement on the petition of the part-time academic staff of Kyambogo University dated 12 October 2026, which raises concerns about their pay, the terms of their engagement, and the timeliness of their payments.

Let me begin by acknowledging these lecturers' contributions. By the petitioners' own account, they carry 65 per cent of the university's teaching staff, and the university relies on them to deliver its programmes. Their concerns deserve a careful and candid answer, and I shall set out the position of the university on each of them in turn.

The teaching staff position of the university.

The petition must be understood in light of the university's staffing position. Academic staffing at the university stands at 34 per cent of the approved establishment, and there is, at present, no wage provision with which to recruit staff on a full-time basis. The university therefore relies heavily on part-time lecturers, of whom the petitioners number more than 500 to sustain its teaching.

The limits that this places on career progression are real, but they are not of the university's making. They arise from the wage availability to the institution, and the university will continue to engage the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Ministry of Public Service for additional wage.

Rate of pay

The University Council has approved a rate of Shs 25,000 per hour for teaching in a day programme and Shs 45,000 per hour for teaching in the evening programme. These rates are applied within the university's approved financial framework and are constrained by the non-wage funding available for teaching.

The petitioners report that other public universities, among them Makerere, Muni, Soroti, and Mbarara pay Shs 50,000 per hour. Mr Speaker, a difference in rates between universities does not of itself establish unlawful discrimination. A proper assessment would require the reported rates to be verified and an account to be taken of teaching responsibility,

qualifications, workload, and remuneration arrangements.

The concern is nevertheless a serious one. University management will review the remuneration framework and assess the financial implications of the proposed rates of Shs 50,000 per hour. Its findings will inform recommendations to the University Council and, where necessary, engagement with Government on additional financing. Any revision will remain subject to established approval procedures and to the availability of funds.

Contracts and access to credit

Part-time lecturers are engaged on contracts of four months. The petitioners argue that these terms deny them stability and that, because lenders regard short-term contracts as a high risk, they exclude them from commercial credit.

Lending decisions rest with the banks in accordance with their own credit policies and applicable regulatory requirements and not with the university. Management accepts, however, that the nature and the duration of contracts may affect how a loan application is assessed. In reviewing the contractual agreements for part-time staff, it will consider how the documents issued to them covering their appointments, contractual terms, and payment records may be improved. Any change to the duration of contracts will depend on the university's teaching requirements, its approved staffing arrangements, the applicable employment laws, and availability of funds.

Mr Speaker, on NSSF contributions, the university remits contributions to the National Social Security Fund on all part-time teaching allowances that have been paid. Where allowances remain unpaid as domestic arrears, no contribution can yet be remitted on them.

The Permanent Secretary and the Secretary of Treasury (PS/ST) have directed the Auditor-General to verify all such arrears before they are paid. Verification is underway, and the report will be submitted to the PS/ST and Parliament.

Transport refund and taxation

The university council has approved a flat transport refund of Shs 10,000 per day for part-time academic staff. Management acknowledges that this may not adequately cover the actual cost of travel at prevailing prices and will consider its adequacy and the financing implication of any adjustment. Any revision will be put to appropriate organs of the university, subject to approval procedures and to the availability of funds.

On taxation: the university is bound to apply the Income Tax Act Cap. 338 as amended. Management will review the basis on which the funds is currently treated for tax purposes to confirm the deduction made as consistent with the law.

Last but not least; timeliness of payment.

The university council has approved the processing of teaching claims on a monthly basis with the faculty, schools, and institutes submitting claim through established procedures for verification, approval, and payment.

Management acknowledges concerns about delays. It will examine the claims submitted, the dates on which they were submitted, approved, and paid, and any verified claims still outstanding in order to establish whether delays arise from the late submission, administrative processing, the availability of funds, or other courses. It will then act on the bottlenecks identified and strengthen monitoring of monthly payments so that the verified claims are paid in accordance with applicable contractual laws.

Mr Speaker, the part-time lecturers of Kyambogo University have kept the university teaching through a period of acute staffing constraints, and their concerns deserve to be addressed. Much of what they ask stands on resources and the honest answer is that the

remedy lies partly with the university and partly with the Government.

The other prayers of the petitioners, which raise matters of wide Government policy and financing, are noted. The ministry will continue to follow up with the University Council and management on the reviews they have undertaken to support the university, in engagement with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Ministry of Public Service.

Honourable colleagues, I want to go on record and call for your support in terms of staffing of all public universities. For example, Kyambogo is at 34 per cent. I want to confirm that we truly need to walk the talk for purposes of us supporting university education. *(Applause)*

I am happy the Minister of Finance is here. I work according to the Indicative Planning Figures I am given as a ministry for all these tertiary institutions of higher learning. I regret the few challenges that the part-time lecturers have caused. I call upon you to continue covering the gap as we look for available money. Thank you so much. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. That is Hon. Ogwang for you. Hon. Johnson Nyeko, Hon. Lilian Paparu and I will stop with Hon. Robert Mugabe about the stray dogs. I am going to read out the rest and then I will get quick responses. One minute; do not thank me too much. *(Laughter)*

3.37

MR JOHNSON NYEKO (NRM, Lamwo County, Lamwo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I request to raise an urgent matter of national importance that could affect Vision 2040. Countrymen and women, lend me your ears. *(Laughter)*

Recently, coffee prices dropped drastically, which signals to farmers that they should produce more. A continuous drop in coffee prices can easily discourage farmers. Looking at Vision 2040 and the maximisation of coffee production, other countries are doing the same; for example, Brazil and Ethiopia, among others. If left unchecked, any further drop in coffee prices will discourage production and affect Vision 2040.

My prayer is that the Government should set up a buffer account so that when prices drop, the price of not only coffee, but also other cash crops is raised a bit. If the prices go high, it is moderated to a stable price. If we want to hit Vision 2040 with confidence, this buffer account has to be urgently set up. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: The Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives can answer for the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, but that is for the trade ministry. Do not thank me also; just go to the answer.

3.40

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Mr Speaker, we have noticed, over time, the fluctuating prices of coffee and other products. However, honourable member, remember that we operate in a liberalised economy where supply and demand interact and determine the price.

We try, as much as possible, to intervene, especially on the farmers' side. For example, we are now planning to support farmers with irrigation so production continues throughout the year. However, setting up a buffer account, where the Government comes in when prices go down, will be problematic. We cannot commit to that, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR NYEKO: Mr Speaker, can you allow me to say something little about that again? It was done before.

THE SPEAKER: No - *(Laughter)* - Hon. Paparu?

3.41

MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on an urgent matter concerning conflict that erupted among three clans in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This part of Congo borders Arua District.

The affected people have decided to flee to Arua District. As of yesterday, over 500 people were registered. The case is alarming. Currently, churches and neighbouring households are hosting these Congolese nationals.

Mr Speaker, the Red Cross and the World Health Organisation are on the ground to screen the Congolese. We all know the alarming cases of Ebola. My prayers – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: The Prime Minister already knows your prayer. It is there on page 4 of the paper. We have to redeem time. Hon. Robert Mugabe from Kitagwenda.

3.43

MR ROBERT MUGABE (NRM, Kitagwenda County, Kitagwenda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of urgent national importance concerning deadly attacks by stray dogs in four villages located in Kigarama Parish and two villages located in Kanara Parish, Kanara Sub-county in Kitagwenda District.

These stray dogs have reportedly killed two children aged 10 and 6 years, and injured a five-year-old boy. In addition, over 100 goats and four sheep have been killed.

My first prayer is that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, the Ministry of Health and relevant local – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Government, you have two unanswered questions. We have one for the Arua Woman MP and another for Hon. Mugabe.

3.44

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): I will respond to the question of the stray dogs in Kitagwenda. We convey our condolences to the families that lost those two children and sympathies to the families that lost the goats and sheep.

I hope the people of Kitagwenda did not consume those goats and sheep. If they died as a result of bites from stray dogs, they should be safely disposed of without being consumed. This is because people could be at risk of infection if the dogs have rabies, for instance.

Secondly, I will ask the Member for the District Health Officer's number so I can speak with him or her to find out whether the child is already in hospital. I will also guide him or her on the health messages that should be aired to help people know what to do if bitten by a stray dog.

As we know, there are emergency measures. You should wash the bite wound, apply antiseptic, rush to a health facility immediately, and receive post-exposure prophylaxis to manage it. Usually, we do not want someone to delay at home.

Therefore, I will immediately secure the contact and get in touch with the people of Kitagwenda; we shall handle it so that people do not die. The Batagwenda must survive; they should not die because of stray dogs. We will also work with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to address the stray-dog issue in the district. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I have Hon. Lilian Aber's response about the 500 refugees who acknowledged defeat and crossed into Uganda after clan fights: one clan was defeated, and 500 of its members crossed into Uganda to take refuge.

3.44

THE SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Dr Crispus Kiyonga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yes, we, the people who live at the border, experience those situations from time to time. However, it is very important that due process is observed in the areas where those brothers and sisters go. They should be registered, through the district system, so that they are known to have come.

This matters because they may need supplies to sustain themselves. Particularly, those of us who border the Democratic Republic of Congo know that the Ebola epidemic is still raging in the neighbourhood. They must be handled through formal channels and properly screened so they do not increase the risk to us, to whom they run for refuge. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Second Deputy Prime Minister, I will need you to - let me first put Question 12, which relates to Question 14, about repatriation. Hon. Sarah Kabarokole, Woman Member of Parliament, Bunyangabu District -

3.48

MS SARAH KABAROKOLE (NRM, Woman Representative, Bunyangabu): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of urgent national importance concerning the death of the late Mable Kamakune, a Ugandan citizen from Bunyangabu District, Nyakigumba Town Council. She died in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia a week ago. She was mistreated and dumped in one of the hospitals in Dubai.

The parents of the deceased are financially constrained and are unable to meet the cost of transporting her body and paying the hospital bills. I, therefore, urge Government, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, to intervene urgently by facilitating the repatriation of the body and covering the associated costs. This will enable the bereaved family to accord - *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Question 14 belongs to Hon. Ayagalachi. This is not the first time he is raising the same issue about Saudi Arabia. Please raise it. Then, the Prime Minister will answer them together.

3.50

MR AYAGALACHI JAMAL (NUP, Bukooli County North, Bugiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, today is my birthday.

THE SPEAKER: Happy birthday, Hon. Ayagalachi Jamali.

I

MR AYAGALACHI: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I want to ask the whole House to show him some love.

MR AYAGALACHI: Thank you so much.

T**HE SPEAKER:** What do you want? You have 30 seconds.

MR AYAGALACHI: Mr Speaker, I am Ayagalachi Jamali. Thank you for your wishes, and I love you all.

THE SPEAKER: You must grow by the next birthday you celebrate. We need - *(Laughter.)*

MR AYAGALACHI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will grow. Mr Speaker, on 1 October 2026, I raised a matter of national importance concerning the late Naitave Nuru, who died while working in Saudi Arabia. Mr Speaker, I informed this honourable House that the family could not afford the cost of repatriating their daughter's remains to Uganda.

Mr Speaker, the line minister promised that the ministry handles such cases, and she directed me to a commissioner. The commissioner's only response was that the costs were very high. They range from Shs 15 million to Shs 30 million. Therefore, the Government does not have that money to repatriate the remains. He advised that, if possible, the family could talk to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and have the remains buried there.

Mr Speaker, the remittances the Government receives from our sisters and brothers amount to Shs 1.5 trillion. Mr Speaker, I thought this would be a way to give back to our sisters and brothers when they face such problems.

My prayer is that the ministry meets the cost of repatriating our sister's remains so that she can receive a decent burial in Bukooli County North, Namayemba Subcounty. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Prime Minister? Thank you. The two questions are related. However, honourable colleagues, it is painful. We need to find a way - the Government needs to find a way, Prime Minister, to help our citizens.

3.52

THE SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Dr Crispus Kiyonga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, I convey my sympathies, and those of the Government, on this loss we have all collectively suffered, losing our fellow citizens, particularly abroad.

A similar matter arose on this Floor about two months ago, and we followed up with the honourable member who raised it. I think the Member is from Kween or Kongasis. When we followed up, we found that the family had gone ahead of us. They had done a lot of work and had managed to repatriate the body of the deceased.

Therefore, in this case, I would like to withdraw to the corridor with the two colleagues who raised this issue during today's sitting. We will get more details, and I will immediately contact the ambassador in Saudi Arabia so we can find a way out. *(Applause)* Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Since the Prime Minister is going to step out to talk to the two colleagues, matters of national importance must stop there. *(Laughter)*

However, there are matters here that the Prime Minister needs a copy of. There is a very critical one about people who are about to kill each other in Budwale and Bubyangu Subcounties in Bungokho over the national park. We handled this matter just yesterday. So, allow this one before you step out to handle the repatriation.

3.55

MS SHAFIGA WANYENYA (NRM, Bungokho County North, Mbale): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I stand to raise on an urgent issue concerning tensions arising from the boundary retracing exercise that began yesterday.

Mr Speaker, this boundary involving Wanale, Budwale and Bubyangu Subcounties has been handled several times with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), and they have come up with Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), which have been signed by UWA. In the last MoU, there were agreements on 11 lines of trees planted to mark the boundary. Those trees are very visible; even when you are in Mbale Town, you can clearly see them.

Right now, UWA has again come up with another exercise. They retraced it yesterday. They have caused a lot of tension. People have started blocking roads and reacting to this because they feel their voices have not been heard. If there is an exercise that should be done, these MoUs are in place. I have shared them with the line minister, Hon. Nakawuki. Even when she was in Mbale, we met with her on this.

My prayer -

THE SPEAKER: We talk too much, and we never know how to pray. You pray because you want action.

MS WANYENYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. My prayer to the ministry is to halt these exercises so we can engage as local leaders with our councillors and the communities, and finally resolve this issue so our people can live in peace with the conservation areas.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, the minister mentioned.

3.57

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Ms Susan Nakawuki): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I actually got a call from Hon. Shafiga yesterday. She was practically crying over the boundary issues.

To give some background, when the Mount Elgon National Park was created in 1993, it started as a reserve, and there was an issue with the boundaries. They were not clear, and some coordinates had not been captured.

However, in 2017, the President directed us to reopen the boundaries because of a major outcry in Bukedi and Mbale. The area we are talking about covers 1,145 square kilometres, and the contested boundary alone is 211 kilometres.

The President directed the Prime Minister to engage the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities to reopen the boundaries, and in 2018, the Department of Surveys and Mapping did so.

Mr Speaker, when we were in Mbale for World Tourism Day on 27 September, the President issued another directive for people to vacate the national park because many of them had grown food there. To report it verbatim, he said, "No growing potatoes in the national park."

Uganda Wildlife Authority was directed to ensure that it evicts anyone carrying out cultivation in Mount Elgon National Park. Against this background, UWA gave notice and warning to people farming on the disputed land to vacate before UWA comes to slash their crops or otherwise. They have not done it because they are giving people time.

Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development is supposed to put up the boundary stones because the coordinates are already done; everything is set, but only the stones are left. So, if the lands ministry would do the needful, then these issues will not be happening.

I am going to have an engagement with Hon. Shafiga and UWA to handle our people more humanely, but it is hard to say that we are going to leave people in the parks. The biggest challenge I want to draw the Members' attention to is that the crops grown in these national parks are very palatable to wild animals, and once they taste them, they do not go back to feeding on green leaves. They have to go into the community, causing more human-wildlife conflict.

The Government Chief Whip has been involved in this matter – *(Interruption)*

THE SPEAKER: Is there a point of information you want to take from behind?

MR MODOI: Mr Speaker, this matter has been discussed all along, and it came up in the NRM caucus. The President clearly directed that the question is all about the boundary. There is no clear boundary we are following.

The problem we have is that UWA allows people to plant but at the time of the harvest, they come in. As I talk, I have a whole subcounty called Kiteka in Bushiyi, and in Bukalasi, where people have been displaced. They have cut off all their food with impunity, and we thought the minister would tell us when they are going to open the boundary.

We have been living in peace, and it is also not true - sorry to say this - that the directive was given to cut off the food. Right now, we have not even been given support to look after our people. The question should be: let them open the boundary. We know which boundary we are talking about. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Minister, conclude.

MS NAKAWUKI: Mr Speaker, the boundaries were already reopened. The active boundaries right now are from 2018. There is a Cabinet Minute 522 of 2018, whereby the report of the reopened boundaries was tabled before Cabinet. The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development was directed to implement that report and use those boundaries of 2018.

However, what is causing the problem for the Members is the fact that the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development has not gone to put the mark stones, so there is not much more work to do. It is putting those mark stones and then maybe moving with the leaders to show them where the boundaries are, but there is no more reopening required.

THE SPEAKER: Do you want to make prayers for this House to help you?

MS NAKAWUKI: Yes, Mr Speaker, because this House has powers to direct the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. As the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, we did our part. We were directed to share that report with stakeholders then in 2018. I also shared the report with the Government Chief Whip, who was equally concerned, and with some Members from the subregion.

THE SPEAKER: We have the second Deputy Prime Minister. We direct you to harmonise your House. We do not want to get to a point where Government is making prayers here. Go and harmonise that and sort the boundary. Another minister wants to give information to a minister, right?

DR BARYOMUNSI: For the benefit of the House, Mr Speaker, I am speaking as a former minister in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to confirm what the honourable Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities has said: that the boundaries were opened, and they touch the Bugisu and Sebei subregions. I personally went to Mbale and Kapchorwa and disseminated the results. We found that some members of the public had entered the park.

In some areas, the park has invaded communities, and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development may need support in resources to erect pillars so the population knows the actual boundaries. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: That is not for debate. Information from Hon. Wanyoto? Hon. Jalameso, you are not a neighbour to Bugisu and Sebei.

MS LYDIA WANYOTO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The problem is big, and it has involved the Prime Minister. She has written to all of us members of Parliament from Bugisu, and the issues that Hon. Shafiga is raising are first on the agenda on Tuesday. We have a meeting with the Prime Minister to resolve many issues; first on the agenda is the issue of the boundaries, the wildlife-human conflict.

However, the challenge we have today, beyond the Tuesday meeting, is the same feeling I have with Hon. Shafiga. The reality on the ground is fights, pushes, and evictions, while we are doing the formalities of marking stones and challenges.

There is that variance between what is on the ground and what we are doing on Tuesday. On Tuesday, we have a meeting to address this, but what she is raising is what is happening now in Bubyangu, Wanale, and Budwale, and I have received the same calls. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Now that it has come to this House, we need to reconcile. This is a House of representatives of the people. You cannot say you are going to meet on Tuesday, yet you are evicting people. The lawyers would say you would have held the subsequent meeting to be nugatory. It will be a mock exercise.

Therefore, can we ask you - through the minister of tourism, to talk to your people right now to suspend the eviction until the meeting on Tuesday. *(Applause)* Suspend any action from now until Tuesday, because you cause *kavuyo* for no good reason.

Where is the minister for works? On page seven, the district woman Member of Parliament for Kisoro, Hon. Akifeza Grace Ngabirano, wrote to our office about the bridge, which has cut off Bukimbira Constituency, and the heavy rains and water flowing from Mt. Muhabura have destroyed homes.

4.07

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Mr Ali Siraj): Mr Speaker, this matter has been brought to our attention, and we dispatched an engineer from Kabale on the same day to assess the situation in Mucha. Currently, the ministry is arranging an emergency construction of a bridge in that area. Further details will be provided to the honourable member.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the other areas of truck drivers, critical health crisis - Hon. Dr Baryomunsi, when you have time, you will respond to that as you make your statement.

The issues of Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) revenue by boda-bodas - I have Hon. Opiyo, and I have sent his note to Hon. Lugoloobi to answer the issue of councillors. Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ON THE TRANSITION FROM THE TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (TIN) TO THE NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (NIN) FOR INDIVIDUAL TAXPAYERS

THE SPEAKER:*(Hon. Kakooza rose_)* You want to raise a procedural matter before we proceed? Is there a procedure? You want to determine a number or what?

MR KIRUMIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rules are rules, and we have to follow them religiously. Rule 43 of our Rules of Procedure requires that at 4.00 p.m., every Thursday, we have Prime Minister's time. I came here with a very burning issue that I wanted to inquire from the Prime Minister. I seek your guidance on whether we are going to have the Prime Minister's time, because even when I checked the Order Paper, I noticed we do not have Prime Minister's time. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Rule 43 is always enforced by the Order Paper. The moment it is not reflected on the Order Paper, then you know that item is not there. We are not suspending that rule, that rule applies to the Prime Minister, not a delegated person. My office and this Parliament are aware that she travelled on official duty to Italy, and she is not able to perform that duty.

Therefore, the most burning issues have just been concluded. Yours was not burning enough. Honourable minister for finance?

4.41

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING)(Mr Amos Lugoloobi): Mr Speaker, before I make my presentation, you asked me to respond to Hon. Opio's question regarding the taxes on the meagre district councillors' pay. What councillors and other local leaders receive is not a salary. It is categorised differently and, under our tax laws, is not exempt from pay-as-you-earn tax.

Therefore, in that arrangement, it is being taxed. However, we have held various consultative meetings across all regions of Uganda, and this matter came up during those budget consultations. We are discussing it; if possible or agreed, it would be considered in the coming budget, but as it stands, the laws do not exempt them. Let me now move to the item -

THE SPEAKER: Whatever he said is very clear. *(Hon. Kakooza rose_)* If it is not clear to you, you wait for him to make a statement. You are not the one who asked the question, are you? You are arguing with the Speaker. You must be very bold. *(Laughter)*

When the minister has acknowledged, and we are in the House where we make laws, that would be homework for a Member of Parliament, because that is where our role is. If you find that there is a problem, you come and fix it. We cannot allow again to be - no, Hon. James Kakooza. You have been here longer. That is why I am denying you – *(Laughter)*

MR LUGOLOOBI: Mr Speaker, I rise to brief Parliament, and the country on the

Government's implementation of the transition from the Tax Identification Number, commonly called TIN, to the National Identification Number, commonly called NIN, as the primary tax identification number for individual taxpayers.

This reform follows the amendment of Section 4 of the Tax Procedures Code Act in 2025, which provides that for tax purposes, the NIN shall be used as the tax identification number for an individual. We passed this matter under the Tax Procedures Code Act, 2025, and this is what we are implementing.

For non-individual taxpayers, the Uganda Registration Services Bureau registration number will be used, while eligible foreign taxpayers may use the appropriate foreign identification number as provided for by the law.

The reform is guided by a simple principle; "one person, one identity."

The Government's objective is to move away from mainstreaming separate identification numbers for the same individual across different Government systems and progressively adopt the National Identification Number (NIN) as a foundation identifier for individuals.

The NIN is unique, persistent and supported by biometric information. It, therefore, provides a stronger basis for accurately identifying individuals and linking them to the different services and obligations administered by the Government and others.

Why is the Government undertaking this reform?

Uganda has made significant progress in establishing a national identification system. According to the 2024 National Population and Housing Census, Uganda's population was approximately 45.9 million people and of these, the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) has registered approximately 35.5 million Ugandans, representing about 77 per cent of the population. Approximately 95 per cent of these registered are adults aged 18 years and above.

At the same time, Uganda Revenue Authority's (URA) taxpayer register contained approximately 5.7 million taxpayers as at 30 June 2026. Of these, about 5.4 million are individuals, representing nearly 95 per cent of the entire taxpayer register.

However, only about 3.3 million individual taxpayers are estimated to be active and this means that approximately 2.1 million individual taxpayer records are inactive or not readily traceable for tax administration purposes.

The existence of two separate identifiers, that is, the NIN for national identification and the TIN for tax administration, has contributed to duplication, inconsistencies, and difficulties in maintaining an accurate taxpayer register.

During the Financial Year 2025/26 alone, URA identified 191,813 duplicate records and 51,993 mutations in the taxpayer register. These weaknesses increase the cost of maintaining the register; they complicate taxpayer identification and create opportunities for individuals to appear under different particulars, including where tax obligations or arrears already exist.

The separation of the NIN and TIN also makes it more difficult to obtain a complete view of a taxpayer's economic activities. For example, an individual may be known to URA only as an employee whose income is subject to Pay As You Earn (PAYE) while the same individual may own rental properties, operate a business, or undertake other income-generating activities that are not readily connected to the same taxpayer record.

The Government is therefore addressing a fundamental weakness in our revenue administration. We must accurately establish who a taxpayer is before we can effectively administer their tax obligations.

Let me speak to the revenue implications.

Mr Speaker, the weaknesses in taxpayer identification also have implications for domestic revenue mobilisation. As I have indicated, approximately 2.1 million individual taxpayers' records are currently inactive or difficult to trace.

The technical analysis undertaken by URA shows that if each of these individuals were economically active and liable to contribute an average of 200 shillings annually, the potential revenue from this population would be approximately Shs 420 billion per year.

I wish to emphasise that the Shs 420 billion is an indicative illustration of the potential revenue at stake and not an estimate of actual tax revenue lost. Whether an individual has a tax liability depends on that person's income, economic activity and applicable tax law.

The challenge also extends beyond domestic information. In September 2025, Uganda's first automatic exchange of information exercise identified approximately 120,000 offshore financial accounts held by Ugandan tax residents with an aggregate reported value of approximately Shs 7 trillion in earnings.

Preliminary analysis was able to uniquely identify only about 20,000 taxpayers. This demonstrates the importance of having a reliable and consistent identifier that enables URA to correctly match information received domestically and internationally to the appropriate taxpayer, subject of course to Uganda's tax laws, tax residency rules, and international obligations.

What does the Government intend to achieve?

The broader objective is not simply to replace one number with another. The transition from TIN to NIN is therefore intended to achieve five broad objectives.

i) The Government seeks to establish one consistent and permanent identity for each individual taxpayer. Changes in a person's name, address, or other particulars should not result in a new taxpayer identity;
ii) The reform will improve the accuracy and integrity of the taxpayer register by reducing duplicate records, preventing identity mutation, and consolidating records that relate to the same individual;
iii) It will improve taxpayer identification and traceability, enabling URA to better associate employment, business, rental property, and other relevant economic information with the correct individual;
iv) The reform will support interoperability across government systems. A common identifier makes it easier within the law to cross-reference relevant information and to reduce the need for citizens to repeatedly provide the same identification information to different government institutions; and
v) The reform will simplify taxpayer registration and access to URA services while strengthening compliance management, risk assessment and recovery of legitimate tax arrears.

The principle of "One person, one identity".

The underlying principle is one person, one identity. A Ugandan should not require multiple government-issued numbers simply to prove that he or she is the same person when accessing different government services.

The NIN is already the foundational identifier for individuals and is increasingly used across both public and private services. Using the NIN for tax purposes therefore builds upon an existing national identification infrastructure rather than creating another identification system.

For taxpayers, this should progressively reduce duplication, simplify on-boarding and provide a single, consistent identity when dealing with URA.

For the Government, it will improve data integrity, reduce administrative costs, and strengthen our capacity to plan, deliver services and administer revenue.

Implementation and transition arrangements.

The Government is conscious that a reform affecting more than 5 million individual taxpayers must be implemented carefully. The transition is therefore, being undertaken in three phases.

Phase one involves mapping existing Tax Identification Numbers (TINs) to National Identification Numbers (NINs). The objective is to ensure that each taxpayer's NIN is correctly linked to his or her existing tax record. This phase is already ongoing.

Phase two involves biometric verification and updating taxpayer profiles using verified biodata and photographs obtained from National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) subject to the applicable consent requirements. During the transition period, verified taxpayers will be able to access their tax accounts using either their TIN or NIN.

Phase three will involve the full transition to the NIN as a taxpayer login identifier for individuals. The date for full implementation will be determined after assessing progress under the first two phases.

I would like to emphasise that the TIN will not be discontinued abruptly while taxpayers are still transitioning. The phased approach is intended to give taxpayers sufficient opportunity to map their existing TINs to their NINs, verify their identities and update their profiles before the system moves fully to NIN-based identification.

Mr Speaker, implementation is already progressing. Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) has integrated its systems with NIRA and is transitioning in phases. There is therefore an interface between the two systems, the URA system and the NIRA system. So during the transition period, the URA system will accommodate both the NIN and TIN while the necessary mapping and verifications are completed.

As of 30th September 2026, 2,130,914 NINs had been successfully mapped to TINs out of the 5,405,148 individual taxpayers, representing approximately 39 per cent coverage. Taxpayers are currently able to update their information through three principal channels:

i) Direct engagement by URA;
ii) walk-in services at URA service centres; and
iii) three, the URA web portal. The next phase will involve biometric verification and updating taxpayer profiles with biodata and photographs retrieved from NIRA, subject to taxpayer consent.

Treatment of other categories of taxpayers

Mr Speaker, the reform also recognises that not every taxpayer is an individual Ugandan citizen. For non-individual taxpayers such as companies and other registered entities, the intention is to use the entity registration number issued by the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB), subject to completion of the necessary approvals.

Foreign taxpayers will use the appropriate identification arrangements applicable to them, including alien identification numbers where they are issued by NIRA. For diplomats, the identification numbers issued through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will apply. The appropriate arrangements for refugees will be implemented as the relevant registration processes are completed.

Important assurances to taxpayers

Mr Speaker, I wish to make one matter particularly clear to the public. The adoption of the NIN as the TIN does not mean that possession of a NIN automatically creates a tax liability.

Tax liability will continue to arise in accordance with the tax laws based on a person's income, transactions, business activities, or other circumstances prescribed by law. The purpose of this reform is to ensure that where a tax obligation exists, the Government can

accurately identify the taxpayer and administer that obligation efficiently.

The NIN identifies the person. The tax law determines whether that person has a tax obligation and how much tax, if any, is applicable.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker and honourable members, the transition from TIN to NIN is therefore not merely an administrative change of numbers. It is an important reform aimed at strengthening the integrity of the Government records, simplifying interaction with Government, improving taxpayer identification, reducing duplication, strengthening compliance, and supporting domestic revenue mobilisation.

The Government's objective is straightforward: one person, one identity, and one reliable taxpayer record.

The reform will be implemented progressively and carefully to minimise inconvenience to taxpayers and ensure continuity of access to URA services.

I also assure Parliament that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will continue working closely with URA, NIRA, URSB and other relevant institutions to ensure an orderly, secure transition that responds to taxpayers' concerns. Government will continue to keep Parliament and the public informed as implementation progresses. Mr Speaker, I beg to submit for God and my Country.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Shadow Minister for Finance? Will he handle? *(Laughter)*

4.32

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu County West, Kalungu): Mr Speaker, I studied tax law, and I have a diploma in tax management from "Mr Akena."

THE SPEAKER: That is true.

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, I want to thank the minister for his statement. But we have to be very careful. One, if there is anybody having a TIN shared by anybody, the mistake is in URA, not on an individual. Because that number is allocated to one person.

Secondly, I want to put this on record – and we must be very careful - there are private companies, and in order to pay taxes, they must have a TIN. So, what will they have in that place if you want to change that level. Will you give a NIN number to a private company? It is impossible.

As we talk now, Mr Speaker, all the new national IDs, if you want to go to a SIM swap in any telephone company, the system does not work because the new national IDs do not perform. You must pay to NIRA to allow you to go and get a new line.

So, what are you trying to change? What I am seeing in URA - you are creating another source of money by transiting from one system to another, and you will suffer in future, the way we are seeing the digital number plate issue coming out.

There is nothing that should shift us from the Tax Identification Number (TIN), because already all people paying taxes go through that tax identification number. And even if you forget its password, URA will give you a new password, and you transact. Let us look at people owning vehicles. What is happening? Do we still have cards for our vehicles? They are on the URA system. You enter your TIN, then you open your car card, then you can do a transaction. But here you are. In Uganda, people paying taxes are very few.

As we talk, Mr Speaker, all children entering school are supposed to get the NIN number, but they do not have pictures on them. Are they going to be paying taxes? Why don't you maintain your system?

Okay, you can run them concurrently, but not shifting from one to the other because that is now a deal you are creating to earn money, create billions that we transitioned from this system to the National Identification Number (NIN), and we spent over Shs 190 billion or Shs 500

billion. That is what you are looking for, Hon. Amos, and I am warning you: facing you here, you will be the person to answer.

The remedies you have given in your statement do not justify your move from the original one. You have not given us the statistics. Give us the people in Uganda whom you are saying that for example, in Mityana, Ssewungu is here; he has a tax identification number, and he shares it with the Attorney-General. Give us that information. Where is it?

It is the same system you are using to get access, but what you have failed to do is to send your staff to look for those people who are supposed to pay taxes. People who dodge taxes are not dodging taxes because they do not have Tax Identification Numbers(TIN).

They are doing so because of the corruption that is seen in the URA sometimes, which you must fight as a country. None of us is willing to allow people to steal taxes. However, the implementation and the services provided after getting taxes can make people pay more as long as they see services delivered out of the taxes they pay.

If you do that, you will not have any challenges. You have seen members - Mr Speaker, everybody is complaining about a road. The other one is complaining about this - because the taxes people are paying from Bungokho or Kalungu are not seen physically on the ground.

So, moving from the digital system to TIN to NIN - those researchers in your ministry who gave you that information are making you look funny here. *(Laughter)* I can assure you of that.

It is not an attack, but of course you have researchers, honourable minister and I pray that Mr Speaker, you give us more time, and the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development goes back and looks at this particular issue seriously – *(Interjections)* - you want a clarification? You always refuse mine, but I can take it.

MR OGWANG: Mr Speaker, I really want to seek clarification from my colleague, Hon. Ssewungu. I think me, you and him came here together.

In line with the subject matter, which the Minister of Finance has just presented, I want to seek clarification from my honourable colleague: what would be his fear in terms of us synchronising the use of the NIN number as a tax identifier?

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you. The honourable Member, I think, has not been following what I have been saying. You have come in at the end. I have given all the fears and the challenges and mentioned them. It is not about fear. I have explained -

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssewungu -

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, as I conclude, that will mean taking you back to what I have said from the beginning. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Are you finding it difficult to remember what you said? You just give him one or two and -

MR SSEWUNGU: I have said, Mr Speaker, but let me say it again; there is nobody in Uganda who is sharing a TIN with another person. If it is there, the challenge is in URA.

Then I said that, as we talk now, most of the new National Identification Cards(IDs) are not on the system. I talked about private companies and said that a private company pays its taxes through tax identification numbers. Will they get NIN numbers as well? These are the questions I was asking. Thank you, Hon. Ogwang.

THE SPEAKER: I think Members on this side should first wait because we are in the same House. Hon. Alenyo. Then, I want to - I am surprised that you are telling me that Hon. Alenyo is on this side when I see him here. Hon. Attan, I think you seem to be more

ready. I called out Hon. Alenyo, but you are not grabbing the -

4.39

MR MOSES ATTAN (FDC, Soroti East County, Soroti City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to thank the minister. My major concern is about the institutions. They pay taxes; they have TIN numbers. What are they going to use? Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Alenyo, are you ready now?

4.40

MR MARSHALL ALENYO (Independent, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I will speak as an expert on NINs. When we worked in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, we set the NIN as part of the National ID.

Indeed, migration from TIN to NIN is not a mere replacement of identification numbers. It is a shift from a fragmented system to a more concerted system.

Mr Speaker, when we were at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, one of the biggest challenges we had was duplicate passports, where an individual would have more than 21 passports. The moment passports started being issued against people's NINs, the fraud reduced all over.

Even in marriages in this country, the moment marriages started getting pegged to NIN numbers, fraudulent marriages have reduced. Mr Speaker, on the issue of TINs - *(Interjections)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, benefit from an expert.

MR ALENYO: I have two opinions. The first, to the Ministry of Finance, you said that for purposes of taxation, we shall have individuals who will use TINs. We shall have non-citizens who will use foreign TINs and business registration numbers for companies.

My only issue with the migration from TIN to NIN is with those countries we have treaties with. You need to clarify those countries with which we have tax treaties, so that we shall be able to use their NINs. Otherwise, if we do not have that lift, it will be very hard.

Secondly, I want to thank the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA), led by Ms Rosemary Kisembo and her team. They have been slowly migrating. It does not mean that everybody who will have a NIN will now be a taxpayer. URA will still keep its role of vetting who is a taxpayer and who is not.

I think that is the fear. It is not. People will have Tax Identification Numbers, but if you are not in the regime of being taxed, you will not pay.

My other question is on the refugees. Under the 1951 Convention on Refugees, the minister of refugees should sit here and know that Uganda is praised in the whole world because of our policy towards refugees. I have heard from the minister for finance that the refugees will wait until the formalities are completed. Refugees pay tax to this country, Mr Speaker.

Therefore, I would expect the Ministry of Finance to tell us how fast the refugee regime is also being done so that once the migration takes place, even refugees on the conventional travel documents are catered for because they are taxpayers. Otherwise, I fully support the migration from the TIN to the NIN as it will consolidate and bring about sobriety. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Nabukenya. In that row, I picked the four of you for a reason: that you should speak.

4.43

MR BRENDA NABUKENYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Luweero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a few issues to raise with the minister. When you make NIN the tax identifier, that means we are going to have cross-system tracking. As the Uganda Revenue Authority, you will be able to access

all the information about our bank accounts, everything, including mobile money.

I want to understand how safe Ugandans will be with all their information in the hands of the tax collector. You might move to attach proceeds from other businesses, knowing that this person has so many accounts. We need to understand how safe you are going to protect Ugandans, because at a certain moment, this move is to broaden and be able to track into each and every person's account, so that maybe eventually you will be able to tax people, even when you do not know what they are doing, maybe from the proceeds.

I want you to inform this Parliament how you are going to protect Ugandans because, along the way, that is going to happen. Also, Mr Speaker, there is a burden shift you are going to give to NIRA. They have been complaining of a backlog. You also find that so many people fail to access identification cards in time. Are you sure they will be able to do good work?

Are you sure that revenue will flow? Business is business. Someone can open an account in the morning, and in the evening that person is supposed to be transacting. Some companies work like that. Are you sure NIRA will be able to provide services promptly so that you do not stall business and people are effectively served? I thank you.

4.45

MR HASSAN KIRUMIRA (NUP, Katikamu County South, Luweero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. These are revenue strategies to collect money and maybe improve our tax-to-GDP ratio. However, my biggest concern is the commencement. If you look at the numbers of our business community, how many people are doing business? Just like the minister said, it is over five million Ugandans. How many of them have already been mapped?

Are we in a position to bring everyone on board at the time of commencement, putting into context that most of our people are not literate enough to use the URA system properly to transact their businesses? Now, we are having a shift from the old system to a new system with an immediate commencement date -

THE SPEAKER: If someone sees the Deputy Attorney-General somewhere, tell him he will be needed. Government Chief Whip, if you see him somewhere, tell him.

MR KIRUMIRA: Mr Speaker, in conclusion, maybe the minister needs to update us on the actual commencement date and whether the Government is going to be ready to roll out this programme, not to lock out our business community. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Member for Ndorwa West? This time I got it right.

4.47

MR ELIAB NATURINDA (NRM, Ndorwa County West, Kabale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I speak as someone who implemented the National ID project. In 2013, I was blessed to be a legal assistant at the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In 2014/2015, we benchmarked countries like Ghana.

At the time the Government came up with this idea of National IDs, it was to link the National Identification Numbers (NINs) with Tax Identification Numbers (TINs). However, the idea was delayed because of all these discussions. I remember, there were discussions in Parliament then.

Mr Speaker, what other countries have transitioned? A country like Ghana in 2021 transitioned to merge the two: NIN and TIN. A country like Rwanda, my neighbour just across, also transitioned in 2025, around September, to make sure that TINs and NINs are applied simultaneously.

Right now, Uganda is adopting the same measure from where we actually went to benchmark. The Government of Uganda should implement those ideas because it spent money on its officers to go and benchmark. Even Members of Parliament went to benchmark in those countries. It is only good that right now, the Government of Uganda, through

this Parliament, is supported in this idea of transitioning so that NINs and TINs apply simultaneously. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. George Musisi. Hon. Patrick Katabaazi, I thought you had gone to Rukiga. Come after him.

4.49

MR GEORGE MUSISI (NUP, Kira Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We may not have suffered much prejudice; we appreciate the rationale for merging the two. What we did not get from the minister are two things. First, what measures are we talking about to intensify raising awareness? Every time there is migration, we have suffered because some institutions start implementing even before the commencement date. It is very important that a lot of information goes out to all stakeholders, especially the institutions that use these numbers, so they know they are not being asked before the commencement date and that key stakeholders are ready.

Second, some people have used NINs or TINs on legal documents, and some of those are ongoing. These are either contracts or when they are making some claims. We want to see that, before the commencement date, there are no issues arising from people who have used the numbers and that they are asked for a different number, and the legal consequences of the numbers that have already been used on different documents. For instance, people are asking for pensions or other claims, and then before the commencement, we see a mix-up of those numbers. We need that assurance that there will be no legal consequences before the commencement date. I thank you.

4.51

MR PATRICK KATABAAZI (NRM, Rukiga County, Rukiga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to support the statement made by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. I think it was very comprehensive and, in my view, covered all areas of concern and, most importantly, the issue of having a uniform taxpayer profile. You have taxpayers who are listed as directors and shareholders of companies, but they are not directly linked. In my view, if you link a company›s TIN to the national identity card number, that will harmonise the data.

I also want to inform this Parliament that the use of National IDs is becoming an international trend. I want to give you an example of Malaysia with the popular use of the "MyKad" that you know of. It is a hallmark of access to all the Government services in that country. Uganda should not be left behind on that one.

Also, we have been having issues at NIRA. This presents an opportunity for the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to work closely with NIRA to streamline its systems. For example, NIRA has about 418 staff members serving 146 districts across the country. That is an area that needs to be strengthened.

We have about 5.6 million identity cards that are not yet collected. We need the management of ID collection to be streamlined so that the objective of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development regarding this is effectively met.

There is also another issue relating to budgeting for NIRA. This becomes an opportunity to ensure that NIRA is fully funded so that the endeavours that Government has in ensuring that we collect taxes and close all the gaps that have been in the system are realised. It is very important that Parliament supports this endeavour. In any case, this rests on a law that has been passed by this Parliament. I want to thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

THE SPEAKER: One gentleman, the bald one, and then the lady on the other side; then I come this way - are you the Acting Leader of the Opposition (LOP) or the assistant? Why are you seated next to him? Okay. Go ahead.

4.54

MR GEOFFREY OKELLO (DP, Nwoya East County, Nwoya): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for

this proposal. Kenya transitioned from what we are discussing today in October last year, which is a very simple thing. Digital technology has brought us so many complications: so many numbers to cram, passwords, PIN and so on. For me, it gets me home cool and dry if they integrate so many things, including my national ID number, TIN, driving permit number, and bank account. I will be home cool and dry.

As for my private information, the Government has an obligation to protect it. I also think that in the next five years we will see this in hospitals in dispensing drugs. So, we had better work faster so that we get there. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Kazo.

4.55

MS MOLLY KAMUKAMA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kazo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement, and I would like to call upon this Parliament to support the minister in this endeavour. We have been urging the Government, as Ugandans, to serve us. We vote for Government to get services. Scattered Government services disorganise and disturb Ugandans. So, we have been urging the Government to integrate and stop working in silos. Now they are doing what we have been urging them to do. We support you on that.

We support you in offering services that are easily accessible. Why should I be looking for TIN from URA, then I have to go to NIRA to look for national ID and all of that? Now I will get it in one place. So, it is a better service. However, you also need to increase the manpower. Look at what is always at the Ministry of Internal Affairs for people who are looking for passports. Why should Ugandans go through that hurdle and such stress, standing the whole day looking for a passport? This is a service we should provide to Ugandans.

Secondly, at NIRA itself, the services are not available. So, honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, as you integrate the data and start to use that data, reinforce the NIRA institution so that those taxpayers who work hard for us to run as a country are also not disturbed because of picking and registering for the national identity cards. If it is lost, you have to go to NIRA for four days to access the service.

Otherwise, we support you because that is the right way to go. There is no country that is not migrating. Those of us who are fearing that data is going to be accessed: it is already being accessed by America, by everybody.

In this age of AI, you waste your time trying to hide anything. Everything is in the public domain. They have to ensure it is accessed legally. Otherwise, it will be accessed freely. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Are you the assistant to LOP?

4.58

MS SHEILAH AMANIYO (NUP, Woman Representative, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In regard to this migration and integration, I would like to bring to the Minister›s attention the low-income earners, to protect the small businesses and the vulnerable citizens during the migration. Not every person who holds a NIN or who has a national ID has a tax liability. I would request that those two be separated so that you do not affect them, thinking that they are liable to pay taxes, to protect the entrepreneurs, the small-scale business people, and the vulnerable people. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Mbale North Industrial? We have an industrialist. Then, Chair, Legal.

MR KARIM MASABA (Independent, Industrial Park, Mbale City): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and I do want to thank the Minister. I do have three areas that I need clarification on.

One, URA has always been complaining that they do not have enough capacity. They have a lot of people who are dormant on the tax register, and they spend a lot of time and

resources to go after these people, yet they do not qualify. Now, given that you have transited, this is going to make the data they have at their disposal much of - what is your assurance about the capacity of URA to manage this?

The second issue is about registration. It is not automatic, but once someone registers for one tax head, he automatically joins the register for other taxes as well. We have people who got TIN numbers just for a one-off transaction. For example, if I am buying a vehicle, I would go and register for a TIN. But then now URA begins making assessments and assuming I am earning a certain type of income, and they keep sending you notices every month.

Now, we have the likes of the boda boda people. Someone who is buying a boda boda. Of course, they are registering to pay a certain tax head. Will URA be following up with all these people as well, because there are people who earn very little money who do not need to join or who do not need to pay some of these taxes? However, because they have paid a certain tax head, they are automatically captured, and URA will come after their income.

The third issue, Mr Speaker, is about data privacy. We already have a challenge where a lot of our data is out there and is being misused. For example, when you look, you will find that my NIN is using a phone number in my name because Airtel and MTN have shared my data already. Now we have people who are transacting on these mobile numbers. URA will make an assessment and assume I am earning because there are mobile numbers that are registered in my name that are out there.

I also found out when I went to Airtel that I had about four phone numbers in my name, and I had to block off all the rest. They told me that when you go to transact, at times these people use your NIN to open up or to get numbers that they sell to people who do not have national IDs. What assurance do we have that URA will not make assessments that came because of leakages of our data that has been shared out there? Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. John Teira, the Chairperson, Legal.

5.01

MR JOHN TEIRA (NRM, Bugabula County North, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker, also Chairperson Legal Emeritus, for this opportunity. I do not think anyone is against digital migration. We really should not be, for starters. It is the right thing, and it is the way to go. There are just a few issues that we need, I think, to pay attention to.

For example, there is a requirement for filing annual tax returns. How will this be related to the TIN numbers? This is because once you have a tax identification number, you have an obligation to file your annual tax returns whether you have generated income or not. But we know the process of filing tax returns is a very technical one.

Therefore, how do we simplify it? Or how do we distinguish between someone operating below the threshold, who is not under obligation to pay tax , and someone who is affected, because failure to file tax returns attracts a penalty? So how do we separate these potential and real taxpayers from those who are operating below the threshold?

Additionally, how do we simplify it for an ordinary person who now has a NIN to ensure that he is able to have a reflection on the tax because he may not be a taxpayer now, but in the future he starts paying taxes after attaining ability.

Therefore, will these previous obligations not accrue to that person when he attends that level where we want them to be? Otherwise, generally speaking, I think even from this side, nobody should really oppose migration. Thank you so much.

THE SPEAKER: As I also migrate from this side to this side, I would like to refer you, people, to Article 17(1)(g) of our Constitution, which says thus: "*It is the duty of every citizen of Uganda, (g), to pay taxes among other obligations*". *[Member rose_]* I will come

back to you to close. This was supposed to take about 20 minutes. I have taken up to 12 people from this side, and Hon. Joan, you wanted to – She is in the middle. She is UPDF.

5.04

MS JOAN ALOBO (FDC, Woman Representative, Soroti City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Although Section 4 of the Tax Procedures Code Act authorises the use of a National Identification Number (NIN) as a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), it does not allow personal data to be shared. Under Section 8 of the Data Protection and Privacy Act, you literally need explicit consent for biometric data transfer between two data controllers.

Honourable minister, could you tell us if you have signed a data-sharing agreement between the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) and the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA), which is approved by the Personal Data Protection Office? If yes, could you please be able to Table it and if not, if a taxpayer refuses consent, what will URA do? Will URA block the tax account or is there any other way that you are going to handle it?

Honourable minister, you have also talked about national IDs and the NINs, but you have left out the driving permits. Where do driving permits fall? Will they be part of the NIN numbers or managed through a separate system?

Mr Speaker, the minister talked about sensitising people, but what I have seen with what the minister is doing is actually using the top-down approach. When you read Sections 9 to 15 of the Physical Planning Act, they talk about the bottom-up approach. We are here trying to start implementing something and then get back to the people on the ground, which will not count. I want to advise the minister to start sensitisation from down there; let the people know about this transition and then come back to implement it from the top. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I think he has started sensitisation from here and the moment - let me do this row because you are very many. I just want to pick two Members: one lady here and one gentleman. Again, one lady there, one gentleman, and we shall call it a night because we have other things to do. If you are against it, we would like to know.

Hon. Nakut, Commissioner - but before she comes in, I had a conversation with somebody about this digital transition and synchronising data, and where you go and buy medication prescribed online, you also buy the food online, and then you go and buy beer - there are apps, including Google, when they know your medical condition, when you are paying for KFC, they say, "No, you have a health problem -*(Laughter)* - you cannot buy chicken and what, please". And if you miss your medication, Google would say, "You have not taken your medication". If you have taken a beer, it says, "You are getting into the car; do not drive". We are going to a smart world. So, there should be no privacy issues. What you are fearing, as one Member from Kazo said, is already - just Google yourself in different apps, you will be surprised. Hon. Nakut.

5.09

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Mr Speaker, first of all, I wish to appreciate the minister for doing his job and doing it well. It is this House that passed the Tax Procedures Code Bill. We inserted that provision, and it became an Act of Parliament, and every time we come here to complain why the ministers are not rolling out what we passed. So, when we have one who respects the House and who follows the law, and now he has brought a statement showing the migration in a phased manner, we should not have taken a lot of time here. We should have told him, "Thank you, please proceed," because it originated from this House. I did not expect Members, especially those who were there when we passed these Bills, to feign ignorance on the subject. That is really regrettable.

This matter is critical to our economy. As you know, our tax-to-GDP ratio is trailing globally. We are not competing favourably even within the region because we have very few people

who are participating in contributing to the taxes that we have. In fact, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the faithful taxpayers of this country.

The shift to NIN will help widen our tax base so that everyone is able to contribute, so that not just a few people are burdened. Perhaps it will then improve our tax-to-GDP ratio and improve what our tax revenue can contribute to our budget. Isn't it shameful on our part to pass a Shs 72 trillion budget and only raise Shs 35 trillion as a country? Isn't it shameful to come to this House and ask for all the roads and all the hospitals when we know that the Shs 35 trillion we collect as a country is not adequate to even manage the loan interest plus the basic running cost of a Government? It should worry us. So, any effort to widen our tax base like now - moreover, the minister is just following the law which we passed here; we should give him an applause. So, I support the statement.

THE SPEAKER: After that brilliant submission - if it was for putting the question, I would put. Can I get to hear from somebody who is against it? Just one person from this side, and tell us, why. You see, even the microphone is against you. *(Laughter)*

MR NAKIYI: No, I needed a clarification from the minister. On page 4 of the statement, he says, "Bio-data will be migrated from NIRA to URA subject to individual consent". Supposing individuals refuse to offer this consent, what will happen?

THE SPEAKER: You will cross the bridge when you get there, but that is the mistake I made the other time, assuming the role of Minister of Foreign Affairs. This time the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will answer that.

Are you all against? This was for a statement, not a motion. I promise the Leader of the Opposition that he would come and then the minister sums up.

5.13

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Any efforts to bolster tax administration are welcome, and the matters we raise are not meant to say we are entirely opposed. We are raising critical concerns because yes, the law was passed; we did have some concerns here and there, but it is in place.

Now at the implementation stage, we are also raising these concerns, and it is good that we raise them. One of my colleagues mentioned that some things kick off and then, along the way, become a problem. We are now dealing with a Brobdingnagian problem of the digital number plates. I do not even know when the rain began to beat us, but it is beating us too much. One minister is saying this; another minister is saying that. That is why we are now raising these concerns.

Mr Speaker, the minister has pointed out - and rightly so - that not all Ugandans are registered with NIRA. About 10.4 million Ugandans are not registered, which violates the law, by the way, because Section 54 of the Registration of Persons Act mandates the Government to ensure that all Ugandans are registered. So, there is a lacuna. As you are doing migration, there are those who cannot even migrate because they do not exist. What is the plan around that?

Secondly, the statement is silent on addressing the escalating number of inactive taxpayers on the tax register. Currently, 60 per cent of the people on the tax register are inactive. That is why there are those who are saying that once the migration happens, we are automatically going to have many taxpayers, and so the inflow from tax is going to increase.

That is not true because currently 60 per cent of the people on the tax register are inactive. Now, if we migrate all those who are on NIRA - and they are a lot more - we could get to 80 per cent or even 90 per cent of those who are inactive. We would like to know what the plan is around those who are inactive.

Mr Speaker, honourable colleagues have talked about privacy, and that is important, even legally. Section 29 of the Data Protection and Privacy Act, Cap 97 - let me tease this one out -provides that an entity that collects and uses personal data should register with NITA-U. The statement was silent on whether URA has complied with this. Maybe the minister will update us on this, since it is a legal requirement.

Do you see why that is important? Yes, you will have access to this data, but you must follow the law, as you should. If you misuse that data, we will call you to order because a legal provision exists. So, our information gets out there, as Hon. Molly Kamukama said, but the guardrails are important to ensure that information is not misused.

Finally, Mr Speaker, the current Domestic Revenue Mobilisation Strategy, which we are told the NIN will enhance for tax revenue collection and all, has expired. I hope the Minister of Finance is aware of that.

In fact, it expired a while back and, because of COVID-19, was given a new lease of life, an extension. However, it expired again in the 2025/2026 financial year that ended. So, you do not have an updated one. What foundation are you relying on? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Minister of Finance?

MR LUGOLOOBI: Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. Let me begin by thanking the Members for the responses. From my assessment, I think about 99 per cent support the transition, and I want to appreciate you. I also thank you for the guidance in areas where we seem to be lacking, though few areas were identified. We have tried to bridge all the gaps.

There was an issue relating to whether we have consent from NIRA. Indeed, we have actually signed a memorandum with NIRA on what we call a "Data Protection Agreement" and on that basis; we now have the interface between NIRA and URA systems.

However, we cannot go into the details of biometrics without the consent of the individuals affected and this is why the system demands that you have to offer consent.

We can have your NIN number but to get the biometrics, we need you to consent to what we are doing and that is why we shall be coming to you to provide your fingerprint before we proceed to the details. I think that will take care of what the Leader of the Opposition is raising.

So, we will do this with your consent, but remember that you need the services of URA every time you want to access your salary, buy a vehicle and do all sorts of things. Either way, we believe that the majority of individuals in Uganda will consent to what we are doing.

We will protect your identities as much as possible, and I think, as Government, we have been reliable enough. We have all the information about you under NIRA, and I do not think you have found this information being misused anywhere. So, that trust has to continue existing because one way or the other, we have to progress.

As the Speaker indicated, you can hardly hide that much nowadays. Just put your name in Google Gemini, and you will get all the details about what you have been doing for many years. Where does this information come from? It is no longer possible to hide.

However, we shall not be accessing your bank accounts. As one of the Members indicated, we shall not be able to do so because you need a special arrangement or consent to access the data in the bank. In fact, we need to have a separate provision in the law for this Parliament to authorise it.

We have not yet approved that arrangement. We came here for you to allow us access to your bank accounts for tax purposes, but you have since refused to accept that. However, we shall continue coming until you allow us access to your individual bank accounts.

On the other issue that Hon. Joan raised about driving permits, we shall progressively integrate these systems, but we will do it one after the other. We cannot do all these at the same time. We shall try as much as possible to minimise duplication of effort here and there.

Here, you have a system on TIN, NIN, and then you have driving permit identification. Why then do we have these multiple identifications if we invested money to have a National Identification System? You have a national ID. Let us use the National Identification Number in most of our systems as much as possible, to avoid this unnecessary duplication of effort.

Mr Speaker, in the interest of time, I may not be able to answer all the questions, but I should mention to the LOP that the Domestic Revenue Mobilisation Strategy is high on our agenda. We are soon finalising it and it will soon be presented to Cabinet.

I think this system is going to go a long way in enhancing tax administration and getting the necessary identification of the people whom we are looking for. It will now be very hard for you to run away from tax by registering today with a particular TIN and then you change into something else; you will now be the same person.

It will be very easy and I am sure it will help us raise more tax revenue for this country through enhanced tax administration.

I want to end by urging all Ugandans to support the system. As you enter the portal, you will be required to enter your NIN, and we will capture it at that stage. However, we shall need another step to collect your biometrics with your consent. Progressively, I am sure we shall get there.

With those remarks, I thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity granted to us.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE EDUCATION, SPORTS AND SKILLS SUB-PROGRAMME FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/2026

THE SPEAKER: It is a bulky report. Hon. Ogwang, I want you to show your summarising skills because we also need the one for health. We cannot rush it, but please summarise it and give the highlights. I hope the main report will be captured verbatim and that Members have copies.

5.25

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Peter Ogwang): I thank you, Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues.

On page one, the statement highlights progress in expanding access, improving quality, promoting equity, and enhancing efficiency across the education and sports sector.

The ministry derives its mandate from the Constitution of Uganda, 1995; the Education (Pre-Primary, Primary and Post-Primary) Act, 2008; the TVET Act, 2025; the National Sports Act, 2023; and the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, 2001, among other legal and policy instruments.

The vision of the ministry is, "Quality Education, Training and Sports Services for All." The ministry's mandate is to provide quality education, training, and sports services nationwide, which are Government's constitutional obligations.

The ministry leads and hosts the Secretariat for the Human Capital Development Programme, which includes the ministries of Health; Water and Environment; and Gender, Labour and Social Development.

Mr Speaker, several statutory agencies support the sub-programme.

The National Council for Higher Education, established under the Universities and Other

Tertiary Institutions Act, 2001, is the primary regulator of higher education.

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council, established under the TVET Act, 2025, regulates the provision of technical and vocational education and training.

The Uganda National Examinations Board manages national examinations at primary and secondary levels.

The Uganda Vocational Technical Assessment Board and the Uganda Health Professionals Assessment Board conduct examinations for TVET institutions.

The National Curriculum Development Centre develops and reviews the national curriculum.

The National Council of Sports oversees sports development.

The Education Service Commission, a constitutional commission, is responsible for recruiting, appointing, confirming, disciplining, and retiring education service personnel.

Mr Speaker, allow me to skip the financial performance and move to sectoral performance.

Mr Speaker, substantial progress was registered across pre-primary, primary, secondary, teacher education, TVET, university education, special needs education, curriculum development, education management systems, guidance and counselling, gender, school health, ICT and sports. I highlight these below.

On pre-primary education, the ministry made progress in strengthening early childhood education.

On primary education, Government continues to expand access to Universal Primary Education. The ministry disbursed Shs 209.1 billion in capitation grants to 12,544 UPE schools, benefiting approximately 9.6 million learners. This was an increase of Shs 24.61 billion over the previous financial year, when approximately 8.6 million learners benefited.

We also procured over 1.6 million copies of P.4 to P.7 instructional materials and distributed 619 mini-science laboratory kits to primary schools to promote STEM education.

In the Karamoja Subregion, Mr Speaker, Government provided agricultural inputs and seedlings to 309 primary schools to support school-feeding programmes.

Government has also sustained the "Go Back to School" campaigns to support the return of children who had dropped out and is finalising a Policy on Free and Compulsory Primary Education targeting learners from disadvantaged backgrounds.

On secondary education, we procured and distributed 90,000 laboratory instructional manuals to 577 public secondary schools.

The ministry completed 17 seed secondary schools this year, bringing the total to 189 under the UgIFT Programme. The ministry is constructing 16 more seed secondary schools across 15 districts under the Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project.

The UgIFT Programme concluded in December 2025, and the ministry has proposed priority investment areas for a successor programme.

Mr Speaker, the ministry recognises that the transition from primary to secondary education remains a significant challenge, with many learners failing to progress on account of financial, geographical and social barriers.

Government is responding by continuing Universal Secondary Education, building seed secondary schools in underserved sub-counties, expanding Government-aided schools, and recruiting and deploying teachers to newly established schools.

Under the ULEARN Project, 121 traditional schools have been earmarked for rehabilitation in the financial year 2026/27.

Government has also earmarked Shs 96.7 billion to rehabilitate and maintain school

infrastructure under Local Government Conditional Grant Transfers in the financial year 2026/2027.

Under Technical and Vocational Education and Training, the work is anchored in the TVET Act, 2025, which reformed and regulated TVET education in Uganda and established a coordinated system of TVET delivery, curriculum, assessment and regulation.

Uganda now has over 146 Government TVET institutions and about 800 private training providers nationwide, with enrolment at approximately 103,000 students, including 20 per cent female participation and an 84 per cent completion rate.

We upskilled 48 trainers in Occupational Health and Safety and retooled a further 150 trainers in modern delivery and assessment methods. Decentralised admissions brought in 2,347 students for Government sponsorship at seven colleges, and subvention grants supported 8,912 students in 20 health training institutions.

Mr Speaker, over the past years, six technical institutions, namely UTC Elgon, UTC Lira, UTC Bushenyi, Uganda Petroleum Institute, Kigumba, UTC Kichwamba, and Bukalasa Agricultural College, were upgraded into Centres of Excellence to further the uptake and development of skilling programmes.

Construction works were completed at four institutions under the Islamic Development Bank project and eight more under the OPEC Fund project. These are Moroto Technical Institute, Kabale Technical Institute, Lutunku Technical Institute, St Kizito Technical Institute, Nawanyago Technical Institute, Basoga Nsadhu Memorial Technical Institute, Ogolai Technical Institute, Corner Kilak Technical Institute, Lokopio Hills Technical Institute, Buhimba Technical Institute, Ssasira Technical Institute and Lwengo Technical Institute.

There are ongoing construction works at Nkoko Memorial Technical Institute, Nalwire Technical Institute, Minakulu Technical Institute, Moyo Technical Institute, and Birembo Technical Institute, which are scheduled for completion in the current financial year.

Commendable progress has been registered on the construction of the skill development headquarters building in Kyambogo, with the completion expected at the end of the year. I am talking about the Ministry of Education and Sports. We will formally be shifting to Kyambogo as our headquarters.

We also assessed and certified 100,334 learners through the Health Professional Assessment Board and Vocational Technical Assessment Board (UVTAB) this year.

Teacher Education

The ministry continues implementation of the National Teacher Policy. 886 primary teacher educators are trained in inclusive pedagogy across 23 core primary teacher colleges.
Most importantly, the Teacher Bill was passed by Parliament on 23rd April 2026 and assented to by His Excellency the President on 5th June 2026. The Act provides a statutory council to accredit teacher programmes, register, license teachers, and enforce professional standards.

In secondary education, 3,412 teachers were recruited for 91 seed secondary schools and head teachers were deployed to all of them.
The ministry phased out low-level teaching certificates in favour of a diploma or bachelor's degree as the minimum entry qualification, established the National Teacher Council to regulate the profession, and operationalised the Uganda National Institute for Teacher Education (UNITE).

On salary disparity between science, arts, and primary teachers, the Government continues to enhance salaries of public officers in a phased manner. In this financial year, Shs 568.65 billion was allocated for the enhancement of salaries of head teachers, deputy head teachers, senior education assistants, and education assistants in primary schools, head teachers, deputy teachers in secondary schools with a background in humanities; and heads of TVET

institutions, together with teachers, instructors, and tutors with a background in humanities. I want to commend Parliament for this fight, which we all worked together to achieve.

The Government continues to recruit teachers at both primary and secondary levels to cover teaching gaps and replace retiring teachers, with plans for additional recruitment.

Twenty-nine Teacher Training Institutes are also being rehabilitated and expanded under the ULEARN project.

University and Higher Education

Uganda now has 73 degree-awarding institutions comprising 55 universities and 18 other degree-awarding institutions with a total enrolment of 227,127 learners.

Student loans were disbursed to 5,481 beneficiaries, and the Government allocated 4,000 merit-based admission slots across public universities.

We also supported 400 scholarship beneficiaries studying abroad and sponsored 263 students in oil and gas-related programs.

The National Council for Higher Education approved minimum standards for competence-based education and training for universities in 2026. Relatedly, the Government has allocated Shs 139 billion to the Research and Innovation Fund to support high-impact research in public universities.

The main campus of Busoga, which I want to say Iganga University, was completed, and the National Council for Higher Education has recommended its operationalisation. Construction also progressed at Kabale, Gulu, Mountains of the Moon, and Busitema Universities.

Bunyoro University acquired 100 acres of land in Kikuube District. The task force has developed 18 academic programmes and 11 academic and administrative policies.

For the Financial Year 2026/2027, the Government has increased the higher education students' loan budget to support 2,500 new beneficiaries, up from an average of 1,500 per year.

Physical Education and Sports

Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania will co-host AFCON under the Pamoja bid. The Government has invested almost a tune of Shs 3.5 trillion for this project. Hoima City Stadium was completed and commissioned.

The National High Altitude Training Centre, Teryet, is now operational, with a few defects being addressed. Akii-Bua Olympic Stadium will be ready by December 31st.

Mr Speaker, the Uganda Cranes reached the quarterfinals of CHAN, our best-ever tournament performance. In addition, the She-Cranes qualified for the 2026 Netball World Cup, and I want to confirm that they are the African champions as we speak now. They did this recently in Nairobi, and Uganda also won six medals at the World Mountain and Trail Running Championship, which took place in Mombasa.

Learning outcomes

The Government recognises that access alone is not enough, and the improvement in access must be matched by improvement in learners' achievement. Learning outcomes are accordingly being placed at the centre of how the sector measures its own performance.

To address this, the ministry is implementing a comprehensive strategy under the Uganda Learning Acceleration Program, supported by the World Bank and the Global Partnership for Education. The approach is three-pronged: enhancing early grade reading and numeracy nationwide, providing teaching and learning materials, including reading textbooks in local languages for primary one to primary three at a target textbook-to-learner ratio of 1:2, and system strengthening through practice.

On assessment, the Uganda National Examination Board is progressively aligning national assessment with the competence-based curriculum, based on expectations as demonstrated in the recent Primary Leaving Examination and Uganda Certificate of Education reforms. Complementing this, the Directorate of Education Standards has rolled out the Integrated Inspection System, a digital platform enabling inspectors to collect real-time evidence on teaching quality and learner performance, while the School Performance Assessment is conducted annually in government-aided primary schools, integrating inspection findings, learner achievements and data, and Primary Leaving Examination results to guide targeted support.

Curriculum development

On the upper secondary curriculum, the National Curriculum Development Centre developed assessment guidelines for the 34 subjects of the advanced level secondary curriculum for use by UNEB. It trained 582 lower secondary school level master trainers on the guidelines for project-based learning and the guidelines for utilisation of time after 2:55 p.m., and developed the Upper Secondary Curriculum Framework and the Scope and Sequence for 37 subjects of the new upper curriculum.

Inspection, quality assurance, and standards

We inspected over 200 early child centres, 1,500 primary schools across 88 local governments, and 1,170 secondary schools. We also trained 246 District Inspectors of Schools nationwide.

Education management

We completed a nationwide verification exercise across 176 local governments to identify parishes and subcounties without public primary and secondary schools, respectively and progressed the Education Management Information System (EMIS)

Special needs and inclusive education

Bills of Quantities were developed for renovation of special needs schools, including Salama schools for the blind and Mbale School for the deaf under the ULEARN project, 66 special needs education schools comprising 56 primary and 10 secondary schools are scheduled for rehabilitation and expansion commencing 2026/2027.

Pending policies, Bills, and strategies

i) A number of policies remain under development, and they include: The draft National Higher Education Policy awaiting a certificate of financial clearance from finance;
ii) The National Curriculum Assessment and Placement Policy ready for presentation to top management;
iii) The National Private Education and Training Policy, ready for a national validation workshop;
iv) The Universal Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education Policy ready for presentation to my top management;
v) The National School Health Policy already approved by the Education Sector Consultative Committee awaiting approval by the top management; and
vi) The draft National School Feeding Policy is still at the stage of stakeholders' consultation.

A number of Bills are similarly pending. These include:
i) The University and Tertiary Institutions (Amendment) Bill, awaiting approval of the National Higher Education Policy;
ii) Education Pre-Primary and Post-Primary (Amendment) Bill, awaiting the approval of the Universal Compulsory Primary and Secondary School Policy;
iii) The Curriculum Assessment and Admission Bill, awaiting the approval of the National Curriculum Assessment and Placement Policy; and
iv) The National Legal Examination Centre Bill, 2025, awaiting approval of the National Higher Education Policy and

amendments of repeal the Education Policy of the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act.

Key challenges

Mr Speaker, notwithstanding this progress, challenges remain. Rapid enrolment growth, unmatched by growth in the budget, continues to strain infrastructure and teaching resources yet the ministry remains unfunded.

Other challenges include inadequate staff, insufficient institutional materials, low uptake of the inspection and teacher effectiveness and learner achievement teller system, and the need to strengthen teacher capacity and professional development.

Above all, ensuring adequate and sustainable financing for education, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), research, and infrastructure remains a critical challenge.

The way forward

The Government will continue to expand and rehabilitate infrastructure in underserved areas, strengthen teacher recruitment and supervision, and enhance the quality of TVET and university education.

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, the performance of the sector this year demonstrates meaningful progress in access, quality assurance, infrastructure, teacher development, and sports.

The Government remains committed to addressing challenges and ensuring that Uganda's education and skills system serve our country's social and economic transformation agenda.

I beg to submit on behalf of the Acting Minister of Education and Sports.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. We shall combine the two sectors and debate them concurrently. You are all leading powerful service ministries. Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE HEALTH SECTOR

THE SPEAKER: The Speaker seems not to have your copy, but you can go ahead.

5.56

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Mr Speaker, the document is uploaded on the system.

THE SPEAKER: I think the Clerk-at-Table had assumed the role of the Speaker to have the Speaker's copy.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Mr Speaker, I have a statement which is over 20 pages, but in the interest of time, I will paraphrase and speak to the statement without reading verbatim of the statement in the hope that Members have copies on the iPads and would be able to read.

Mr Speaker, I rise to present this ministerial statement on the status of health service delivery in Uganda. The first page speaks to the vision of the ministry, which is to have a healthy and productive population that contributes to economic growth and national development.

Our mission is to provide high quality and accessible health services to all people in Uganda, including addressing broader determinants of health to attain socio-economic development and a prosperous life.

Our goal is to achieve and sustain good health for all Ugandans through promotive, preventive, curative, palliative, and rehabilitative services, which contribute principally to the objective of the Human Capital Development Programme to improve population health, safety, and management.

The health sector has prioritised areas of:

i) prevention, control, and elimination of communicable, non-communicable, and neglected tropical diseases and injuries,

with emphasis on a primary health care approach and control of cancer, cardiovascular disease, and trauma;

ii) provision of high-quality sexual and reproductive health and rights services for adolescents, mothers, newborns, and infants. This captures the mandate and the priority areas we are looking at.

Section 3, speaks about the recent public health emergency, and I am speaking about the Ebola outbreak, but just in summary, like we briefed Parliament, we had an outbreak that we announced on the 15 May 2026; an imported outbreak of Ebola where we registered 20 cases, managed them, but two Congolese nationals unfortunately died, and 18 were cured and discharged.

I heard the Leader of the Opposition yesterday commenting on a case in Kenya. I can tell Parliament that there is a recent case of a 40-year-old gentleman, a Kenyan of Somali origin, who has been living in DRC for seven years. He entered the country by road, flew out through Entebbe, was diagnosed with Ebola disease in Kenya, and has died.

Kenya has since registered two positive cases. Once that information came to our notice, we worked backwards to trace and reconstruct the journey of this gentleman. He entered through Mpondwe, although there are no records there, but we were able to check the records in Entebbe. We got the driver who dropped him, and we have since tracked the contacts. They are under isolation. Today is 13 or 14 days since then.

There is no secondary transmission, no case of Ebola in Uganda. Ugandans should be comfortable, and assured that there is no Ebola in Uganda. *(Applause*) Earlier on, I got worried when our honourable colleague from Arua raised an issue of Congolese who have entered West Nile. We are dispatching a team of health workers from the ministry this evening to be there, and ensure that, that group of Congolese remain in isolation, and are screened.

We shall work with the authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) at the earliest. As long as there is security for them on the other side, we should be able to take them back into DRC, and do whatever public health measures required to ensure that they do not become a danger.

Mr Speaker, in Congo, Ebola is still a huge challenge. They have registered over 9,000 cases, and by yesterday, they had lost 4, 410 Congolese. We have a collaborative arrangement with them; we have established three treatment centres in Arua, Kasenyi, and Butembo. We have our health workers and experts working with the Congolese health workers and managing the Ebola cases.

I would like to urge people living in Congo that there is no need for them to come to Uganda for treatment. The high-quality treatment they would be getting in Uganda is already in Congo. We have strengthened our points of entry at the borders to ensure that we do not get new cases of those who cross into Uganda.

We are also engaging the international community, especially the countries that imposed travel restrictions, especially the United States (US), Canada, and others. We are going to have a meeting with the diplomatic community next week, on Monday, to discuss these issues. Soon or later, they should be able to open and reverse those restrictions, which are impeding Ugandans from travelling and also their nationals coming into Uganda.

I speak about the performance against the Third National Development Plan (NDPIII) result areas. This is section four of my report. The health sector has contributed directly to 168 indicators in the NDPIV. Overall, 75 per cent of the targets have been met, 5.4 per cent registered improved progress, 16.6 per cent fell below the target, whereas 3 per cent have not yet been assessed because we are yet to carry out the population-based surveys which will give us the results.

Generally, we can say that we are making progress because many of the indicators and targets are being met. I have presented this in a tabular form showing the outcomes, intermediate outcomes and outputs; those

achieved, where there is good progress, not achieved and not measured. I went ahead to give a little bit of detail as shown in 4.1.

Honourable colleagues, at the outcome level, the sub-programme achieved 58 per cent of the targets, four per cent made progress and seven of the targets (27 per cent) were not achieved. Eleven per cent of the indicators could not be measured.

The Universal Health Coverage Index is at 49 per cent against a target of 53 per cent, moving from a baseline of 45 per cent. We have moved from 45 to 49 and yet to meet the target of 53 per cent.

Malaria incidence slightly increased to 226.5 per 1,000 persons from 223 in the previous year. There is a challenge with malaria, as one of the honourable colleagues had earlier raised, from Northern Uganda, although we still achieved the annual target of 260.

The new HIV infections declined to 0.71 per 1,000 susceptible population compared to 0.79.

Maternal mortality ratio, which is a measure of mothers who die due to pregnancy and childbirth, improved to 189 per 100,000 live births. However, we are yet to carry out a demographic and health survey next year to give us the most current figure now, because our target that we set is 182.

Mortality due to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)- related causes dropped to 28 per 100,000 against a target of 28.1. Mortality from communicable diseases; malaria, TB, HIV and AIDS increased to 42.7 against a target of 38 per cent.

The figures give you an indication on how we are moving. Child obesity stood at three per cent against a target of 3.4. Stunting among children under five stood at 25 per cent against a target of 26 per cent.

Wasting at 2.9 per cent against a target of three and teenage pregnancy at 24 per cent. This is high and should be a concern to all of us that our daughters and younger sisters are still getting pregnant during their teenage periods.

The intermediate outcomes

We are saying that the use of modern contraceptive is at 33.3 per cent against a target of 30 per cent. This has been rising but we need to do more to see that the women in Uganda are using contraceptives.

The unmet need for family planning has fallen to 27.2 per cent against a target of 24. Per capita Outpatient (OPD) attendance was at 0.97 against a target of 0.98. Pay attention to this. Bed occupancy rate stood at 104 per cent against a target of 65 per cent, meaning that we still need more beds compared to the over-congestion in our hospital admission wards.

The requests by the honourable members that we need to expand our infrastructure in terms of health centres is backed by data that we even have many floor cases in our health facilities. We shall seek support when we come here for resources to build health centres and upgrade many more.

We see that the population with access to safely managed sanitation has increased surpassing the annual target of 23 per cent. However, access to basic sanitation, that is improved toilet coverage, has stayed at 31.1 per cent below the target of 36.

I have disturbing reports in the ministry in the areas including Busoga and Mayuge where communities still do open air defecation. You find that even the local leaders glorify that kind of behaviour. I urge the Members of Parliament that we need to work together to get on the ground and sensitise our people and ensure that we address these issues.

THE SPEAKER: Did you say open what?

DR BARYOMUNSI: Open air defecation – *(Laughter)* – In other words, people –

THE SPEAKER: I last heard about open mining in Zambia. Open what? Open cast. I did

not know about open air - I also know about open air crusades.

DR BARYOMUNSI: I will at some point bring you statistics for each district. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Minister of Health, that is our role as leaders to mobilise our people.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Absolutely.

THE SPEAKER: To move away from open air to closed air. *(Laughter)*

DR BARYOMUNSI: We want to work together because those are the people we represent in this House; to help them get the correct messages and support them to get where we want them to be.

Annual deliveries at health facilities increased to 71.8 per cent achieving the annual target of 69 per cent. HIV viral load suppression rate among people living with HIV overall has remained high at 97 per cent, achieving the target although the concern is still among the paediatric age groups. This means that people living with HIV are accessing ARVs, taking them religiously and then they are getting viral load suppression.

I was also given a report recently that Paediatric HIV is a big problem. I was given a report that in Uganda we are getting a challenge where women test HIV negative when they come for antenatal care but along the process of pregnancy, they turn positive.

Somebody made a dramatic remark: what is wrong with us human beings? That for animals, they abstain from sex when they are pregnant but for us human beings, even when we are pregnant, that we – Paediatric HIV among children is becoming a challenge.

THE SPEAKER: You will tell us your medical findings. About the motivation of that.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Yes, Mr Speaker. I am raising these because these are advocacy issues, which we should take down to our people and educate them.

HPV coverage: HPV is human papillomavirus. This is the vaccination we give girls of 10 years to prevent this viral infection which predisposes girls and women to cervical cancer. That is HPV. HPV coverage for girls at 10 years is 109 per cent, meaning many girls are getting the vaccination, which is quite good.

At output, we also see a positive trend. We observe that the proportion of children under one year who are fully immunised is at 83 per cent. We need to work together to raise these numbers so that all the children get their immunisations. This is short of the target of 86 per cent, due to inadequate outreach sessions implemented during the year that affected optimal service uptake.

However, for Measles Rubella second dose coverage, we recorded an improvement to 68 per cent. I had made a statement on this in the House earlier on when I was talking about the campaign, that Measles Rubella we give two doses. So, for the first dose, we get over 90 per cent. The second dose, we are at 68 per cent.

I thank Members of Parliament and leaders, when we mobilised for the recent immunization campaign against Measles Rubella, we had a target of reaching 7,645,000 Ugandan children, but we managed to vaccinate 8,500,000, which is 110 per cent attainment of our target. So, we exceeded the target that we had set, and I want to appreciate the Ugandan parents and guardians and all the leaders who mobilised.

Pregnant women receiving iron and folic acid supplementation on first antenatal care visit declined to 62 per cent from 67 per cent the previous year, largely because of lack of availability of commodities.

HIV positive pregnant women initiated on antiretroviral treatment declined by 8 per cent to 87 per cent from the previous year, which is way below the 96 per cent annual target.

We also give figures about TB and other illnesses.

Institutional mortality risk. The institutional maternal mortality risk per 100,000 deliveries has declined a bit to 57 from the 83. That is good, the lower the better.

Institutional perinatal mortality rate per 1000 births also declined. When mortality declines, that is positive; that is good. 14.5 is below the target of 16.5.

Coverage of Health Centre IVs that are fully functional, offering blood transfusion and cesarean sections, reached 66 per cent, exceeding the 64 per cent target. Continued investment is required to sustain blood transfusion and cesarean section capacity. So, we use those two markers: ability to transfuse with blood and ability to carry out C-sections to measure the functionality of our Health Centre IVs.

The proportion of national referral hospitals and regional referral hospitals with functional neonatal intensive care units increased to 26.3 per cent, and the coverage exceeded the financial year 25/26 target of 20. So that is also good. However, priority should be given to specialised staffing, equipment, and availability of essential commodities at all the regional referral hospitals.

In the next paragraph, I talk about the community health workers, giving the figures that the health sector has continued to improve the services at community level with an improved coverage of community health workers. Parishes with at least two functional community health extension workers have increased to 41 per cent against a target of 10. Villages with at least two Village Health Teams (VHTs) stand at 52 per cent against the target of 30 per cent. I did pledge earlier on to bring a standalone paper on community health workers so that I can show you which districts have been covered, which districts are yet to be covered, in what period, for us to appreciate that program.

Road traffic mortality rate per 100,000 population is still a big challenge at 35.4 against a target of 27.7. These increasing deaths from road traffic injuries are largely driven by factors such as poor road infrastructure, weak enforcement of road safety policies, and unsafe road user behaviours.

The coverage of ambulances by constituency still stands at 56.7 per cent, with only 200 out of the 353 constituencies equipped with an ambulance. The subregions of North-Central Uganda, South-Central Uganda, Bunyoro, Bukedi, Bugisu and Ankole have the least coverage of constituencies with ambulances.

I have provided a table showing the regions from Acholi to West Nile, the number of constituencies in those regions, the number of boat ambulances. Just the other day, the Hon. Mulyanyama was asking for an ambulance for Kiyindi, and I am going to provide it. I have got an answer for him.

Then, the number of road ambulances that we have, the coverage and then the percentage. You can see that Karamoja is doing well. Out of 17 constituencies, 16 have ambulances. Even Kampala is doing well. Out of nine constituencies, seven constituencies are covered. Even Teso, out of 24, 18 are covered. In Bugisu, out of 23, 11.

As I had communicated earlier, we have some modest resources, and I think every year we shall have resources to procure ambulances, and this kind of information informs us on how to allocate the ambulances, so that those that are not performing as well become the priority areas to be considered, like Bugisu. Moreover, given the terrain, the mountainous nature, and the hard-to-reach areas, you definitely need to be prioritised over other areas, but we are committed to ensuring that the whole country is covered.

The coverage of constituencies with a functional Health Centre IV or a community hospital still stands at 63 per cent against a target of 65 per cent, although a few Health Centre IIIs are still being upgraded to Health Centre IVs and community hospitals. The coverage will continue to improve.

As I had presented earlier, we have programs like Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers Program II (UgIFT) II and others, where we shall be upgrading a number of health centre IIIs to IVs, a number of health centre IVs to community hospitals and also constructing health centre IIIs where they are not. So, we shall ensure that progressively the whole country gets covered.

I have provided a tabular presentation about coverage. For instance, the first table shows that out of the 146 districts, we have 72 hospitals; we have 66 districts with hospitals and 80 districts without hospitals. So, we have – I know honourable members have been writing, it is okay, but we also have data. So, when we are now identifying which areas to support, we are guided by this information.

We also state that out of the 353 constituencies that we represent, 276 have either a health centre IV or a hospital and 77 do not have either a health centre IV or a hospital.

The subcounty coverage with at least a public health centre III and above; out of the 2,191, we have up to 638 subcounties without a health centre III or a hospital bigger than that. Through our programmes and projects, we are going to ensure that all these get covered progressively.

5.0 Disease burden

Government health facilities accounted for 77 per cent of all outpatient attendances, followed by private-not-for-profit at 13 per cent and private-for-profit facilities at 10 per cent. This shows that the majority of Ugandans prefer Government health facilities because the data shows that, for outpatients, the Government facilities handled 77 per cent of the cases.

Over 66 per cent of patients sought care at lower-level facilities, that is, health centre III and health centre IV, reflecting increasing confidence in Uganda's referral system following recent upgrades of health centre IIIs. Malaria, cough/cold (without pneumonia), and urinary tract infections remained the three leading outpatient conditions.

The number of confirmed malaria cases, including those from the community, reduced by eight per cent - and let me say, we have a programme of distributing mosquito nets in several parts of the country. I think we shall write to update you on how the nets are going to different districts so that you can be part of the mobilisation and informing our communities so that we are in the know as members of Parliament.

5.2 Injuries and emergency medical services

The OPD attendances due to injuries fell in the reporting period. Motorcycle accidents accounted for 56 per cent and motor vehicles 17.2 per cent of road traffic injuries, with Kampala having the highest number of cases, followed by Busoga and Lango. I think this is very significant. We need to come up with progressive policies to handle motorcycles and boda-boda transport because when you go to Mulago Hospital, the budget for surgeries is consumed by accidents of boda-bodas in and around Kampala. So, it is a very big observation we are seeing.

Gender-based violence accounted for 11 per cent of injuries, up from nine per cent in the previous year, signaling a need for strengthened protective services. I must report that I was in Kabale, Mr Speaker, and I asked the Director of Kabale Referral Hospital: "Which cases do you get here?" She told me, "Oh, malaria here is low because of the temperatures in Kabale; the main cases are non-communicable diseases and violent trauma."

She said, "These Bakiga/Banyakigezi take alcohol, fight, injure each other, go home, and beat their wives." So, I am putting on notice the leaders from Kigezi, including myself - Even husbands are beaten. *(Laughter)* So, this was a report from the doctors.

My colleagues from Kigezi, we have to get down and harmonise our people, or we get courses for them. There are specialised courses in anger management; we should train our people on how to manage anger to reduce this burden of violent trauma which is there.

5.3 Mental health

Mental health conditions presenting at OPD rose steadily from 455,153 cases in Financial Year 2021/2022 to 666,239 cases in Financial Year 2024/2025, with females constituting 57.4 per cent of patients. So, there is an increase in mental health challenges although this contrasts with what I found in Butabika. I was at Butabika National Referral Hospital for mental health and they told me that of the cases in Butabika, 70 per cent are males, versus 30 per cent females.

When I asked about the national prevalence of mental health challenges, we are around 12 per cent. So, when I am counting 100, when I say 1, 2, 3, the 12th will be mentally -

THE SPEAKER: Where did you end, 12? *(Laughter)*

DR BARYOMUNSI: Mr Speaker, at that percentage, I was trying to compute; when you look at the total number of members of Parliament, it would give you around 40 per cent of us. If you take that national average of 12 per cent and multiply by the number of MPs in the 12th Parliament, it would mean around 40 in number, of us. *(Laughter)* I was hoping maybe mixed across. So, I am just saying mental health conditions are a challenge, and we should pay attention to that issue.

Epilepsy accounts for 44.9 per cent, unipolar depression 15 per cent and bipolar disorder 10.8 per cent were the leading conditions. Bipolar means that when somebody has a bipolar condition, they have extremes. There are times when he has what we call mania. Mania is when you are excited; everything is hyper. Even appetite, libido is hyper – *(Laughter)* - and everything is hyper. Then you swing into depression, where now everything is low. That is a bipolar condition.

So, epilepsy, unipolar depression and bipolar disorder were the leading conditions with the highest burden reported in West Nile, Busoga, and North Buganda and these regions are represented here. We shall investigate further as a ministry to know why these regions may be posting higher rates of mental health illnesses. This upward trend underscores the need for continued investment in mental health services at all levels of care, including integration into primary health care.

I will summarise the later parts, but I am giving more detail on these because they tell you where we are standing as a country, but the later parts I will just summarise.

5.4 Inpatient admissions and mortality

Inpatient admissions rose by 10.4 per cent with children under five accounting for 39.5 per cent of admissions. Health centre IIIs accounted for the largest share of admissions of 32.8, while national and regional referral hospitals carried the heaviest daily patient loads of 56 to 67 patients per day.

Malaria: 26.8 per cent, pneumonia, septicemia - Septicemia is when you get a bacterial infection in the bloodstream. That is what septicemia is. Septicemia accounted for 4.5 per cent, and neonatal conditions – Neonates are live babies who are between the age of zero and 28 days. That is a neonate. So, when you are in Parliament, like in the first week, you are a political neonate – *(Laughter)* - Whereas infants are up to one year. Some of you are political infants in Parliament because you have not completed one year in Parliament – *(Laugher)*- I am just using those examples for us to understand a neonate and an infant. Neonatal conditions accounted for 4.3 per cent. These were the leading causes of admissions.

On mortality, neonatal conditions accounted for 14.9 per cent, pneumonia 8.3 per cent, and malaria 5 per cent. These remained the leading causes of in-facility deaths, with 32 per cent of neonatal deaths attributable to premature babies.

A total of 2,128 confirmed malaria deaths were registered at health facilities with sharp regional disparities again. North Buganda recorded the highest number of malaria deaths, followed by Bunyoro, Karamoja, Acholi,

while Kigezi, which registered eight cases, and Ankole reported lower numbers of malaria deaths.

Notably, deaths due to hypertension rose to 4.5 percent of all in-patient deaths from 2.8 per cent. While deaths due to injuries fell by 14.9. These deaths from hypertension speak to the rise in Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). The honourable colleague from Kole had a question for me about the rising challenge of Non-Communicable Diseases. It is not only in Kole, but we see it across the country. This is an observation we have made.

In section six, we talk about essential medicines and health supplies. We are saying that we are not able to meet the financial needs regarding the medicines which we require. We have a funding gap of $491 million. The Development Partners have been contributing up to 64.3 per cent of the funding, with the Government providing 35.7 per cent.

There are now policy changes in funding, say from the United States. The Development Partner funding is reducing, and therefore we need to put resources into buying our own drugs to serve our population. Therefore, honourable members, we should note with concern that reporting performance and commodity availability declined due to funding disruptions following the US Government stop-work order, with medicine stock status reporting completeness falling as low as 3 per cent in April 2025.

The average national availability of the 50 tracer commodities stood at 62 per cent. Tracer commodities are a few drugs that we pick out and use for monitoring. If you find them in a facility, then they give you a picture. We are saying they stood at 62 per cent. It means that we need to put more resources into procuring medicines and other pharmaceutical supplies.

We also speak about laboratory services. The second paragraph under that, we are saying test menu implementation improved with facility level from 47 per cent at health centre III to 75 per cent at regional referral hospitals. This indicates that laboratory services tend to be much better at higher level health facilities like national referral hospitals and regional referral hospitals, but when you get down to health centre IIIs and health centre IVs. We need to step up our action to ensure that we have high quality and efficient testing services.

On blood transfusion, the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services was able to meet the target in terms of collection. They achieved 101.4 per cent of the target. However, meeting the target as planned is different from meeting the country's clinical demand for blood. For instance, health facilities ordered for 594,022 units of blood in 25/26 but only 70.6 per cent of that demand was met.

Therefore, we call upon all of us to always donate blood when called upon so that we have blood in our hospitals. It is painful to see a patient die in your hands as a doctor when the patient required just blood transfusion and you did not have blood available. Let us always heed to the call to donate blood.

Regarding the safety and the quality of the blood that we correct, the blood safety continues to improve. For instance, the HIV seroprevalence among the donors has continued to fall. It fell from 0.92 per cent to 0.7 per cent because when you donate, that blood is tested to ensure that we give safe blood to the recipient. We have also continued to improve testing of the blood.

In 9.0, we talk about radiology services. In Uganda, radiology services are delivered across various levels of health care facilities from regional referral hospitals to district-level health centres. The radiology and imaging services nationwide are available at six national referral hospitals, the 16 regional referral hospitals, 200 general hospitals, and 258 Health Centre IVs.

The growing diagnostic fleet includes 570 both standard and mobile X-rays, 52 CT scanners, 21 C-arms, 19 mammograms, three catheterisation units, six Cobalt-60 machines, and 10 Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scanners. There are three at the Government

hospitals and others in private institutions. I think the three are at Mulago, Mbarara, and Butabika, where we have MRI services. We plan to avail those MRI services in the other hospitals.

The distribution of radiology services by level of care includes: at the national referral hospital, we have advanced ultrasound, X-ray, CT, MRI, mammography, fluoroscopy, and others. At the regional referral hospitals, we have advanced ultrasound, X-ray, CT, fluoroscopy, and MRI. At the general hospital, Health Centre IVs, you can see the kind of services that we have.

The only challenge I have seen since I entered the ministry, at times the X-ray and these machines when they break down, our system has been slow in having them worked on and repaired. However, we are streamlining all that so that if an X-ray machine or any of these services breaks down, then it is urgently repaired and services are not interrupted.

Mr Speaker, regarding the health infrastructure, Uganda's health infrastructure agenda is anchored in the National Master Plan for Health Infrastructure Development, Expansion, and Maintenance ranging from 2025 to 2040. In other words, we have a master plan where we have to provide these health facilities in all your constituencies and subcounties, and ensure that the whole country is covered.

We have a 15-year strategic framework which is aligned with the Constitution, Vision 2040, NDP IV, and SDG III, aimed at accelerating Universal Health Coverage. I can also add the NRM manifesto.

The Government policy is to ensure that every constituency has a Health Centre IV, which we are now going to upgrade to a community hospital, and a subcounty to have a health centre III. However, given that we are going to be deploying medical officers, doctors, at health centre III, we shall also have to expand the infrastructure so that a doctor is not just redundant there. He will perform even some minor surgeries and treatments, and also link with the higher-level health facilities. So we are instituting all these reforms to ensure that Ugandans have access to health care.

The challenge, with a population of 49.9 million and growing is that infrastructure has not kept pace. Critical gaps remain across every tier of the system, including shortfalls of three national referral hospitals and three regional referral hospitals. In other words, we are going to create three more national referral hospitals and three regional referral hospitals, which I can confidently say include Tororo Hospital. Yes. We are going to upgrade.

THE SPEAKER: That is the first time you are saying something relevant. *(Laughter)*

DR BARYOMUNSI: Yes. We have lined up hospitals, including Tororo Hospital, to be upgraded to a regional referral hospital as well as Kapchorwa and others. Then 38 general hospitals, 125 health centre IVs, and 488 health centre IIIs.

I must say, last time I presented about the U-gIFT project, I instructed my engineers to review the costing so that we are able to construct many more health facilities with the resources we have. So we should be able to support your constituencies and communities with upgrades of health facilities, and where there are no health facilities, we construct.

Government has delivered significant results, including rehabilitation of 18 general hospitals, upgrading of 407 health centre IIs to health centre IIIs, and construction of 38 new health centre IIIs. Government has installed 14 ICUs, 14 CT scanners, 20 new X-ray units, and an MRI machine at Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital, among other investments in blood banks, laboratories, incinerators, and specialised care units. I would like to thank our Government Chief Whip. She has been overseeing the health sector for the last 10 years, and a lot of investments have been made.

So as part of the way forward, priority investments that we have lined up include building a national trauma hospital at Naguru. Like I said earlier on, three new national

referral hospitals, three new regional referral hospitals, including the one I have stated. Five city hospitals across Kampala's divisions, 38 new general hospitals, expansion of referral hospital bed capacity, upgrading of 125 health centres III to health centres IV, construction of 488 new health centre IIIs, and strengthened systems for maintaining health infrastructure and equipment. This will be done in a phased manner to ensure that we cover the country.

These investments will expand equitable access to care, reduce congestion at referral hospitals, strengthen emergency and specialised services and build a more resilient health system implemented in phases aligned with the Government's planning and budget cycles. We shall cover all regions of the country because all Ugandans, wherever they are, need these improved services.

On health financing, Mr Speaker, for the Financial Year 2026/2027, the total health sector resource envelope is Shs 5.23 trillion. This is an increment from Shs 5 trillion in the preceding year. In 2025/2026, the Government of Uganda contributed 72.5 percent, which is approximately Shs 3.629 trillion, which was a 4 per cent increase in domestic financing over the previous year, while donor financing contributed 27.5 per cent. Notwithstanding this growth in domestic commitment, the health sector's approved budget constituted 6.1 per cent of the national budget, an increment from 5.6 per cent in the preceding year, a trend that still falls short of the Abuja Declaration target of 15 per cent and this House should keep that under close scrutiny.

Mr Speaker, while we appreciate the progressive increment in the budget of health, it is still inadequate to cater for our needs. In 2001, our Presidents and Heads of State met in Abuja and committed to increasing the national budgets for health to at least 15 per cent. So for us, we are at six per cent.

So if we are to meet our health needs to have the health centres, the ambulances, the medicines and the services which our people need, we appeal to Parliament to let us work faster towards reaching that target, that commitment of 15 per cent, to enable us to address the health needs of our Ugandan citizens.

But let me add to that sentence, as I summarise it, that out-of-pocket expenditure remains high. Ugandans still have to pay out of pocket. As a ministry, we are exploring different health financing options, and I will soon come to this House with a Bill to address health insurance. I am finalising the Bill, which I will take to Cabinet and then bring here so we can see how Ugandans can afford health services.

I wish to caution health workers across the country to desist from the diabolical act of extorting money from Ugandans. It seems to be widespread. The other day I met development partners from an organisation called Enabel. They are Belgians. They are supporting a project in Rwenzori and Busoga. When they were reporting to me, they reported that one of the problems, the challenges on the ground, is health workers extorting money from our poor patients.

The other day I said on television that I hate to see a health worker being handcuffed, especially because they have extorted Shs 20,000, Shs 50,000. For instance, there is a case I saw in Kiryandongo where a doctor had extorted Shs 150,000 from a pregnant woman who was in labour. It is a bit shameful for us health workers. We have increased the pay of health workers, and we remain committed, as a Government, to further increasing it. So please, the health workers watching this session, desist from extorting money from these poor Ugandans.

Where the services are free, please provide free services. Where a service has a lawful charge, they should put a sign within the hospital premises indicating the cost. As I saw at Kabale Hospital, whatever is lawfully charged is posted everywhere. When you come, you will know, because we offer grade A and grade B services in hospitals, from general hospitals upwards. We have two types of services. Free medical services and private medical services, where you can pay if you are able or if you are

in urgent need and do not have time to wait; that provision is there.

We are streamlining communication within our health facilities so that when patients come into the hospital, they know whether any lawful payment is required; any payment you make must be accompanied by a receipt. If we get any health worker on the wrong side of the law, we shall be a little bit harsh, have them arrested, prosecuted, detained, and punished in accordance with the law.

Mr Speaker, I move to the conclusion. In 12, we are speaking about performance of local governments and health facilities. The national average score on the local government league tables rose from 73.6 per cent in the Financial Year 2023/2024 to 76.9 per cent, with 50 per cent of local governments scoring above the national average of 75.4 per cent.

So, we measure how the districts are performing. Top-performing local governments included: Kiruhura, Bundibugyo, Mbale, Lira City, and Amolatar, while South Buganda, North Buganda, and Bunyoro regions recorded the lowest regional performance. I think I should also generate a list from our league tables. I may not present it on the Floor, but I will circulate it to all Members, so that you see where our districts fall in terms of performance. We send resources to the districts, and the local governments implement these programmes. As the Ministry of Health, we assess how they perform.

So, I congratulate those who performed well, but also urge those who are not performing as well to pull up their socks. I do not see my district among the best or the worst. We are somewhere in the middle, but we should all work hard to improve our district's performance.

We have also issued an instruction: we do not want a district or any agency to return money at the end of a financial year, when our people are in critical need of services. We do not have health workers; when we give a district money, it pays wages, fails to recruit, and returns the money. We are working hard to penalise whichever entity falls short, because the money should improve our health care.

At facility level, public facilities accounted for 83 per cent of outpatients and 73 per cent of inpatient services delivered nationally. As I said earlier, public facilities are performing well, but we continue to receive complaints and concerns from private not-for-profit health facilities. These are the health facilities under the faith-based institutions: the Catholic Church, the Church of Uganda, the Muslim faith, and the Orthodox, because we have enhanced pay in the Government, and the health workers want to shift, but we are working with them because we are not competitors.

We also have an arrangement and partnership with a private not-for-profit. We extend grants to these hospitals and also second health workers to these facilities. I am meeting with the Inter-Religious Council next week to discuss strengthening the partnership through grants and the workers we second there, so we can work in harmony. We do not want those hospitals to be destabilised because of the policies on the Government side.

Among specialised institutions, the Uganda Cancer Institute registered 8,372 new patients in the year, Uganda Heart Institute performed 201 pediatric surgeries and 123 adult cardiac surgeries, and Kiruddu National Referral Hospital conducted 19,729 dialysis sessions. The Government commends Mbale Regional Referral Hospital because of its high-performance score -*(Applause)*- of 67 per cent and Mengo Hospital 55 per cent for leading performance among the regional referral hospitals and the private non-for-profit hospitals. Among the regional referral hospitals, Mbale performed best -*(Applause)*- and among the private not-for-profit, Mengo performed best.

Mr Speaker, we are improving services, and the other day I officiated at a ceremony to discharge a patient successfully treated with a bone marrow transplant at the Uganda Cancer Institute. They can now do bone marrow

transplants *(Applause)*, and Mulago Hospital can also conduct organ transplants.

In September, they did kidney transplants, which were very successful, and the Uganda Heart Institute is also doing open-heart surgery. We are moving; we need support from Parliament and the Government because our ministry's goal is to reverse medical tourism in Uganda. We want to build the capacity of our hospitals, including private hospitals, so that few, if any, Ugandans are referred abroad.

One of the reasons why patients of cancer are referred is for diagnosis and staging of cancer. However, I thank Parliament for approving resources in the past. We are now equipping the Uganda Cancer Institute with state-of-the-art equipment, and soon we should be able to do procedures that previously required people to travel elsewhere, here at Mulago in the Uganda Cancer Institute.

Regarding section 13, I will speak about the ongoing sector reforms.

We continue to advance key reforms to strengthen the sector's foundations heading into NDP IV, including finalising the Ministry's Strategic Plan, aligned with other national instruments. We are preparing to launch the Uganda Malaria Elimination Strategic Plan. We want to have zero malaria deaths by 2030, and you know we now even have a vaccine against malaria. We are also exploring other measures to control malaria. We are looking to roll out the national integrated, interoperable digital platform. We are actually trying to digitise the healthcare system across the country.

We are also reforming the health workforce, including inviting and attracting Ugandans in the diaspora, because we have many specialist doctors living outside Uganda, especially at hospitals like Lubowa Hospital and the Aga Khan Hospital being constructed in Nakawa. These are going to be super-specialised hospitals.

So, we are trying to attract Ugandan specialists who are in the diaspora- Canada, the US and Europe to come back and be able to serve Ugandans through those hospitals, plus Mulago and the other hospitals -*(Interjection)*- Yes, Lubowa Hospital is on course. We are doing all this to improve performance in the health sector.

Strengthening accountability, curbing absenteeism and ending the theft of medicines in public health facilities

We are instituting several measures to curb absenteeism, theft of medicines, and general laxity within the health sector. For instance, I have outlined several measures.

i) We are carrying out facility-level verification audits; some announced and others unannounced;
ii) We are strengthening -

THE SPEAKER: Minister, you should have concluded.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Absolutely. These are the last pages, sir.

iii) We are strengthening biometric attendance monitoring at health facilities, so that we are able to monitor the attendance of our health workers;
iv) We are also expanding the Electronic Logistics Management Information System to track medicines because there has been a concern. This Parliament has been enhancing the budget for medicines.

However, at our health facilities, patients complain that out of three or four medicines, they are given only one or two, and they have to buy the others. When you speak to health workers, they say it is because of the large number of patients, but we also have evidence, to an extent, that these drugs are being leaked.

Therefore, one measure we are instituting is a digital system that can track all drugs from when they leave National Medical Stores until a patient receives them, so we can track each pellet or drug that leaves. We will also recruit and deploy pharmacists and other specialists;

every medicine we spend a coin on ultimately reaches the patients who benefit.

We are also tightening enforcement of sanctions against health workers who are absent and may be found on the wrong side of the law. This includes strengthening inspection of private clinics and pharmacies that may be in possession of government drugs because these drugs are embossed with the "Government of Uganda, Not for Sale".

We encourage you, honourable members, when you are in the communities, to feel free to do spot checks in pharmacies and drug shops. If you find those Government of Uganda drugs there, it means they have been stolen. They are there unlawfully and we can apprehend the owners of those facilities. There are a range of measures which we are instituting to address this.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, under 13, we outline a number of challenges which include:

i) Underfunding;
ii) Decline in donor financing;
iii) Lack of health insurance;
iv) Understaffing. Our staffing level today is at 34 per cent. We aim to increase it to at least 55 per cent in the medium term;
v) The rising cases of malaria and non-communicable diseases (NCDs);
vi) Issues of infrastructure which I have raised but we want to address them;
vii) Cross-border public health emergencies like Ebola and other diseases; and
viii) High rate of population growth in Uganda. It also undermines the achievements which we register.

Going forward and in conclusion, Mr Speaker, I want to assure the House that the Ministry of Health is committed to working with Parliament. We appeal to you that, as the budgeting process starts, we need more resources to address the concerns of Ugandans.

We also appeal to Members of Parliament to be part of the campaign because, as we have been saying, when you look at the disease burden in Uganda, up to 75 per cent of the diseases which afflict Ugandans are preventable. We want you, as Members of Parliament, to remain the voice so that we can educate and sensitise our people.

Like my honourable colleague was saying, Bilharzia is a big challenge. What we shall do as the Ministry of Health is to give you as much information in simple language, so that you can use it to draft messages that we can give our people, in order to be able to prevent and control most of these diseases.

This ultimately means that we shall have fewer patients in our health facilities and maybe we shall need less resources for medicines and others. We pledge to work with all of you to address the health concerns of Ugandans. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker and honourable members. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: I am at a loss. The minister was speaking about health, and we thought he would take a few minutes, but he did not. Health is broad. Give me a few minutes; I want to try to practice democracy from the Speaker's chair.

Education and health are among the most important services we need. *(Applause)* Before education comes, you must be alive. We need to do justice because you have mentioned the performance of the health and education sectors.

Each constituency represented in this Parliament needs to have an input. *(Applause)* It will not be fair to close out some other Members due to time because the voters will ask, "Why didn't you talk about our constituency?" We need to move together. First, let us agree that everyone should move together with those two ministries.

We have one other item of the PAC (COSASE) report, which is 36 pages. Shadow minister, I thought you would do that when start the debate, so that you do not lose your momentum. My own inclination now is that we defer the debate on these two statements -*(Applause)*- to Tuesday, so that the Order Paper is not crowded.

We want to give each statement paper one hour of debate, so that people who care about their constituencies – *(Hon. Alenyo rose_)* – You come and sit here. *(Laughter)* That shows the demand, and that one hour will not be enough.

We can consider maybe two hours each – *(Applause)*- and Members should come with statistics. I heard Bugisu has 23 constituencies but only 11 have ambulances. How do you go back when this Parliament has given you the opportunity at the beginning of the term to make a case for your constituencies?

You have to make a case on health service delivery, education service delivery, the roads, electricity and water. Not that the rest are not important but those are core. What will bring you back here is when those people know you are working for them.

Now, the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (PAC-COSASE); did you say that you could present in five minutes? Can we endure 10 minutes just to have it on record? We are not going to debate it. We shall debate it after the two.

He is a lawyer, and those ones talk more. If he goes beyond 10 minutes, then the microphone will go off and, automatically, we shall ask the record to capture the whole report. At least some of you are seated there and have time to stretch. However, just imagine the Speaker. You sit here and cannot stretch. I pray you understand the stretch I am talking about.

Next item. Ten minutes.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (COMMISSIONS, STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES) ON THE REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE UGANDA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION FOR THE AUDIT YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

7.04

THE CHAIRPERSON, PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ON COMMISSIONS, STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES (Mr Muwada Nkunyingi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Auditor-General's report on the financial statements of the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) for the audit year ended 31 December 2025 was laid on the Table and subsequently referred to the Public Accounts Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (COSASE).

The committee examined the Auditor-General's findings and recommendations, together with the Uganda Human Rights Commission's audited accounts, to ascertain whether the funds received by the entity were utilised in accordance with the intended purpose in executing its established mandate.

The committee held meetings and reviewed relevant documents - I will skip, in the interest of time, but the report is uploaded. The committee held in-house meetings to receive briefings on the Auditor-General's report. The committee further held four interfaces with the Uganda Human Rights Commission and one interface with the former accounting officer, Ms Lucy Ejang Margret.

The committee considered the Uganda Human Rights Commission's financial statements on revenue performance, expenditure performance and balance-sheet analysis. On page five, the committee made recommendations on the Commission's financial statements for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

On budget performance, before the recommendations, the committee noted that Government support to the Uganda Human Rights Commission rose significantly, as seen in the additional resources from the Treasury during the period under review.

Despite Government intervention, there are continued backlogs in inspections of detention centres, the conclusion of tribunal cases, outstanding investigations and delayed recruitment that have persisted since 2022. The inability to conclude tribunal cases undermined access to justice during the just-concluded strategic plan for the Financial Years 2020/2021 to 2024/2025.

The Uganda Human Rights Commission showed poor allocative efficiency of resources, with employee compensation costs far exceeding the statutory limit of 65 per cent of recurrent expenditure, as enshrined in the Treasury Instructions, 2017.

The committee recommends that the Uganda Human Rights Commission should implement its budget as planned to meet its mandate. Additionally, the Commission should adhere to the statutory limits on employee costs as a percentage of recurrent costs, as provided for under the Treasury Instructions, 2017;

Secondly, in accordance with section 76(1) of the Public Finance Management Act, Cap. 171, the minister responsible for the institution should report to Parliament and explain the matter.

Observations and recommendations on specific audit queries: Failure to clearly define procurement items in the procurement plan

The Auditor-General noted that, contrary to regulation 6(a) of the PPDA (Procurement Planning) Regulations, 2023, some procurements in the Uganda Human Rights Commission's detailed procurement plan were not clearly defined. For instance, the plan included broadly defined activities such as welfare and entertainment, inland travel, meetings with identified stakeholders and consultative meetings, instead of the actual goods or services to be procured, such as hotel services, catering services and stationery.

The committee observed on page six that the accounting officer's failure to ensure user departments submitted clearly itemised, specific individual procurements when preparing the procurement plan made it difficult to determine precise procurement requirements, estimate costs accurately and plan and manage the procurement process.

It is a standard operating procedure for all procurements to have a clearly itemised list of activities rather than ambiguous statements and figures. No amount of explanation can justify such practices by an entity that has previously been involved in public procurements.

Management's explanation that the user departments have since been sensitised on the issue does not cure the damage already caused by the anomaly; it is a post-mortem intervention without a guarantee against recurrence.

Furthermore, whereas the PPDA Regulations, 2023 require the Procurement and Disposal Unit to update the procurement plan of a procuring and disposing entity whenever necessary during the financial year, and whereas the submitted updated procurement work plan for the Uganda Human Rights Commission shows procurement items to be clearly defined and itemised, it relates to the Financial Year 2025/2026 and not 2024/2025. This means that, during the year under review, the Uganda Human Rights Commission did not update and itemise the procurement work plan as required.

The committee recommends that the accounting officer should oversee procurement planning from start to finish to ensure all procurements are clearly defined and documented.

The committee further recommends that the accounting officer adopt standardised procurement procedures, conduct proper needs assessments to minimise uncertainty, delays, and unnecessary costs, and take personal

responsibility for any loss resulting from negligence.

On page seven, we continue with the unimplemented procurements. The Auditor-General noted that the Uganda Human Rights Commission did not execute a procurement to complete the partitioning of its head office, worth Shs 70.41 million, despite receiving the required funds.

Furthermore, this procurement was erroneously reported as completed in both the memorandum Statement of Performance in the financial statements and the Quarter Four performance report, contrary to the actual implementation status. This contravenes section 60(2) of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act, Cap. 205, which requires a procuring and disposing entity to plan its procurement in a rational manner.

The committee observes that the action by the accounting officer of diverting allocated funds for office partitioning to procurement of furniture without prior approval from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and the explanation that the decision was informed by the impending relocation of the Uganda Human Rights Commission to the new JLOS House, scheduled for December 2025, is not sufficient since the reallocation to JLOS House was not an abrupt occurrence. This is violation of sections 14(3) and 21 of the Public Finance Management Act, that that requires strict compliance with the budget and prior approval by the minister of the virement. This was an offence under Section 77(1) of the Public Finance Management Act, for diverting funds and making unauthorised commitments.

The committee was unable to ascertain whether even the purchase of the said office furniture indeed happened, since no proof was presented to the committee. Failure to execute and accurately report on the procurement indicates that the accounting officer did not adequately discharge the accounting officer's responsibility prescribed under the PPDA regulations.

The entity showed weakness in procurement planning, contract execution, performance reporting and oversight by the accounting officer, resulting in a mismatch between reported and actual implementation status of the activity, contrary to the PPDA regulations, which require accounting officers to ensure successful execution of procurement, disposal, and contract management processes and contract implementation to be undertaken in accordance with agreed terms.

The committee recommends that;

i) The accounting officer (and we refer here to the former accounting officer) should be held for the diversion of public funds, and the Inspectorate of Government and the Directorate of Public Prosecutions should take appropriate action.
ii) An audit be conducted on the assets allegedly procured using the diverted funds.

The accounting officer should ensure that all procurement, disposal and contract management processes are undertaken in accordance with the PPDA requirements and approved contract terms, where the entity maintains adequate documentation of contract implementation including timely follow-up and monitoring of contract performance to strengthen procurement and contract management oversight.

The accounting officer should take steps necessary for strengthening procurement planning, contract execution, monitoring and performance reporting through instituting periodic verification of reported implementation status against actual progress.

The committee further recommends that the accounting officer provide supporting documentation on procurement to ensure accuracy and reliability of procurement plans, contract monitoring, records and performance reports.

Also, to ensure proper documentation, justification and approval of procurements before implementation and where changes

occur, the procurement plan should be promptly and formally revised to reflect the approved alteration to enable the plan to remain accurate, transparent and aligned with the actual procurement requirement.

Low bidder participation

In accordance with Section 46 of the PPDA Act Cap. 205, all public procurement should be conducted in a manner that maximises competition and achieves value for money.
An analysis of the bidders' participation, based on the comparison between the number of shortlisted bidders and the actual participants, revealed a low bidder turnout. For example, in two procurements valued at Shs 233.9 million, as shown in the table. For all these procurements, only one out of five shortlisted bidders responded.

The committee observed that:

Low bidder turnout limits effective competition and defeats the motive of enhancing competition to achieve value for money.

It observes that the accounting officer did not demonstrate how she had ensured that procurement opportunities were sufficiently publicised and that realistic provisions are made for mobilisation and logistical challenges associated with projects located in remote areas in order to enhance competition, promote value for money and facilitate timely project implementation.

The committee recommends that the accounting officer should adopt measures to attract more bidders to enhance competition and ensure value for money.

On contract deficiencies

Regulation 50 of the PPDA Act requires the accounting officer to appoint a person with appropriate skills and experience from the user departments to be the contract manager. The regulation further gives guidance on the contract management records that should be monitored for proper contract management, including contract management plans.

The Auditor-General had noted within the audit report that for contracts valued at Shs 1.72 billion awarded during the year, the accounting officer appointed contract managers and the respective officers accepted their appointments. However, there was no evidence of contract management plans, periodic management reports, contract-related correspondence, site meetings, minutes, monitoring reports or a contract register to track the progress of awarded contracts.

The committee observes that inadequate contract management and monitoring may have exposed the Government to risks of delayed implementation, poor quality outputs, cost overruns and failure to detect and address contract deviations on time. It further weakens accountability and makes it difficult to establish whether the Shs 1.72 billion worth of contracts were implemented effectively and achieved value for money.

The committee recommends that:

Administrative sanctions be taken against contract managers of the Uganda Human Rights Commission who failed to perform their duties.

All parties to contract management must perform their roles as stipulated by regulations to ensure successful completion of contracts.

The accounting officer should strengthen contract administration in compliance with the PPDA contract regulation, 2023 by maintaining requisite contract management records to promote accountability, economy, efficiency and effective and value for value for money.

Management of non-current assets

Lack of asset management policy

Instruction 16.9.1 of the Treasury Instruction, 2017 requires the accounting officer to assess the overall performance of non-current assets

regularly and systematically for functionality, utilisation, physical and financial performance using key performance indicators and targets.

The Auditor-General noted that the Uganda Human Rights Commission did not have an asset management policy with documented procedures for monitoring non-current asset utilisation and, as a result, asset downtime reports were not maintained for all assets that were not operational.

The committee observations

Lack of an asset management policy increases the risk of undetected underutilisation or misuse of assets, leading to inefficient resource allocation and unmeasured service delivery outcomes and failure by the accounting officer to ensure that the Uganda Human Rights Commission has in place an asset management policy violates the Public Finance Management Act and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards requirements and poses a risk of loss, theft, fraud and irregular disposal due to lack of verification, maintenance and clear roles.

The committee recommends that:

Accounting Officer should, within three months of adoption of this report, fast-track the development of the Uganda Human Rights Commission asset management policy. The Uganda Human Rights Commission should implement annual asset verification and update the IFMS asset register to ensure accurate reporting and compliance.

Omissions and inconsistencies in the asset register

The committee noted that instruction 16.6.1 of the Treasury instruction required the accounting officer to maintain an electronic and manual register in Form (TF 26) for all assets that contain at a minimum the following: date of purchase of the asset, the supplier, the type and description of each individual asset.

Contrary to the above, a review of the asset register revealed that the asset register did not indicate the physical location, users of the assets and condition of the assets, among others.

Assets with a net book value of Shs 334.8 million that were disposed of still formed part of the asset register and were still being depreciated.

Assets with a net book value of Shs 2.74 million had no registration or tag numbers, which made tracking of these assets difficult. There were variances between net book values in the assets register and net book values in the memorandum statement of stores and assets.

The committee observes that:

i) The absence of key information such as physical location, users, condition, disposal dates and disposal proceeds renders the assets register materially incomplete and not compliant with the Treasury requirement;
ii) The presence of disposed assets in the asset register, and their continued depreciation and lack of registration, weakens asset accountability, tracking, and safeguarding;
iii) There are significant discrepancies in the reported value of assets, indicating weaknesses in asset management and financial reporting;
iv) The Accounting Officer's explanation was that data cleaning was still ongoing confirms that the reconciliation process was incomplete at the audit;
v) Documents submitted to the committee as annexures on omissions and inconsistencies in the asset register and conclusion of the asset verification of all fixed assets and update of the fixed assets register show minor details of the four categories of assets among the many, namely Light ICT Hardware, among others.

Recommendations

i) That the Accounting Officer should ensure that all assets are accurately recorded, tagged, and assigned to the responsible custodians, with complete

information on location, condition, acquisition, registration, and tag numbers, and promptly remove and account for disposed or lost assets;

ii) The Accounting Officer must reconcile the assets register with the Statement of Stores and Other Assets, general ledger and financial statements, investigate variances, and ensure all acquisitions, transfers, disposals, and depreciation adjustments are properly documented and recorded;

iii) As well, the Accounting Officer must finalise the ongoing data-cleaning exercise within three months, conduct a full physical verification of assets, resolve outstanding discrepancies, and introduce regular management review and monitoring of asset records.

3.2.5.3 Failure to dispose of vehicles that have exceeded their useful lives-

THE SPEAKER: You have exceeded your useful time.

MR NKUNYINGI: I am almost concluding. On failure to dispose of vehicles, the committee recommends, on page 15, that;

i) The Accounting Officer should liaise with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for additional funding to allow Uganda Human Rights Commission procure new vehicles in a phased manner;

ii) The Uganda Human Rights Commission dispose of all obsolete and uneconomical vehicles in accordance with the Treasury instructions and replace them with cost-effective alternatives;

iii) The Uganda Human Rights Commission strengthen fleet management and budgeting to ensure timely replacement of vehicles and adequate funding, thereby reducing maintenance costs and preventing further depreciation of public assets.

3.2.5.4 Underutilisation and improper reporting of Uganda Human Rights Commission's land

Section 32 of the Public Finance Management Act requires the Accounting Officer to be responsible for the management of the assets and inventories of the vote. A review of the details of the six pieces of land owned by the Uganda Human Rights Commission revealed that;

i) Only two pieces of land in Gulu and Moyo are fully developed, one of which is occupied;

ii) The structures on Buganda Road in Kampala are partially used as a library despite being condemned as unfit for occupation by KCCA;

iii) Three pieces of land in Soroti, Masaka and Lira are not developed and remain unoccupied;

iv) A review of the Uganda Human Rights Commission's assets register revealed that the three pieces of land in Soroti, Moyo, and Lira were omitted from the register.

The committee made several observations and recommends that;

i) The Accounting Officer should follow up with the Minister of Local Government to obtain the necessary approval and embark on the process of titling the Uganda Human Rights Commission's land in Lira;

ii) The Accounting Officer must expedite the conclusion of the feasibility study to ensure that a Public-Private Partnership is entered into to develop the land at Buganda Road;

iii) Must follow up with the Masaka District Local Government to ensure that a new piece of land is allocated to the Uganda Human Rights Commission to replace the affected land;

iv) Also follow up with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and other development partners to provide funding to develop the land in Soroti.

3.3 Review of the overall performance of the entity's strategic plan

The committee made observations that;

i) Partial implementation of the Uganda Human Rights Commission strategic plan points to inadequate resource allocation that renders critical activities unimplemented; and
ii) Misalignment of resource allocation to non-priority areas denied the entity from meeting its strategic objectives over the strategic plan period.

The committee recommends that;

i) The Accounting Officer should plan for the allocated funds in line with the core mandate and priorities of the Uganda Human Rights Commission;
ii) The Accounting Officer should ensure that unimplemented activities are reassessed, and if found relevant, roll them over to the next strategic plan and prioritise their implementation to ensure effective service delivery.

The committee also made observations on review of the implementation of the strategic plan and made recommendations on page 20, also made recommendations on revenue performance, and on performance of non-tax tax revenue.

Mr Speaker, on page 23 the committee made observations and recommendations on utilisation of Government warrants, but more specifically, allow me to go through the observation of the committee on case management on page 24.

A case management

Article 52 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda mandates the Uganda Human Rights Commission to investigate the violation of any human rights, including the provision of compensation to victims of violations of human rights or their families.

The Auditor-General conducted procedures to establish whether the Uganda Human Rights Commission has managed to carry out one of its core mandates of addressing human rights complaints effectively and promptly and noted the following issues;

Case registration on the Human Rights Integrated Information System

The Auditor-General established that currently, the system allows for responsible staff in complaints management to capture complaints of alleged human rights violations on the system, and management of these complaints through the various complaints management processes or stages as stipulated in the Uganda Human Rights Complaints Handling Procedures Manual Handbook.

Out of the 272 complaints received by the Uganda Human Rights Commission and registered, the regional offices only registered 80 on the system, leaving a balance of 192 complaints as non-registered.

There is a table on page 25 that tabulates the performance. The committee on page 25 made the following observations;

i) That failure to embrace the Human Rights Integrated Information System by regional offices will lead to no value accruing to the Uganda Human Rights Commission's investment in the development and deployment of the system;
ii) Sticking to a manual system instead of a digitised one only makes the process of complaint filing and tracking slow and difficult to assess in comparison to the electronic data.

The committee recommends that the Accounting Officer should fast-track the review process by the systems unit and ensure timely response to or rectification of issues identified in order to put the Human Rights Integrated Information System to its intended use.

The committee looked at the status of complaints management at the investigation level. A review of the status of complaints received as at 30 June 2025 revealed that the Uganda Human Rights Commission was able to investigate 36 per cent of the total complaints received as summarised in the table shown below.

Further analysis of the partially investigated complaints revealed that 264, that is, 35 percent of the complaints have been at the investigations level for more than two years despite Section 6.7 of the Complaints Handling Procedure Manual, 2015 requiring the investigation process to be concluded within eight months of receiving the complaint. There is a table below that shows the chronology.

The committee made the following observation on page 27:

i) That delayed investigations lead to further loss of evidence as a result of the death of complainants, while some complainants lose interest in the complaints, and this hinders service delivery in Uganda Human Rights Commission's core mandate;
ii) The delayed investigations lead to delayed consideration of deserving human rights violation cases, and subsequently deny would-be deserving cases the desired justice in a timely manner.
iii) When potential witnesses or victims lose interest or die because of delayed investigation, the Uganda Human Rights Commission fails to perform its core mandate.
iv) On page 27, the committee recommends that the Uganda Human Rights Commission investigate and hear human rights violation cases without delay.
v) Appropriate action should be taken against the Uganda Human Rights Commission officers who abate such delays without reasonable cause.
vi) The accounting officer should liaise with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for additional funding to allow the Uganda Human Rights Commission to procure additional means of transport and, going forward, prioritise the completion of the partially investigated cases.

On the status of complaints management at tribunal level:

This was one of the critical areas that the committee interrogated. The Auditor-General, relying on the advice of the Attorney-General, observed that the tribunal comprises the chairperson and at least three members of the Uganda Human Rights Commission, in line with the quorum provided for by Article 51(2) of the Constitution.

The tribunal's analysis of cases for the Financial Year 2024-2025 revealed that of the 1,154 human rights cases brought forward, only 61 were closed, as indicated in the table on page 28.

The Auditor-General equally established that although the Uganda Human Rights Commission was fully constituted, there was a 7.7 reduction in clearance rates during the year under review- that is, the financial year- and the accounting officer explained that the Uganda Human Rights Commission has previously been relying on Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS) funds to conduct tribunal hearings by holding at least one session per region.

However, with additional funding, the Uganda Human Rights Commission indicated the intent to hold two sessions per region.

The committee was further informed that some human rights cases within the Uganda Human Rights Commission were closed rather than considered at the discretion of the Director of Legal Investigations and Pauline Mutumba Nansamba.

While interfacing with the committee, Ms Pauline Mutumba Nansamba-*(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: You have done 30 minutes instead of ten.

MR MUWADA: Mr Speaker, I have two pages left, and I am moving to the observations and conclusion.

THE SPEAKER: Please do.

MR MUWADA: While interfacing with the committee, Ms Pauline Mutumba Nansamba confirmed that indeed several cases were

closed by her, relying on guidelines by the Uganda Human Rights Commission, which guidelines or approvals were denied by other Commissioners as non-existent, and that the Uganda Human Rights Commission has not sat to sanction several such case closures.

The Chairperson of the Uganda Human Rights Commission, Justice Mariam Wangadya, informed the committee that she takes personal responsibility of all closed complaints or cases by Ms Nansamba Pauline Mutumba.

Ms Pauline Mutumba Nansamba could not avail copies or prove the existence of such guidelines or authority sanctioned by the Uganda Human Rights Commission.

While engaging with the Uganda Human Rights Commission, the committee was informed of an impasse between the chairperson and other members of the Uganda Human Rights Commission, which prevented the chairperson from convening tribunal meetings to hear and dispose of cases filed before the Uganda Human Rights Commission.

The committee was further informed of a long-standing dispute between the former accounting officer and the chairperson concerning alleged financial impropriety, mismanagement, misuse, and forceful possession of institutional assets, arbitrary decisions and issuance of instructions contrary to the law.

The committee learned that these challenges had become increasingly difficult to manage, ultimately prompting the chairperson, Justice Wangadya, to submit a notice of resignation to the appointing authority.

While appearing before the committee, the chairperson, Justice Mariam Wangadya, told the committee that the appointing authority declined her resignation by phone and instructed her to report to work. She further mentioned that she is unable to convene tribunal sittings because of internal disputes with her colleagues.

The commissioners attributed the tribunals' non-attendance partly to the chairperson's failure to convene them and to a lack of adequate funds to facilitate the sittings.

The committee observed that the unjustified conflicts among senior officials indicate weaknesses in leadership, internal control, communication and adherence to established governance procedures, and the inability to convene tribunal meetings and dispose of pending cases has undermined access to justice and the Uganda Human Rights Commission's constitutional mandate to protect and promote human rights.

Allegations of financial mismanagement, misuse of institutional assets, arbitrary decisions and unlawful instructions raise concerns about compliance with the public financial management, accountability, and public service standards.

The unjustified closure of filed human rights violation cases by a single individual, Ms Pauline Mutumba Nansamba, Director, Legal, Investigation and Compliance, without tribunal sittings or approval, undermined the core mandate of the Uganda Human Rights Commission and denied complainants justice.

The committee recommends that the Uganda Human Rights Commission should immediately revise its approach on interim and permanent closure of filed cases and ensure that cases are subject to proper legal and fair processes that promote fairness and transparency rather than treating closure of cases as an administrative matter by a singular individual.

The Chairperson, Justice Mariam Wangadya, based on her own admission and acknowledgement of liability, should accordingly be held liable for any cases irregularly closed by the Uganda Human Rights Commission.

The tribunal should reinstate all human rights complaints that were irregularly closed and manage them properly in accordance with the law.

The members of Uganda Human Rights Commission, including the chairperson, should be retired in public interest to put an end to the unjustified conflicts that have affected the effectiveness of the Uganda Human Rights Commission.

Uganda Human Rights Commission should strengthen leadership, communication, internal controls and governance mechanisms. The Uganda Human Rights Commission should resume tribunal meetings and expedite disposal of pending cases to ensure access to justice.

The Uganda Human Rights Commission should strengthen financial and administrative oversight, including independent review and investigation of suspected impropriety and the Office of the Inspectorate of Government and the DPP should take appropriate action against implicated members and staff of the Uganda Human Rights Commission

Ageing of cases at tribunal level: On ageing of cases at the tribunal level, the committee observed the serious concern over the persistent backlog and the excessive ageing of tribunal cases, noting that 1,093 cases were pending, with 563 cases having remained unresolved for over 10 years, including 11 cases pending for more than 21 years.

The committee observed that such delays undermine timely access to justice and public confidence in the Uganda Human Rights Commission.

The Uganda Human Rights Commission lacks a time-bound backlog clearance strategy supported by adequate funding, timely appointment of tribunal leadership, and increased hearing sessions to dispose of aged cases and prevent further accumulation.

The committee recommends that the Uganda Human Rights Commission should develop and implement a time-bound backlog clearance strategy with clear annual disposal targets, dedicated funding and regular monitoring to resolve aged cases, particularly those pending for over 10 years.

It should strengthen the tribunal's operational capacity by increasing hearing sessions and providing adequate professional staff at various regional levels and resources to prevent further accumulation of cases.

The committee further recommends that the Uganda Human Rights Commission Act should be amended to provide for the conduct of operations of the tribunal and the commission in the absence of the chairperson, and to address the necessity of the tribunal disposing of complaints for all regions in a timely manner.

Inspection of places of detention, which was our last substantive observation
The Constitution requires the Uganda Human Rights Commission, among other things, to visit jails, prisons, and places of detention to assess and inspect conditions and make recommendations.

A table shows a review of what was visited and the low performance in visiting detention centres.

On page 33, the committee observes that failing to carry out inspections in line with the Uganda Human Rights Commission mandate may mean that human rights violations for persons held in detention have gone undetected, unreported, and uncorrected.

The committee recommends that the Uganda Human Rights Commission should prioritise and undertake regular inspection of all places of detention to ensure compliance with its constitutional mandate.

The Uganda Human Rights Commission should strengthen its planning and budgeting for detention inspections to ensure timely detection, reporting, and correction of human rights violations.

Now the Committee made other incidental matters on page 33. At the start of the interface, the Committee observed that governance and management of the Uganda Human Rights Commission were sharply divided

over allegations of abuse of office, financial mismanagement, and corruption, placing the Human Rights body at the centre of the dispute. The Committee was informed that the various parties had headed to the Committee's advice during the interface to reconcile and that the reconciliation efforts had commenced. There was, however, divided opinion among Uganda Human Rights Commission members on an agreeable mediator.

The Committee observes that the Commissioners and Chairperson are engaged in both internal and public wrangles, including counter-accusations of mismanagement, abuse of office and corruption. For example, Rtd Col Stephen Basaliza, one of the Commissioners, informed the Committee that the Committee interface gave him a rare opportunity after several months to see, meet and even requested to greet the Chairperson in the Committee because they could not meet at the Commission.

Both the Commissioners and Chairperson conceded to the existence of serious disputes and mistrust that cannot allow them to meet physically. The Commissioners revealed that even the recent 2026 meeting of the Uganda Human Rights Commission with political parties was without their knowledge, input or invitation.

The Committee further observes that the statutory nature and mandate of Uganda Human Rights Commission touches the fundamental values of human rights which cannot be subjected to or dependent on whether parties in charge are in harmony or not. Despite the circumstances surrounding the Uganda Human Rights Commission, minimal efforts have been undertaken to revitalise the entity for proper functioning to achieve the intended statutory values and goals that touch human rights protection and safeguards.

The Committee recommends that members of Uganda Human Rights Commission who are found culpable for the dysfunctionality of Uganda Human Rights Commission be retired in public interest and a new leadership team be constituted to salvage Uganda Human Rights Commission for effective execution of the Commission's statutory mandate.

Payment of Uganda Human Rights Commission funds into personal accounts

During the interface, the Committee established that two personal assistants to the Chairperson, Ms Mariam Wangadya, had improperly received various sums of money purported to be for facilitation of official Uganda Human Rights Commission activities contrary to the applicable financial guidelines and the law.
Ms Nsamba Pauline, a former personal assistant to Ms Mariam Wangadya, and Ms Doreen Nabate, the current personal assistant to Ms Mariam Wangadya, both acknowledged and confirmed the receipt of various amounts of money on quarterly basis meant for official activities under the office of the Chairperson. Ms Nsamba Pauline Mutumba confirmed to the Committee

THE SPEAKER: This is clear. That one is clear. Members are going to-

MR MUWADA: The Committee observes that paying Uganda Human Rights Commission activity and program funds into private and personal accounts for personal assistance contravenes the law, undermines accountability, exposes public funds to misuse and misallocation, and exposes the Government to financial loss.

The Committee reviewed certified copies of bank statements of Ms Mutumba Pauline Nsamba and Miss Doreen Nabate for the period and have made the relevant attachment.

The Committee recommends that the office of the Inspector General of Government should investigate the matter conclusively with a view of recovering all monies irregularly paid and received by personal assistants and prosecuting all culpable officers involved in the irregular approval, payment and receipt of public funds.

The culpable officers of Uganda Human Rights Commission should not only account, but should also refund all the money.

Lastly, Uganda Human Rights Commission generators in personal use;

The Committee learned that without approval or proper process, property including generators was taken and converted into personal use at the personal premises or homes of the Chairperson Ms Mariam Wangadya and Commissioner Crispin Kaheru.

Other commissioners protested the practice and mode of allocation classifying it as diversion of Uganda Human Rights Commission property from public to private use.

Crispin Kaheru informed the Committee that he has since removed the generator from his home and returned it to Uganda Human Rights Commission. This development was confirmed by the accounting officer.

The chairperson Ms Mariam Wangadya also confirmed that she is in possession of a generator belonging to Uganda Human Rights Commission at her home. She was open to returning it and challenged the accounting officer to retrieve it from her home at any time.

The Committee recommends that the accounting officer should recover Uganda Human Rights Commission generator from the home of the Chairperson Ms Mariam Wangadya.

The accounting officer must ensure that going forward, all assets, including donations, are properly registered, and all asset movements are tracked, documented, and their value and condition assessed. The recovered assets or generator should be technically assessed to ascertain condition and the respective Human Rights Commission officers should be held personally responsible for any resultant damage, depreciation and technical defect occasioned by their unauthorised access, transfer, custody and use.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker and Members, the Committee concludes that although Uganda Human Rights Commission demonstrated satisfactory budget absorption and non-tax revenue performance, there is significant weakness remain in procurement, contract and asset management, strategic plan implementation, case management and institutional governance.

The Committee is particularly concerned about persistent backlog of tribunal cases, delayed investigation, inadequate detention inspection and weakness in accountability and internal controls which undermine the Uganda Human Rights Commission constitutional mandate and value for money.

The committee therefore urges the line ministry, the accounting officer and Uganda Human Rights Commission to promptly implement the recommendations of this report, strengthen governance and internal controls, and prioritise the effective and timely delivery of the Uganda Human Rights Commission's core mandate.
I pray and I implore this August House to adopt this report together with the recommendation therein. Mr Speaker and colleagues, I beg to move and I request to lay the report and minutes of the Committee proceedings. I beg to lay. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members. LOP. One minute and then Government Chief Whip.

7.49

MS SHEILAH AMANIYO (NUP, Woman Representative, Mukono): Thank you Mr Speaker. I would like to particularly thank you for accepting to hear our report on human rights which has been our cry as the alternative here and we are happy that it has been tabled.

I would like to thank the two ministers who have read to us their statements. We pray that everything the ministers have presented translates into measurable improvements in service delivery, because Ugandans need better schools, adequately facilitated health Centres, essential medicines, and access to quality healthcare.

Particularly, I would like to request Hon. Baryomunsi to provide the clearance that we requested for to go and visit Lubowa Hospital. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: LOP. No. The real Government Chief Whip. *(Laughter)*

7.51

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. You made my head feel bigger than it actually is. I wish to thank our colleagues, first the honourable ministers who presented the two reports, and the Hon. Nkuyingi Muwada, who presented the Human Rights Commission report.

Mr Speaker, we are voted to this House to do justice. Much work has been done this evening, but we have not had time to debate it.

I wish to undertake, on behalf of the party, to mobilise my team, all Members of Parliament, Independents, and the National Resistance Movement (NRM), to ensure they are organised and prepared for Tuesday's debate. For those who missed the sitting, I encourage you to go to your iPads, read, and prepare to debate this matter so we can reach a meaningful conclusion that helps our nation, Uganda. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Government Chief Whip. On my record, he is the acting one, and I want to thank the two ministers equally for the very detailed statements that they have given.

I also want to thank the Chairperson of the Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises(COSASE). Your report is very informative. We had already accessed it, so you only needed to summarise it, since you were open about it and it was already in the public domain.

We were anticipating the recommendations you gave, and I did not want to rush it, but you insisted we could do it the way we did.

Finally, I would like *Hansard* to capture the whole report, both the two statements and the committee report. Then, on Tuesday, I also want to direct the Clerk to bring the sectoral report on human rights so that, when we discuss education and health and then come to human rights, we cover it exhaustively, so we see the balance between the sectoral and accountability committee.

There is definitely something wrong. By the time you carry an institution's generator to your home, I will have come to this Parliament, but there will be no time when my personal assistant will be paid the money I am supposed to be paid.

I told the clerk that my facilitation should be paid through my account. So, this thing of giving other people obligations – so, get prepared. I am glad that the Government Chief Whip has prepared her people. I also need the Leader of the Opposition to prepare his people so that we have a research-based, evidence-based debate. Do not bring other things from the newspapers. Bring what is in the report. Next item.

ADJOURNMENT

THE SPEAKER: I thought that there was another report. *(Laughter)* The House is adjourned to Tuesday next week at 2:00 p.m.

(The House rose at 7.55 p.m. and adjourned to Tuesday, 20 October 2026 at 2.00 p.m.)