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(HANSARD)

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FOURTH SESSION - THIRD MEETING

TUESDAY, 15 APRIL 2025



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA
IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 27TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Tuesday, 15 April 2025

Parliament met at 10.10 a.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. We are continuing with the ministerial policy statements, but we shall also be handling some Bills. Today, we will handle the Sugar Bill so that we can complete the process for farmers to start benefiting from the law.

However, I will be amending the Order Paper to accommodate a forensic audit report from the Auditor-General on selected exchange transactions and utilisation of the supplementary funds provided to the Uganda High Commission in Abuja, Nigeria, during the Financial Years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. I will be amending the Order Paper so that it can be laid on the Table.

Now, let us move to matters of national importance, and I will start with Hon. Nandala-Mafabi.

10.14

MR NANDALA-MAFABI (FDC, Budadiri County West, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Recently, there was a gazette issued by the minister for gender, "*Umukuka we Bagisu*", yet, in our cultural institution, we already have a gazetted institution called "*Inzu Ya Masaba*."

It is in that regard that I would like the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development to explain how he can make two cultural institutions in one region, yet he has not de-gazetted one, and he is gazetting another one. This is causing strife in Bugisu, and people are almost killing each other because of this confusion. Mr Speaker, I beg for your indulgence.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Nandala-Mafabi. Let the minister come and explain this on Thursday. He can bring a brief statement. Yes, Hon. Sekabira.

10.15

MR DENIS SEKABIRA (NUP, Katikamu County North, Luweero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The matter I am raising is in regard to the minimum entry requirements for students who are going to enrol for certificate medical courses; that is, nursing, midwifery, lab, and others.

Mr Speaker, in the old curriculum, the student was required to have a pass as the minimum entry requirement. In the new curriculum, the minimum or a pass is equivalent to a "D". However, the Government has run adverts

only inviting students who have a “C” as the minimum entry requirement to enrol for these courses.

I am raising this matter so that the Ministry of education and Sports can harmonise this issue to make sure that all Ugandans are accommodated in the new curriculum to be enrolled for the certificate courses. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let the minister for education give a response on Thursday. Hon. Abdallah Kiwanuka and Dr Noah Musa?

10.16

MR MUSA NOAH (Independent, Koboko North County, Koboko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The matter I would like to raise is in regard to the payment of tobacco farmers. You are very aware of the story of these farmers. This financial year, Shs 9.7 billion was provided.

In February, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives verified the Auditor-General’s report and committed that farmers will be paid in March. It is now April, and farmers have not received this money. Every day, we receive calls asking when the money will be paid.

My prayers are:

First, the trade ministry should explain when the farmers will be paid.

Secondly, during the verification exercise, some farmers who lost their receipts were not considered. Contrary to that, we had a meeting on 4th April with the trade ministry and the Attorney-General’s Chambers, where we agreed that farmers who lost their receipts should get letters from the Police and the Gombolola Internal Security Officer (GISO) to indicate that indeed they lost their receipts.

These farmers have their records in the Auditor-General’s report, but unfortunately, they were not considered. Therefore, my second prayer is that the ministry should explain how they are going to handle those farmers. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. On the part of payment, this is an issue that the minister responded to last week, but I will request him to repeat himself since he is here for emphasis purposes, and also the second part of the question. Minister for trade?

10.18

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Mr Speaker, this matter came up last week. We did inform the House and honourable members who raised this matter that the verification of the farmers has been completed. We could not pay using the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS). We had to open a bank account in the Central Bank so that this money is transferred from this special account to the farmers’ accounts.

We have received all the information from the farmers. We have opened a bank account with the Central Bank. This week, we are transferring money to the individual accounts of the people who were verified. I am sure that this week, farmers will start informing you - I do not know whether they will inform you, but we will inform you that we have paid.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What about the second part of verification; the ones who lost receipts? Maybe you need to consult further.

MR BAHATI: I am not familiar with that situation, but I will cross-check and come back to you. If a farmer is confirmed by the relevant groups, then we should find a mechanism for how we should repay them.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item. Yes, procedure, LOP? Welcome back.

MR SSENKYONYI: Thank you. Mr Speaker, I thought you would do good to procedurally guide on a matter that you had guided on but has remained hanging. A few days ago, I raised a complaint asking the Government to update us on the issue of transferring files of civilians who had been incarcerated by military courts, following the Supreme Court’s decision stating

that military courts have no jurisdiction over civilians, including military personnel, on certain issues.

We have been waiting for these files to be transferred without success. It has been over three months, but that has not happened, yet you tasked the Government to get back to us on this issue.

The Government Chief Whip committed to coming to this House with a statement through the Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs. Incidentally, Hon. Obua reached out to get clarity on the exactness of what I had raised – something I appreciate him for. I gave him information, and he also captured what was on the *Hansard*.

So, I thought that his reaching out, which was a good thing, should have been followed by that statement, which they committed to bring through the Minister for Justice. So, can the Government tell us what is happening regarding this matter? I am saying this because you are in contempt of a decision of the Supreme Court.

It made its determination over three months ago and the Government committed to transferring those files to civilian courts, but that has not happened. Why is the Government okay with being in contempt of court?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Leader of the Opposition (LOP), let us handle that matter tomorrow together with the Ministerial Policy Statement for the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs. The Attorney-General will be here, so let us put him to the task tomorrow. Yes, Hon. Kanyike?

MR KANYIKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are processing ministerial policy statements. Last week, as we adopted the report of the Committee of Public Service and Local Government, I raised a question here concerning the delay in the implementation of the monies given to districts, which were curved off the new cities. Mr Speaker, Masaka District received the money on their account -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, what is your procedural matter, and which rule are you applying?

MR KANYIKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Masaka District received the -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, please listen to the presiding officer. Because where you are going - you are not on a procedural matter. Procedural matters are for issues inside here - no, I do not go through that - a procedural matter should be about what is going on here. So, when you take me to Masaka, no please -

MR KANYIKE: I was just giving a preamble before raising my procedural matter. (*Laughter*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, what is not procedurally going right here?

MR KANYIKE: Mr Speaker, thank you for the guidance. In your communication, you alluded to the fact that we are processing ministerial policy statements and they are on the Order Paper - the procedural matter I am raising is that last week we adopted the report of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government – while we are adopting these committee reports, the ministers responsible for these different entities are not doing what they are supposed to do. The Hon. Raphael Magyezi came to Masaka and overturned a decision, which had been taken by the council - (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, please, just bear with me. What you should have done is to come to my office and book space on matters of national importance. What the minister is doing outside this House cannot be a matter of procedure here. That is what I was trying to put across. When you come and ask for space to present something as a matter of national importance, I will give it to you.

However, if a minister is doing something wrong, in the ministry or anywhere else, that

cannot not a procedural matter here. And colleagues, I have always guided you not to abuse the Rules of Procedure. In fact, when you read Rule 78 of our Rules of Procedure, you realise that it guides you properly on the Rules of Procedure. That is why you should mention the rule under which you are standing, meaning something is going beyond what the rules provide for in this House.

So, honourable member, I will give you space if you want to present that matter. Next item. (*Hon. Katusabe rose*) Hon. Atkins, under what rule? Rule 178?

MR KATUSABE: Mr Speaker, thank you for the kindness and your generosity. On 25th December, we had Christmas in our homes with families and communities and on Sunday, 20th April, we are going to have Easter celebrations in commemoration of the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

However, one of our citizens spent Christmas in a prison -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Atkins, Rule 178 refers to “Functions of the Committee on National Economy.” (*Laughter*) So, what does it have to do with – Rule 176 is about the “Composition of the Business Committee” - no, I was listening properly. So, honourable colleagues, please. Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON FORENSIC AUDIT OF SELECTED FOREIGN EXCHANGE TRANSACTIONS AND UTILISATION OF SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDS PROVIDED TO THE UGANDA HIGH COMMISSION IN ABUJA

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, honourable commissioner.

10.27

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the Report of the Auditor-General

on Forensic Audit of Selected Foreign Exchange Transactions and Utilisation of Supplementary Funds provided to the Uganda High Commission in Abuja, Nigeria during the financial years 2022/2023, and 2023/2024.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Commissioner. This report has very sensitive issues, bordering on fraud, etcetera. So, it is referred to the Directorate of Criminal Investigations for further management, and then the minister responsible will be required to bring here an action-taken report, which we will go through. Thank you. Yes, point of procedure, Hon. Zaake.

MR ZAAKE: Mr Speaker, I am raising a procedural matter and seeking your guidance. Is it procedurally okay for a plenary session to proceed when there is another parallel meeting in this same building? I have just received information that there is an ongoing meeting chaired by another presiding officer in the same building, in the conference hall.

So, is it procedurally okay for that to happen? That is why most of the Members are not here, yet we are discussing very important issues related to ministerial policy statements. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, in our rules, we do not have two presiding officers - the one who is seated here is the presiding officer. That is number one.

MR ZAAKE: Information to correct my statement.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, you do not access a microphone like that. You do not dive and land on one. You seek permission, so let me make it very easy. I am not privy to what is going on – no honourable colleague.

However, I must tell you that we usually have issues, which are beyond plenary and on several occasions, whenever one of us is chairing, the other one can be handling issues as long as they are related to the running of this House.

So, that is normal because we usually do it and we work together on the same. Therefore, there is no other ongoing meeting aimed at frustrating plenary, and even now, I have some ongoing committee meetings. I, therefore, cannot stop meetings from taking place. Honourable, take it easy. Yes, Hon. Nandala.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. Our commissioner has just laid a report of the Auditor-General, which borders on fraud. Wouldn't it be procedurally right that we, as a House, move to adopt this report and ask the Criminal Investigations and Intelligence Directorate (CIID) to carry out investigations and report back?

Right now, this House is the owner of the report, and it would be good to move very well so that everybody knows that the House agreed in totality that the CIID takes over rather than going through another committee. This would be constituted as the Committee of the Whole House, if it is agreeable -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, I weighed all those options and I found that what is very critical is: one, for the CIID to look into it. We are not saying, "Go and implement"; we are just saying, "Look through this and if you find that what the Auditor-General has discovered borders on criminality, then you can go ahead and take charge together with the DPP." It is their option. That is why I felt that first adopting it here would make it a resolution of Parliament, yet what we are doing is getting the report without our resolution. We are saying, "The Auditor-General found this; kindly look into it." We do not need to make a resolution on it.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, I am not really against your ruling because in this report, there is nothing that bars any other officer of Government, like the CIID or the Inspector General of Government (IGG), from handling it. Now, since it has been laid in the House, we wanted to, as far as Parliament is concerned, let the CIID take up this matter. That is what I am trying to say, Mr Speaker. I am not overruling you, but just saying that

it would be better and decent to say, "We as a House have received the report and the whole House agrees that the CIID" – he might have already taken over, but we also say that, "He takes it over."

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Niwagaba.

MR NIWAGABA: Thank you, for giving way. You know under our rules, the Presiding Officer has wide discretion and if you fetter a discretion like this one when he has looked at the report and finds it fitting to send it directly to the CIID and you want the House to first adopt it without the House looking at it critically, don't you think that would clog the business of the House unnecessarily? Why don't you allow the decision of the Speaker, which he has taken, to take precedence, and then the House will be briefed by the respective minister at an appropriate time?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: I agree. Mr Speaker, if that is what you want, let us take it then.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You remember that is how we also handled the one of cooperatives. Hon. Sarah, before I permit you, and before you access the microphone, I need to know – on which guidance?

10.33

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Mr Speaker, last week, I raised the issue of police officers who had not been paid their salaries; some for six months, eight months, and so on. You directed the Minister of Public Service to come and give a statement here.

When she came to the Floor, she stated that the Minister of Internal Affairs would come and give a statement to this effect. I did not see the Minister of Internal Affairs for the whole of last week and neither did I see the minister here.

What has also come to my attention, Mr Speaker, is that some other police officers have reached out to me – these are lawyers. Recall that there was a decision to actually enhance the salaries of lawyers serving the police force, and these police officers actually went to court, and there was a decision of the High Court because their salaries were reduced from what they were earning. The decision of the High Court is on my phone – (*Interjections*) – Do you want me to lay it? (*Laughter*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Sarah, who are you talking to? (*Laughter*)

MS OPENDI: Mr Speaker, the point that I actually wanted to raise is that when the Minister of Internal Affairs coming to make that very pertinent statement, because the country is waiting. These are people with guns. How are these police officers surviving, Mr Speaker? Maybe that is why we are seeing all these –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us handle that matter on Thursday.

MS OPENDI: On Thursday?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yea, Thursday.

MS OPENDI: Okay. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Bahati, did you want to comment?

MR BAHATI: I just wanted to update the honourable member and the House that the Minister of Internal Affairs is actually handling that matter. On Thursday, he will update the House, but we are already handling it to address the situation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item?

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE
PROPOSED ANNUAL BUDGET
FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/2026:
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure, Hon. Atkins?

MR KATUSABE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for your generosity and kindness; I am back. Okay, if you are asking for the rule, it is rule 78 -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, who are you talking to? (*Laughter*)

MR KATUSABE: I am addressing myself to you, Mr Speaker, and just like I said, on the 25th of December, we had Christmas; the birth of Jesus Christ. On the 20th of April - this Sunday - we shall celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior.

Mr Speaker, my procedural issue appeals to your grace, mercy, generosity, and kindness. While all of us are looking forward to celebrating the resurrection of the Lord with our families, friends, and communities, there is one senior citizen, Dr Kiiza Besigye –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Atkins, I do not want it to look like I am suffocating you and denying you space, but Rule 78 (4) provides for procedure and states thus: “*Where a Member interrupts debate on a point of procedure, the Member shall state the rule of procedure he or she deems to have been breached by the Member holding the Floor or the procedural matter he or she wishes to be ruled upon, before subjecting the Member to the Speaker’s ruling.*”

A point of procedure is for what is going on in this House, okay? I know the matter. Can I guide, honourable, that you book space and I will allow you to raise it as a matter of national importance.

MR KATUSABE: Appreciated, Mr Speaker; I have no problem with booking the matter. Can that matter be accommodated in the afternoon,

because to me it has a lot of urgency, as urgent as -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, come and book the matter. I will determine when to give you time. Thank you.

MR KATUSABE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, Committee on Health. As the Chairperson, Committee on Health comes, in the public gallery this morning, we have a group of students from the School of Law, Makerere University.

Makerere area is represented by Hon. Bashir Kazibwe Mbaziira and Hon. Shamim Malende. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Honourable colleagues, please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Thank you.

Chairperson, Committee on Health, you have 15 minutes, and then we shall debate your statement.

10.39

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON HEALTH (Dr Joseph Ruyonga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I am the Chairperson of the Committee on Health, and you are giving me a very big task of presenting a report of a sub-programme, which has 29 Votes? But okay, I will try.

Before I present the report, I would like to lay on the Table a copy of the report, the minutes of the committee meetings, and some other important documents. One of them is Annexe 2, which is Rehabilitation/Capital Development of General Regional Referral Hospitals and National Referral Hospitals. I beg to lay.

We also have a list of health facilities, upgrades, and newly constructed facilities under the UgIFT and AMCHE programmes. That is centres II and centres III. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, the document is quite big, and it was uploaded. I will not read it verbatim,

but if you go to page number 1, you will see the votes, which are under the health sub-programme. But we can go to page 17, in the interest of time, where we have the committee's observations and recommendations. We are starting with page 17, Vote 014, which is the Ministry of Health.

- 1) The first section is about President Trump's executive orders. The committee notes that following the execution of President Trump's executive orders, the USA government withdrew financing, resulting into a funding shortage of total Shs 604 billion.

Recommendations

- (i) The Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development should find alternative financing to bridge the Shs 604 billion gap in the health sector and ensure that the key programmes continue running.
 - (ii) The second is that the Government should fast-track processing of the National Health Insurance Scheme Bill as a measure for generating domestic revenue to finance the health sector.
 - (iii) The Ministry of Health should integrate the programmes affected by the withdrawal of the USAID funding into the mainstream health care system.
- 2) The second is inadequate funding for regional equipment maintenance workshops

We can go straight to the recommendations.

- (i) Shs 2.3 billion is required to fully functionalise regional equipment maintenance workshops.
- (ii) The regional referral hospitals should prioritise the recruitment of biomedical engineers and technicians to service and maintain the medical and diagnostic equipment.

3) Oxygen plants

Page 18, the committee recommends that additional Shs 8.6 billion be provided to the Ministry of Health to complete and commission the remaining oxygen plants and additional Shs 11.85 billion be provided to procure transformers that will stabilise the power supply for the oxygen plants and newly acquired medical equipment.

4) Medical equipment

The Ministry of Health reported that it had acquired new imaging equipment, like CT scans, MRI, and ultrasound machines, for regional referral hospitals. This equipment requires constant maintenance that can cost Shs 7.7 billion annually.

The committee recommends that additional Shs 7.5 billion be provided for the maintenance of that equipment.

5) Upgrade of health centres

We can go to the recommendations on page 19.

- i) We need Shs 60 billion to complete the upgrade of health centres that had already been started.
 - ii) We need an addition of Shs 7.6 billion for equipment that will be required to functionalise the upgraded health facilities.
- 6) Inadequate funding for the renovation and equipping of health facilities. In the second-to-last paragraph, the Ministry of Health reported that in 2024/2025, it had planned for the partial rehabilitation of 13 general hospitals.

These include Kambuga, Masindi, Apac, Koboko, Kotido, Kamwenge, Kitgum, Katakwi, Amuria, Kasana Luweero, Kapchorwa, Itojo, and Muko. The total budget was Shs 39 billion, but the cumulative release from quarter 1 to quarter 3 was only Shs 12.7 billion, which is only 32 per cent.

Recommendations on page 20

- (i) The Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development should provide additional funds amounting to Shs 46 billion to complete rehabilitation, expansion, and equipping of Masindi, Kambuga, and Itojo General Hospitals, which are currently very old and dilapidated.
- (ii) The Ministry of Finance should provide Shs 20 billion, which is required to commence the rehabilitation of the foreign general hospitals, Apac, Koboko, Kotido, Kamwenge, Kitgum, Katakwi, Amuria, Kasana Luweero, Kapchorwa, in a phased manner.

The Ministry of Finance should prioritise the release of the transitional development grant to address the issues of delayed rehabilitation completion. Hard-to-reach areas, such as Mayuge, Namayingo, Kalangala, Buvuma, and the rest, should be given affirmative action regarding health service delivery.

7) Status of ambulances

There are 158 constituencies that have not received ambulances. The honourable members are complaining. Also, we have 14 boat ambulances, but very expensive to maintain in terms of fuel and servicing.

The recommendations

- i) The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development provides additional Shs 54 billion to procure 158 ambulances for the remaining constituencies, including mine. *(Laughter)*
- ii) Additional funds amounting to Shs 17 billion, that is, fuel – Shs 12.8 billion and Shs 5.6 billion for servicing, be provided for the maintenance and functionalisation of the current fleet of ambulances under the National Ambulance Call and Dispatch System.

iii) The Ministry of Health should allocate specific times and days when the boat ambulances should move so that the public is aware of the schedules.

iv) More funds should be provided to complete and add more regional call dispatch centres.

8) The organ transplant council

The Human Organ Donation and Transplant Act was assented to by the President, but we do not have a council. Therefore, we need to set up a council and if operationalised, it will be responsible for sanctioning applications of donation and transplant, setting guidelines, quality control, supervision and monitoring of organ donation and transport industry. This reduces the cases seeking these services abroad.

The recommendation

The committee strongly recommends that Shs 5 billion be provided to the Ministry of Health to operationalise the Uganda Organ and Donation Transplant Council.

9) Underfunding for public health emergency preparations

Under the public health and emergency preparations, I go straight to the recommendation.

i) We need Shs 3 billion to be provided to the Ministry of Health for it to get prepared for any emergency outbreaks by establishing and functionalising the point of entry health units at Entebbe, Malaba, Busia, Vurra and Cyanika.

ii) Shs 4 billion be provided to support the Ministry of Health in operationalising the national and regional public health emergency operation centres to respond to outbreaks.

10) Inadequate counterpart funding under Global Fund

On inadequate counterpart funding under the Global Fund, the committee recommends that Shs 9.6 billion be provided as the counterpart funding for HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria control projects because this is a requirement.

11) Status of mortuaries

On the status of mortuaries in health facilities, most of our facilities do not have mortuaries, and those which have are dilapidated and lack equipment.

Recommendation

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Health should prioritise modernising mortuary facilities by providing necessary equipment, expanding their capacity and ensuring adequate training for personnel to improve the overall quality of mortuary services in most health facilities.

12) Support to the Uganda Red Cross

Uganda Red Cross supports the Ministry of Health in emergency services, like outbreak responses and blood donation mobilisation.

Recommendation

The committee recommends that an additional Shs 3.7 billion be provided to the Uganda Red Cross Society to enable them to - the committee recommends that an additional Shs 3.7 billion be provided to Uganda Red Cross Society to enable them to support the Ministry of Health in emergency services, disease outbreak responses and blood donation mobilisation.

On page 24, on Community Health Extension Workers (CHEWs), the Ministry of Health reports that an increment of Shs 2 billion is required, as counterpart funding, for the CHEWs programme that is currently supported by donors, to strengthen disease prevention and promotion of public health activities.

The committee recommends that an additional Shs 2 billion be provided to the Ministry of Health for counterpart funding

for the community health extension workers programme, to strengthen disease prevention and promotion of public health activities.

Vote 134 – Health Services Commission

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development provides Shs 3 billion for the procurement of vehicles for the board members of the Health Services Commission, in a phased manner, starting with Shs 1 billion in the coming financial year.

Vote 127: Uganda Virus Research Institute

The committee was informed that the Uganda Virus Research Institute has five acres of land at Kamwanyi in Entebbe, which is occupied by bonafide occupants, who have made it impossible for it to develop.

The committee recommends that Shs 5.4 billion be provided to Uganda Virus Research Institute to pay off the bonafide occupants, and secure the land for development.

On page 25, there is inadequate funding for research. We can go straight to the recommendations. They need an additional Shs 1.6 billion for research.

The second is that the Uganda Virus Research Institute mandate should be amended to cover bacteria, viruses, protozoa, insects, and other microorganisms. You may think that they deal only with viruses, but there are also some other microorganisms.

Uganda Heart Institute

We can go to page 26. The newly approved staff structure is understaffed, and wages are an issue.

The committee recommends that an additional wage amounting to Shs 22.89 billion be provided to Uganda Heart Institute to enable them to fully operationalise the new approved staff structure, and enable timely functionalisation of the newly expanded Heart Institute complex, located in Naguru.

Super specialised training

The committee recommends that an additional Shs 0.56 billion be provided for the training. The training takes about three to five years.

On the regional cardiac centres, there are two established cardiac centres. There is land in Hoima and in Mbarara, but they need - if you can go to the recommendations, you will see that Shs 51 billion for the construction of the two cardiac centres.

Power connection to the new home in Naguru

The committee recommended that Shs 2.8 billion be provided to Uganda Heart Institute to connect the new Naguru Centre to a dedicated power line.

The Uganda Cancer Institute

It has two centres, one in Gulu and the other in Mbarara. The committee recommends that Shs 7.1 billion be provided to enable the Uganda Cancer Institute to operationalise the Gulu and Mbarara centres. This will help bring cancer services closer to the people in order to decongest the main cancer centre in Mulago.

Inadequate medical supplies for the Cancer Institute

They need Shs 15.9 billion to be provided.

There is the issue of funding for the Fred Hutch Centre. The Uganda Cancer Institute Fred Hutch Centre in Kampala was established with funding from the US Government. The committee was informed that USAID funding for the Fred Hutch Research Centre had come to an end. They needed Shs 6.5 billion, and only Shs 1 billion was provided. In the recommendations, they need Shs 5.5 billion extra.

Staff wages - they are understaffed. The committee recommends that Shs 42 billion be provided to Uganda Cancer Institute, in a phased manner, beginning with Shs 10 billion.

On page 29, there is the issue of inadequate funding for nuclear medicine – that is, the PET Centre.

The Uganda Cancer Institute is earmarked to become a regional centre of excellence in terms of cancer management. This includes prevention, screening, diagnosis, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and surgery, and carrying out research and training of health workers in the field of oncology.

One such project is the Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Centre. This project is important for the early detection of cancer and will greatly reduce referrals abroad. The cost of PET scans will be 30 per cent of what is paid abroad.

The budget required for the establishment of the nuclear medicine PET Centre is Shs 338 billion.

The committee recommended that the Government prioritise the acquisition of this diagnostic equipment in a phased manner. However, this has not been done. Uganda Cancer Institute requested for a supplementary allocation of Shs 92 billion that was required to meet the outstanding financial obligation under the PET project. Consequently, Shs 30 billion was allocated through the supplementary funding, creating a funding gap of Shs 62 billion.

The committee recommends that Shs 62 billion be provided for clearing the outstanding obligation on the establishment of the nuclear medicine facility - that is, the PET centre.

National Medical Stores

We can go straight to page 30. Table 10 shows the funding of the National Medical Stores. You can see what was allocated and the funding gap.

In the recommendations, which are on page 31, the first is that we need Shs 5.42 billion for the distribution of essential medicines and medical supplies, required for upgraded health centres

II to health centres III.

The second one is that Shs 25.45 billion is required to cover reproductive, maternal and child health services.

The third is that Shs 32.93 billion is required for the provision of specialist units and non-communicable diseases.

Number four is the Shs 0.87 billion required to cover funding gaps at health centres II, across the country.

Number five is the Shs 4.7 billion required for the procurement of specialised medicines for national referral hospitals - Kiruddu, Mulago, and Butabika.

Number six is the Shs 4.94 billion required for nutritional supplements, and Shs 13 billion for warehousing, distribution, and National Drug Authority verification fees.

Number seven is that the Government of Uganda should work towards creating increased partnerships and investments in African vaccine and drug manufacturing capacity to ensure sustainable, timely, and equitable access to life-saving vaccines for the country, to avoid over-reliance on donors.

There is an unpaid bill of Shs 92 billion, which is the handling fee for donated items and supplies to National Medical Stores. It has never been cleared by the Ministry of Finance, so National Medical Stores needs that money. That is recommendation number one.

Number two is that, in future, the cost of handling donated supplies should be factored into funding negotiations and agreements with partners.

Poor stock management practices

We can go to the recommendation - the first one is that the Ministry of Health should enforce strict controls governing stock management practices at its facilities.

The Ministry of Health should follow the matter of storage facilities to ensure that all health facilities have adequate and appropriate storage for medical supplies.

The Ministry of Health and National Medical Stores should develop IT tools for last-mile accountability of essential medicines and health supplies, which will keep a record of whoever the medicines and supplies are dispensed to.

On page 33, there is the issue of access to the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) health services by civilians.

The facilities under UPDF are also accessible to civilians. They used to get Shs 2 billion, but it was stopped.

The recommendation is that Shs 2 billion be reinstated to UPDF, to cater for medical services extended to the civilian population.

They have a newly established hospital at Mbuya, which accommodates 436 beds.

Recommendations

The committee recommends that the National Medical Stores be allocated an additional annual allocation of Shs 8.8 billion to facilitate the efficient operation and optimal performance of the newly established national referral hospital at Mbuya.

Uganda Blood Transmission Services (UBTS)

Recommendation

- i. The committee recommended that Shs 3.5 billion be provided to Uganda Blood Transmission Services to procure 10 more blood mobilisation vehicles that will support them in blood donor activities, given the three new blood banks.
- ii. They need the procurement of specialised laboratory blood collection and night equipment - we can go to the recommendations.

- iii. The committee recommended that Shs 3.2 billion be provided to procure blood transfusion services for the purchase of a centrifuge. The centrifuges are critical in the preparation of blood components.

Understaffing

They also need more staff for the new structure. It was recommended that they need Shs 11.7 billion. This can be done in a phased manner.

Kawempe Regional Referral Hospital

Only 46 per cent of the staff positions are filled, so we need an extra Shs 6.1 billion to raise that percentage to around 60 per cent.

Inadequate funding for medicines and supplies

The committee recommended that we need about Shs 1 billion – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me add you seven minutes.

DR RUYONGA: These are 29 Votes, but I am going to –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Committee chairperson, please first listen. Take your seat. This is not how we work on the Floor. You are a chairperson, and when you are guided, you do not start by procrastinating, and then you start - you utilise your time because we need Members to have more time for debate. We read this report because you gave it to us last week, and we need to debate it. Otherwise, if you go on reading and the Members do not debate, you will be satisfying yourself. You have seven minutes.

DR RUYONGA: Much obliged, Mr Speaker. I will now go to the general observations. I will not go Vote by Vote, but go to general observations in the interest of time, which is on page 54.

General observations and recommendations

1. The effect of oxygen plants on electricity bills

Recommendations

- (i) The Ministry of Health, together with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development and Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL) should conduct a national energy audit for hospitals to identify inefficiencies, wastage, prioritise upgrades, and recommend cost-saving interventions.
- (ii) The Ministry of Health should procure energy-efficient oxygen plants that consume less power.
- (iii) The Ministry of Health should create protocols for hospital power use to monitor and reduce electricity costs by prioritising critical equipment and enabling routine energy reporting.

2. The status of non-communicable diseases and the level of preparedness to deal with the rising challenges

Recommendations

- (i) The Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development should allocate adequate funds to cater for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) that are increasingly killing citizens silently.
- (ii) The regional referral hospitals should prioritise the procurement of essential medicines and technologies for NCDs in their procurement plans.
- (iii) The Ministry of Health should enhance preventive health measures to curb the rise of NCDs.
- (iv) The regional hospitals should introduce quality assurance systems to improve the chronic care of NCDs patients for better clinical outcomes.

3. The status of antimicrobial resistance in the Ugandan health system

Recommendations

- (i) The Ministry of Health should implement a robust Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) surveillance system to monitor resistance patterns and inform treatment guidelines.
- (ii) The Ministry of Health should promote rational use of antibiotics through education, guidelines, and policy enforcement to stop over-the-counter medication.
- (iii) The Ministry of Health should invest in diagnostic infrastructure to enable timely and accurate personal identification and susceptibility testing.
- (iv) The Ministry of Health should implement stringent infection control measures to reduce the spread of resistant pathogens within hospitals, and the national referral hospitals and general hospitals should fully functionalise their medicine and therapeutic committees to curb AMR.

4. The Non-Tax Revenue

Recommendations

- (i) The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should adjust the Non-Tax Revenue (NTR) ceiling and also return the NTR funds to the hospitals.
- (ii) The Ministry of Health should establish clear accountability mechanisms to monitor the use of NTR, ensuring funds are directed towards patient care and infrastructure development.
- (iii) The Ministry of Health should come up with clear guidelines for the utilisation of the NTR.

5. Private wings

Recommendations

- (i) The budget for private wings should be enhanced to match revenue collections.
- (ii) There should be a deliberate effort to support hospitals with capital development funding to construct and provide private wing services.

- (iii) The Ministry of Health should develop and disseminate comprehensive up to date guidelines to stabilise private wing operations.
- (iv) The Ministry of Health should provide the current private wing policy and guidelines that prohibit the recruitment of contract staff. The contract staff can be purposely used in private wing services.
6. Functionalisation of lower health facilities.

Recommendations

- (i) The ministry should deliberately improve services and supervision of lower facilities.
- (ii) They should build capacity.
- (iii) They should carry out community mobilisation to build trust in lower facilities and also finance should release funds timely.

7. Increased C-section

Recommendations

- (i) The Ministry of Health should develop and implement strict national guidelines.
- (ii) The ministry should monitor health facilities' C-section rates.
- (iii) The Ministry of Health should equip health centres with the necessary resources to support normal deliveries.
- (iv) The ministry should publish annual reports on C-section rates.
- (v) The ministry should educate communities on the benefits of normal delivery.

8. The National Health Insurance Scheme Bill

Recommendation

- (i) The ministry should fast-track the National Health Insurance Bill.

9. Access to medical services by refugees.

Recommendations

- (i) The Ministry of Health should come up with a clear policy on access to medical services by refugees and foreigners.
- (ii) The Ministry of Health should foster collaboration with neighbouring countries to share information and resources about these outbreaks and also create joint task forces to manage cross-border health threats.
- (iii) Some districts like Kampala, Nebbi, Yumbe, and Koboko, which are refugee-affected transit districts, should be considered to benefit from refugee-hosting district projects.

10. The current burden of sickle cell disease

Recommendations

- (i) The National Medical Store budget for sickle cell medicines should be increased. They need an additional Shs 1 billion.
- (ii) The different hospitals should prioritise the procurement of hydroxyurea.
- (iii) The Ministry of Health should strengthen all existing sickle cell clinics within the regional hospitals.
- (iv) National and regional hospitals should prioritise...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude -

DR RUYONGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Conclusion

The Government's place on health emphasises access to high-quality health care by all Ugandans as a means of guaranteeing their contribution to the country's socio-economic transformation.

In line with the Government's commitment to preventive health care as opposed to curative services – which are costly – more emphasis should be on ensuring equitable access to well-equipped facilities, trained and motivated

health workers, in addition to improvement in the health-care delivery system.

The committee recommends that a total of Shs 3.2 trillion, excluding Kampala Capital City Authority, the Uganda Aids Commission, and local Government PHC, of which Shs 1.628 trillion is recurrent. It includes; pension, gratuity, and arrears and Shs 1.61 trillion is development expenditure. The budget allocation for the health sector is shown in the table below. Mr Speaker, I beg to report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairperson. I will start with Hon. Ndeezi, Hon. Mudimi, Hon. Ababiku, Hon. Alex, Hon. Max Ochai, Hon. Enos, Hon. Nyakikongoro, Hon. Paparu, Hon. Esenu, Hon. Tumwine, Hon. Mary, Hon. Opendi, and Hon. Teira. The rest, first wait. Three minutes for each Member.

11.13

MR ALEX NDEEZI (NRM, PWD Representative): Mr Speaker, my concern is very specific. From both my constituency and colleagues here, I have been asked about wheelchairs for persons with disabilities. I read this report in quite fine detail to be able to identify an answer to this question, but unfortunately, no answer.

What I know very well is that once upon a time, in the 1970s, this country had the best orthopaedic services in the whole of Southern-Sahara. However, as we speak now, all these workshops have collapsed; they are not undertaking any production at all.

As we speak, people who need these appliances have to go to the private sector. You need more than half a million shillings to purchase a wheelchair. You need more than Shs 300,000 to buy a crutch; ordinary people cannot afford this.

When we made the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2020, we said that the Ministry of Health shall ensure that persons with disabilities access mobility appliances free of charge or at subsidised prices. We have been asking the

Ministry of Health to prioritise this provision of the law, but nothing has been done.

Therefore, my question to the Ministry of Health is: When will you ensure that persons with disabilities in this country get access to these services at affordable prices? Where is the plan? Where is the budgetary provision? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Mudimi and Hon. Ababiku.

11.15

MR WAMAKUYU MUDIMI (NRM, Elgon County, Bulambuli): Mr Speaker, Mbale Regional Referral Hospital is overwhelmed by a number of patients. Ten years ago, the Government initiated the construction of a surgical ward. Up to now, they have not completed it. It requires only Shs 5.6 billion to accommodate over 250 patients – it is a 250-bed capacity – yet up to now, they have not finished it.

When you visit it, patients are all over the corridors, outside, and it is now raining; there are mosquitoes affecting those who are taking care of the patients. I want the minister to tell us exactly when the Government is providing that additional money. Some time back, Parliament tried to make a budgetary allocation for it, but the money was not released.

Secondly, the policy of the Government is to have a health centre III in every subcounty and a health centre IV in every constituency. You realise that Bulambuli has three constituencies, but with only one health centre IV. By the nature of our area, a health centre IV is based in the lowland, but up there, people are struggling.

We recently had mudslides, where the only access road was cut off. The entire upper belt of Bulambuli – 16 subcounties – is on its own with no health facilities. I want the honourable minister to also tell us what happened to that.

Some time back, there was a team from the Ministry of Health and the Uganda People's Defence Forces Engineering Brigade. They

visited some sites there and even informed the *wananchi* that they were going to construct one of the facilities called the Buluganya, at my place.

It has been three years and they have never come back. They are silent, yet the *wananchi* are asking whether they were duped. I need that clarity because the current death rate in Bulambuli is very high. As I speak now, in my area, they are burying seven people today.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, there is some information I am trying to get because there is something we agreed upon in this House. The issue of a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) machine. We agreed that even if everything else fails, as a must, we must provide the money for this machine. Finance had told me they had provided Shs 35 billion, and I even communicated it here, because when I was following up, they had promised to top up and we would get the Shs 62 billion.

The committee report shows that Shs 62 billion has not been provided. I do not see it in the draft estimates that I cross-checked, so I have asked the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development to cross-check it. We agreed upon that here, and we must sort it out. I hope we can stand our ground on that.

We will work with the finance ministry so that the money for the PET machine can be provided. *(Applause)*

We cannot continue with this business of sending people abroad for cancer treatment when it has already advanced, yet it could have been detected much earlier.

That one is a deal we have made without anyone saying, "I belong here; I belong there." *(Applause)* It is for all of us. Let the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development take note of that and I hope I will get feedback before we finish debating this issue. Hon. Ababiku?

11.20

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I thank the committee for the comprehensive proposals to this House. My first issue is about the Government's effort to promote safe delivery for mothers.

The Government has scored highly in this area, but there is a big challenge because we have a shortage of maternity wards, especially in Adjumani District. The district general hospital has inadequate capacity and mothers are now being accommodated with their babies in a grass-thatched room. The rains have started. Many babies are going to die.

Honourable minister, I have written to the ministry and raised it here four times but there is no action. Who will account for the deaths of those people when they occur?

Two, I am concerned about how best we can avert unnecessary dying of our people and also better manage some of the diseases, especially Hepatitis C. Honourable minister, this matter came to your office. We do not have reagents at district general hospitals in the whole country. That is why many people die because they get tested after they have been referred there.

What the district general hospitals do is only to send the samples, and it takes two weeks for people to get their results. It is also very expensive. One patient has to pay Shs 250,000. Can we have a provision for this? It is not only for Adjumani, but the whole country.

The committee raised the issue on how to rehabilitate the mortuaries. However, Mr Speaker, there is an occurrence in our districts in relation to some deaths associated with unique cases, where people refuse to bury their deceased immediately. The hospital tries to preserve the bodies but to a limited extent. I propose that for all the district general hospitals, let us have fridges – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Niyonsaba, followed by Hon. Max Ochai.

Honourable colleagues, I have already picked this round. For those who have come late, you will forgive me.

11.23

MR ALEX NIYONSABA (NRM, Bufumbira County South, Kisoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I want to thank the able chairperson of the Committee on Health for the submission, but I have a concern.

In my constituency – I am aware that about 125 constituencies do not have health centres IV. Mine is a special one because it is next to the Democratic Republic of Congo. We have refugees coming in year in, year out and they frustrate the services of the health sector.

There is a health centre III called Muramba which is the only one that is bordering the area where the refugees come from. It is always suffocated and requires to be upgraded to a health centre IV. Also, Kisoro District is a centre for refugees to go through, but they do not actually go through; they stay permanently. So, Kisoro should be a refugee-hosting district.

That aside, Muramba Health Centre III gets deliveries of more than 10 babies per week when there are no refugees. When there are refugees, they go up to even 30 deliveries per week –(Interjection) – those are deliveries per day.

Mr Speaker, I request that the Government considers upgrading that health centre III to a health centre IV or at least a maternity centre be constructed in that area. Thank you.

11.26

MR MAXIMUS OCHAI (NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. The committee has fulfilled its constitutional mandate of presenting to us recommendations, in respect to the health sector. I would like to thank them for focusing on the Uganda Cancer Institute.

I have a patient right now in Mulago and what I have seen over the past two weeks or so is

alarming. Therefore, when the committee says that we need to support the Uganda Cancer Institute, I fully support them too – (Applause) – particularly now, when they are calling for an additional Shs 42 billion for wage. Let us support this, honourable colleagues, and request the Minister of Health to reprioritise their priorities, and ensure that the Uganda Cancer Institute is fully funded.

The other recommendation that I would like to support is in respect to increasing the ceiling of Non-Tax Revenue (NTR) by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. I request that the ministry considers this as a critical matter. Let them review their Macro-Fiscal Framework and ensure that the ceiling is lifted, so that the respective institutions get what can be used to finance health sector activities.

In addition –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like to move with you, honourable member, because I know you are an expert in budgeting.

Hon. Max Ochai was one of the top officials in the budget office in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development before coming here.

I would like to know about NTR because it must be generated by the institution that is requesting for it. Should we say the ceiling is below what they are generating and they end up not receiving their money back, which we usually do through supplementary? Otherwise, how shall we raise the ceiling for NTR if they are not generating it?

MR OCHAI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for that question. From history, projection of Non-Tax Revenue has been wanting, to the extent that you sometimes realise an amount which is far below the potential. It is very important –(Interruption)

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, Hon. Maximus is raising an issue. We note that Non-Tax Revenue is revenue collected by the ministry and is, in most cases, remitted back for

the purposes of running the activities. Studies have been done on this.

The clarification I would like to seek from you, my brother, Hon. Maximus, is; what has been collected for the last maybe three years that we, as Parliament or the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development have not allowed to be extended? We need that as empirical evidence because everybody needs Non-Tax Revenue because it will reduce the direct taxes and we shall utilise the Non-Tax Revenue.

MR OCHAI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will probably leave that to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to take up. I am not yet a minister for finance. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What Hon. Nandala has asked is what I asked about. When you recommend that we raise the ceiling for NTR, the question is: how much did they collect, and what is the ceiling?

Usually, whenever the ceiling is low, we extend this money through supplements, which is a tedious process. We ensure that all NTR goes back to the entity. Hon. Max, that is why I referred to you as a budgeting expert. You should be –

MR OCHAI: Mr Speaker, as I was saying, the Minister of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development should once again have the capacity to make a precise forecast of the Non-Tax Revenue. Once that is done, we shall get away from these additional supplementary time in and time out. That said, the report does not indicate to us in any way that the estimates for the health sector are equity-responsive.

A subregion like Bukedi, which is very disadvantaged despite the enormous resource potential, seems to have been ignored in these estimates. How I wish the Ministry of Health could tell us when exactly Tororo General Hospital will be upgraded to Bukedi Regional Referral Hospital.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Tumwine?

11.31

MS ANNE TUMWINE (NRM, Woman Representative, Ntoroko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join my colleagues in thanking the chairperson for the report. Mine is on the intern doctors. Last year, we had a backlog of intern doctors who were still waiting for placement and this year, there will be more graduates.

I do not see any budgetary provision for the placement of intern doctors in the report. Honourable minister and the committee chairperson, what is going to happen to the backlog and to the new intern students who will be graduating? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Enos?

11.32

MR ENOS ASHIMWE (NRM, Kabula County, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. When you look at all the submissions we are going to make today, they all have to do with resources. I thank the team for bringing out the issue of underfunding to the Ministry of Health, specifically on page 11.

We failed even to meet our international commitments. We signed treaties, specifically the Abuja Declaration, to have 15 per cent of our budget sent to the health sector but we have never met this target for over 24 years now.

My question is, if we have failed to meet the target of funding the sector, why don't we look at the alternatives? Why can't we fast-track the National Health Insurance Bill?

Honourable minister, please guide us because when we mentioned it to the President the other day, he said that we need to first create wealth for every household. That will not happen. It will take ages.

Yes, we can do wealth creation but at the same time, look at the alternatives that will bring solutions. The silver bullet in having all these challenges resolved is in putting more resources or finding alternatives for the resources.

Number two, is the challenge of spreading too thin and achieving nothing. In our health centres at the district level, to get equipment that can do the simplest diagnosis is becoming a problem.

Computed Tomography (CT) scans are failing us. If somebody in Lyantonde gets a brain injury, we have to send them to Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital, which cannot give them a scan. They have to send them to private clinics to do the scan, which costs almost Shs 700,000.

An ordinary Ugandan, honestly, moving from Lyantonde to Mbarara and then to a private hospital to get treatment is not helping us. Even the Shs 1 million that we are putting into the Parish Development Model (PDM) to do wealth creation is not helping them because they are spending a lot of money on health, yet we are not helping them.

Honourable minister and Government, let us fast-track health insurance. Let us help our people. We deal with infrastructure. All that we are going to mention has a lot to do with infrastructure.

The health centres IV that they had started upgrading are right now on a standstill. When we keep pushing the Ministry of Health, the issue is that we still do not have money. When we go to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, they tell us, "We have no resources," so what do we do? Every day, we are digging deep into our pockets.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Lillian Paparu, followed by Hon. Nyakikongoro.

11.35

MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the recommendation for a policy on how foreigners can get treatment or medical attention in our country.

I come from a district bordering a neighbouring country; we normally budget for Arua District

and I know that includes other districts that border other countries. And with the porous borders that we have, when we get drugs, our neighbours, especially from the DRC, for my case, get this information.

The population increases and within a week or two, the medication is done. So for me, that is a big point to note. We need a clear policy on how foreigners can get medication within our country.

I want to concur with the committee on issues of equipment. We have been making some progress in improving health services in the country. In my district, we finally had a health centre III upgraded into health centre IV.

There were some infrastructure developments done but there is no equipment and the staffing is limited. We now have a health centre IV, that is Bondo health centre IV. It is supposed to have 87 staff but we currently have only 18. I think that is something we should take note of so that we can make sense because we need the chain to the end so that the last person can receive treatment.

Finally, on the issue of the USAID funding, the committee has recommended that the Government should absorb some of these activities that were funded under that project. That is important because I know under USAID funding, there were staff that were paid in the health centres or hospitals.

Now that this money is not there, we cannot be here sitting without filling that gap. That will mean some staff will not be working and it is going to create a big gap in the country.

11.38

MS ROSEMARY NYAKIKONGORO (NRM, Woman Representative, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the issues raised. My concern is about the ambulances. We were invited and we raised the momentum of the people, and told people that they were going to receive ambulances, but up to now, nothing has been mentioned.

This goes back to the Members of Parliament who think that Members from certain constituencies are not working hard because they have not delivered, yet we were all invited as Members of Parliament, and they promised that each constituency is going to receive an ambulance.

When it comes to access to health, previously, we thought that it was the distance from homes to health centres.

Now that the Government has put up infrastructure, the issue of staffing, like my sister has said. I would like to thank Minister Anifa Kawooya, who came to open some of the health facilities in our area, which were built by the Government. However, most of them do not have staff and equipment.

We wonder why the Government spends money on infrastructural development without planning for other factors such as equipment and staffing. I do not know when the Government will lift the ban, especially on employing health workers. We know that health is wealth.

Mr Speaker, on the issue of Shs 2 billion for community health workers, I think this can be considered to facilitate them so that they can continue doing the work. We know that funding has reduced with Trump's orders and other funders', but as the Government, I remember we had planned for the Contingency Fund – that, each year, we should budget for it. This would supplement these uncalled-for budget gaps – is that so?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Unforeseen.

MS NYAKIKONGORO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. That is why you are so brilliant. *(Laughter)*- for the unforeseen gaps.

Mr Speaker, I was showing, on my phone to my neighbour here, that there is one of my constituents who sent me a message that the anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs have reduced in places where they were getting them from; they cannot access them anymore. As a country, we had fought the battle – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kasajja says: “Colleagues, money will come.” *(Laughter)* Let us have Hon. Oseku, Hon. Sarah Opendi, Hon. Teira and Hon. Joan Namutaawe. That means that I will have shifted to the Opposition side. I am done with this side – I am cautious about what I am doing; to ensure that at least someone speaks from each subregion. I have noted Hon. Chemonges for Sebei, Hon. Stella for Karamoja – I will see, honourable colleagues. I am cautious.

11.41

MR RICHARD OSEKU (NRM, Kibale County, Pallisa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the chairperson of the committee for the report. In the committee's observations and recommendations, they pointed out, in number five, health centres II that were upgraded to health centres III.

However, I would like to report that some of those health centres, which have already been upgraded from health centres II to health centres III, are still operating on the budgets of the health centres II. They do not get the PHC non-wage – it is not upgraded. They are entitled to result-based funding. A case in point is Oladot Health Centre III in Pallisa District. They are not getting this funding. I would like to know from the Minister of Health, when they are going to upgrade funding for these health centres III.

Two, Hon. Ochai has just mentioned that Bukedi Subregion faces challenges. We have Pallisa General Hospital, which apparently serves about six districts. Up to now, it has not been renovated and not fully equipped. We have been asking that it be upgraded to a regional referral hospital or a hybrid of sorts.

Honourable minister, we have raised this issue to the health inspection team that came to Pallisa and the other areas in 2024. Up to now, we do not seem to see the plan to attend to these very pertinent areas.

Finally, our people are suffering because there is a high demand for health services. However, in these district general hospitals, for simple

services such as a scan, laboratory service or surgical procedure, you must pay money – and not little money. For example, for a caesarean birth (C-section), you must pay Shs 300,000+ to a doctor.

I have been asking this question and I have raised it before to the Prime Minister. Why is it that the doctors must ask for money to carry out a surgical procedure on a patient? Is this not part of what they are paid for? We need this to be clarified by the honourable minister because this is going on – *(Member timed out.)*

11.45

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for their report.

Mr Speaker, I want to entirely agree with you that we must prioritise the purchase of the PET Machine so that we end the challenge that Ugandans face.

There is actually wrong diagnosis going on in this country. By the time they discover that somebody has cancer, the disease would have reached stage three or stage four. Therefore, we must find the Shs 62 billion. What is available is Shs 30 billion. What they need is Shs 92 billion. Let us put aside everything for the sake of ensuring that there is proper diagnosis. *(Applause)*

Of course, we have been told that they receive 7,000 cancer patients annually and these are the ones that are diagnosed. However, there are people who have cancer out there and they even do not know.

Secondly, can we focus instead of doing so many things at the same time? Uganda Cancer Institute already has a regional centre, fully constructed and commissioned, in Omoro and another one in Mbarara. There is a funding gap of Shs 15.9 billion. What has been provided is Shs 9 billion. Can we prioritise that? What goes on at the Uganda Cancer Institute – honourable colleagues, if you get there, you will actually feel sorry for them. It is terrible. It should not be a centre of excellence for oncology in the

East African region. I support the committee's report, saying we should prioritise.

For Uganda Heart Institute, they just want to start constructing. Can we focus on the Uganda Heart Institute at Naguru and have it operational, first, before we think of starting other centres outside? Uganda Heart Institute is already running – I talked about the two. Can we first prioritise that and have it operational before we think of Hoima and another centre that they are thinking about?

I want to move to the other – the digital X-ray machines. Thank you, Ministry of Health, for procuring this equipment. We have had a challenge of X-rays in this country. When I was the Minister of State for Health (General Duties), we took a new digital X-ray machine to Tororo. Unfortunately, five years down the road, this equipment has never worked. Just a small thing – *(Member timed out.)*

11.48

MR JOHN TEIRA (NRM, Bugabula County, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank you, chairperson of the committee, for your submission.

I join my colleagues in applauding the Government for its efforts to operationalise the regional cancer centres. What is obtaining in the Uganda Cancer Institute is terrible. The only way we can decongest it is to make these regional centres operational.

There are certain facilities that we should also start considering to put in some of our hospitals at the district level, especially with cancer scanning, because most people realise they have a cancer problem when it is too late.

Therefore, we should have a mechanism where information can be disseminated at the local level to enable them screen for cancer. Also, those who require further screening can be referred, when we at least have a mechanism to detect it at the district general hospital.

Secondly, the Shs 77 billion funding gap for the health centres IV in constituencies that are

lacking should be given priority, in my honest opinion. Some of us represent constituencies that are by the river banks and lake shores, and there is a lot of activity related to health in these areas. The people have a general bias of moving from those areas to go and seek medical attention.

Therefore, we get a lot of challenges related to health in those areas. If these facilities are near them, there can be an easier way of convincing them to get diagnosed and medical support.

Thirdly, on the issue of ambulances, I do not know which criteria were used at the start for those that were distributed, but we need to have a uniform approach. If we say that we are allocating money, let us have all the constituencies covered in one go, rather than saying that those who speak well or less should be given an opportunity and priority. That is not helping us and we are getting a challenge in this area.

Lastly, these issues tend to be very sentimental, but the presence of the minister for finance would speak so much to the priority given to these issues at this time, but none of them is here. I find it out of proper procedure. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I agree with you, honourable colleague, because the finance ministry has many ministers. However, it seems like when Hon. Musasizi is not around, no one else can be – it is a pity – yet the budget is their process.

I had picked Hon. Joan Namutaawe, Hon. Zaake, Member for Kalangala, Member for Bukomansimbi, Hon. Ebwalu and Hon. Santa.

11.51

MS JOAN NAMUTAWE (Independent, Woman Representative, Masaka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the funds allocated to the National Medical Stores to procure drugs for our hospitals. Last week but one, I was in Masaka Regional Referral Hospital with a patient, but the situation I found there was alarming. Patients are asked

to buy drugs from private pharmacies, which is too costly for them.

Masaka Regional Referral Hospital is struggling with drug stock-outs due to the high number of people getting services from this hospital. We are in the budgeting process; can we get a commitment from the minister that in this coming financial year, all hospitals, especially Masaka Regional Referral Hospital, will get enough drugs to save our people?

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Zaake?

11.52

MR FRANCIS ZAAKE (NUP, Mityana Municipality, Mityana): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will begin from the same note. What everybody keeps talking about in our communities is the lack of drugs in the hospital, but my problem is with the statement that we have just heard. There is always money budgeted to provide for drugs in these hospitals nationwide.

However, in Mityana Hospital, I have never received any report. In all the calls I get from my voters who go to that hospital, nobody receives free drugs.

First and foremost, almost all patients solicit money. On a monthly basis, I spend more than Shs 10 million buying drugs and treating people using my mobile clinic in Mityana. I wonder what the health sector is doing about this.

This is what everybody talks about, every year, and when we get into campaigns, you keep promising free medical services, but it is not happening.

Since we are in the budgeting process, let us put in place mechanisms to make sure that medicine is not stolen from hospitals and it can be accessed by patients. This is because almost everybody has a prescription from doctors to buy a particular medicine. This practice should

stop so that medicine gets to the common people. I thank you.

11.55

MS HELEN NAKIMULI (NUP, Woman Representative, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. The people of Kalangala are proud of you. I commend the committee for such a wonderful report, especially on the hard-to-reach areas. We feel represented very well.

Committee chairperson, thank you for listening to our cry, especially on the issue of ambulances, which were not given fuel in the National Development Plan IV (NDP IV). Now that you have brought it out, we are grateful and hope that this fuel will come to us, not only in words, but in action.

On 29 March 2025 – I want to explain why we are happy about getting fuel – there was a lady who was coming from Banda Island to give birth, but she gave birth in the middle of the lake in a very ugly boat. Therefore, when we have these ambulances functional and fuelled, we will be happy and honoured.

Secondly, on page 21, the committee recommends that the ministry allocate specific times and days when the boat ambulance should move so that the public is aware of the schedule.

Mr Speaker, a health condition cannot be allocated time. You cannot tell somebody to get sick tomorrow; I do not agree with the committee on this recommendation. For example, in the islands, you cannot tell somebody to get sick for the ambulance to move or not.

The ambulance must be stationed somewhere, ready to move at any time. For example, if somebody gets COVID-19 with signs, will you wait for Sunday, when it is a Monday? I believe this recommendation should be removed from the committee's report because it does not make sense to me as a Member of Parliament from the hard-to-reach areas.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, do not mind about that recommendation because it is not budgetary in nature. The recommendations that we refer to the committee, as per Rule 149(2) of our Rules of Procedure, are those that need reconciliation, harmonisation, and consolidation into the budget. Therefore, since it is not budgetary in nature, you can also ignore it.

MS NAKIMULI: Much obliged, Mr Speaker.

11.58

MS VERONICA NANYONDO (NUP, Woman Representative, Bukomansimbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, and thank you, committee chairperson, for the report.

My concern from the report is financing and upgrading lower health facilities. It is a good proposal. We have Kyabagoma Health Centre II with one room where everything is done. The challenge is that we try, as Members of Parliament, like me – I took the initiative to buy the land for the hospital, but the ministry. We wrote letters, and we have not yet received any response, but it accommodates about 5,000 patients. We, therefore, need to look into that.

Secondly, when you look at upgrading, we have subcounties with no health centres in Bukomansimbi like Butenga, yet we resolved that each subcounty has to have a health centre. So, we have to look at sub-counties with no health centres.

Lastly Mr Speaker, if we are upgrading, let us focus on some factors like the population. We have Butenga Health Centre IV which helps people from four districts in Greater Masaka. We also have one regional referral hospital – Masaka. If we are to upgrade, we have been here praying for the Government to upgrade Butenga Health Centre IV to a hospital. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Santa, Hon. Atkins, and then Hon. Ebwalu, and Hon. Balimwezo.

12.00

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for giving us a very good report.

My first question is to the Minister of Health: Sometime back, you called us to Nakasero to receive ambulances. When will Oyam District get the pledge of the ambulance? People are asking day in, day out.

Secondly, I would like to address myself to the issue of counterpart funding arising from President Trump's Executive Order because it has affected HIV infected persons. It has affected malaria and Tuberculosis control – where we have children, women, and others also infected.

The committee has recommended Shs 9.6 billion, Mr Speaker. I think when you look at our population, and the people affected from these diseases, this Parliament can find room to provide this money.

Thirdly, I would like to add my voice to the issue of cancer in this country. We recommended that the PET machine be bought. The whole of last year, I was in the Uganda Cancer Institute with my late dad and the congestion there – We are now in the rainy season; when it is raining, you will find attendants outside and beaten by rain.

If there is something that this Parliament can do, again, let us buy this machine and secondly, focus on decongesting the Uganda Cancer Institute in Mulago by providing money for Mbarara Satellite Centre and then the Northern Regional Centre.

When we look at the Uganda Cancer Institute, from congestion to lack of drugs, inadequate staff, you will find that we have a big problem as far as this disease is concerned.

Then, finally, I would like to talk about the maintenance of equipment. We have bought equipment in many regional referral hospitals but we do not have the technicians to service and maintain them. It, therefore, looks like

we are moving one step forward and two backward. Money has been spent but the equipment works for about two to five months or even a full year and then they are down and remain there. When the patients come in, they are referred to private facilities.

I would like to thank you and I pray that this Parliament finds room to accommodate the budget, especially for the Uganda Cancer Institute in Mulago. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, as we debate, the public should know that when we say “the committee has recommended -” some of this money is not yet provided. Therefore, they should not go out there and say “Parliament...”

On health alone, the unfunded priorities that Dr Ruyonga and the team have brought up have come to a total of Shs 1.776 trillion. That is outside the budget we have; it is the money we should look for. That also happens to other sectors.

So, that is why when we go to reconciliation with the budget committee, it is very critical. A good example is the health centres – when we repurposed the budget, the health centres that were promised to be included – I hope, chairperson, they have been included.

Ambulances – by the way, honourable colleagues, including my constituency. When we are talking about “who is connected” most of you are not as connected as I am, but I was not considered for the ambulance. So, I join you in the quarrel. *(Laughter)* We quarrel together. You, therefore, have an ally here – Yes, I do not have, and when you look at my constituency, it is a hard-to-reach area.

I had already mentioned Hon. Atkins. You are next, followed by Hon. Emmanuel Ongiertho and then I will come to the Independents. I have noted you. Oh! Hon. Ebwalu was first. So, Hon. Ebwalu, followed by Hon. Atkins; the problem is that you keep shifting. *(Laughter)*

12.04

MR JONATHAN EBWALU (Independent, Soroti West Division, Soroti): Mr Speaker, in April 2021, this Parliament, in its wisdom, passed a resolution to honour the doctors in Soroti Regional Referral Hospital, following the miraculous operation they conducted by separating conjoined twins. Parliament made a resolution to honour that hospital by elevating it into a regional referral and teaching hospital.

The challenge we were given at that time as leaders was to identify land. Our leaders have identified land at Soroti University to a tune of 50 acres. As I speak, Soroti Regional Referral Hospital does not have a medical ward because the ward that was built by whites a long time ago has collapsed; it does not have an X-ray machine, anaesthesiologist, orthopaedic doctor or an oxygen plant.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, as a hospital, what does it have? *(Laughter)*

MR EBWALU: I can tell you it has nothing. I raised the matter because these are the things that are on the ground. I am happy that Hon. Ecweru and Hon. Okaasai whose patients are treated there, are both here.

I raised a matter of a transformer to be put in Soroti Hospital so that we can produce oxygen, but Hon. Okaasai has not attended to me up to now. I would like to request that the issue of Soroti Regional Referral Hospital is treated as an urgent matter. It is just a hospital by name. Hospitals are sick, but I think Soroti Hospital is sicker than all the hospitals in the country. I request you to take this matter seriously. Our people are dying.

This is a regional referral hospital. Why would we call it a regional referral hospital and yet we do not even have Panadol in the hospital? The minister is looking at me. Please, listen to me and attend to this matter. Let us look for resources so that we invest in the hospital.

We have got land, and the important thing left to do is to identify resources so that we can build the regional referral and teaching

hospital in that area. Otherwise, Mr Speaker – *(Interruption)*

MR ECWERU: MR Speaker, just to supplement. I know my colleague is here – the truth is, while I am here, I am not supposed to make so much ... but Soroti Regional Referral Hospital is sick. There is a need for me and my colleague, and all of us, and the committee to go to Soroti, and look at Soroti, and prescribe a solution. It is bad for the people and the Government.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ecweru, if I may ask; have you brought that to the attention of the Cabinet?

MR ECWERU: There is so much that goes on in the Cabinet that we discuss, but I am telling you Soroti Hospital is sick.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You see, the Cabinet complained that we interfere with the budget. Okay? You are lucky to sit in the Cabinet so I hope the way you have stated it here is the way you stated it in the Cabinet. Though I know in the Cabinet, they are called secrets.

Hon. Okaasai, do you also want to confirm the sickness of the hospital?

MR OKAASAI: No, I am not confirming the sickness. He referred to a transformer. First of all, we have got a special tariff for health facilities where we are charging only Shs 350 instead of Shs 780. That is one.

Secondly, for all referral hospitals, we have a budget to provide them with dedicated lines. Mbale has already got a dedicated line. Soroti Regional Referral Hospital will also have a dedicated line within the budget that you are going to discuss here.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Atkins? A point of procedure, Hon. Nandala-Mafabi?

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, the procedural issue I am raising is that a minister

came and stated that the hospital is sick and yet the people who go there are sick. How can a sick person treat a sick person? Is it procedurally right that Soroti Regional Referral Hospital should remain sick to treat sick people?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Maybe that is why the minister wants it attended to; so that it can treat sick people. Hon. Atkins?

12.11

MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese): Thank you very much -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Atkins, wait. Cabinet or Government, I think I have, on several occasions, listened to the President saying there are times they have decided and intervened in a sector and given it enough attention, especially the roads sector. Why don't you discuss this in the Cabinet? For example, we look at one financial year and say our major focus is on health. We put in place infrastructure, equipment, and Shs 3 trillion. Okay? We set the base like we did for the energy sector and the roads.

If we could do it for – Say for one financial year, our major item this year is health. Next financial year, our major item is education. Okay? Before Hon. Zaake orders that we need - Yes, Hon. Atkins?

MR KATUSABE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is very important. Everything else can wait, but not the health of our citizens. I draw the attention of Hon. Musa Ecweru, Minister of State for Works and Transport (Works). You remember, honourable minister, the Bwera Hospital Road. It is totally impassable.

Mr Speaker, we have Bwera Hospital which is a district general hospital. Statistically, the population of Kasese District is about 1.4 million Ugandans. It means in its own right, it ought to have a regional facility.

Honourable minister, I am happy that you are here. On Wednesday, the Speaker directed the minister, your colleague, to come with an oral

answer for Kikorongo-Mpondwe Road. For one reason, Bwera Hospital is at the border in my community. However, because it is a district general hospital, the person from the other end has to use the Kikorongo-Mpondwe Road. I can tell you, a lot of patients never make it to the hospital, Mr Speaker.

Madam Minister, you need our support and we are constitutionally duty-bound to give you the support that you need. Mr Speaker, I pity the people; our honourable sisters, at the ministry. We are grilling them with questions: how much can they do? This is a constitutional institution charged with a constitutional obligation to appropriate. They need money. It is this Parliament to give them the money that they need.

Mr Speaker, if the problem has anything to do with money, I am going to write to your office. From today and going forward, I do not need a business ticket to go and do official duty. If my business ticket can save something to save my fellow citizens, I will ask that every time you send me overseas on official duty, please give me –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, Members have been using the economy class; it will not be new. So, I do not want to play it against Members, for sure. Members have been travelling in economy class. Yes, I had picked Hon. Emmanuel Ongiertho, followed by Hon. Balimwezo.

12.14

MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would also like to thank the committee for a good report and for mentioning Nebbi in regard to refugees. Also relating to the fact that you are suggesting that there should be some kind of policy to guide how people coming from outside are supported in the health service - Mr Speaker, when you mention Nebbi, I would like to take you to greater Nebbi, which covers Pakwach, Nebbi and Zombo. You know that we border Congo, and on the other side of Congo, we have the same Alur people. I would like to tell you that

in some cases, they also have national IDs for Uganda. That means that the policy needs to be crafted carefully to make sure that such people are taken care of.

To us, our people from Congo are like brothers and sisters, and that is why nobody talks about Nebbi in terms of refugees yet they are there, and because they come in as brothers and sisters, we do not look at them as foreigners.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Nebbi General Hospital is the hospital that is taking care of all referrals from Zombo to Pakwach to greater Nebbi. Unfortunately, that has squeezed out the population within Nebbi Municipality because the main focus is on persons referred from Zombo, Pakwach or the other parts of Nebbi, leaving out the people within Nebbi Municipality. I urge our ministry to look at Nebbi Municipality because we have Thatha Division, Abindu Division, and actually, they even have land for health centre IIIs.

If that can also be looked at, we will be very happy so that we know that within Nebbi Municipality, where our regional referral hospital is, the ordinary people within the municipality are taken care of. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Balimwezo?

12.17

MR RONALD BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division East, Kampala City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate you for emphasising the need for a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scanner. I interested myself in finding out the cost of a PET scanner during the death of our beloved Speaker. I established that the cost of a high-end PET scanner with advanced technology was in the range of \$1.5 to 5 million.

Recently, we approved a supplementary, and within that, we approved the procurement of a PET scanner at Shs 30 billion. Today, it has been established that the ministry has that money. A sophisticated scanner in the world

costs \$5 million, but here, it is put at Shs 92 billion, which is too much. We can procure five sophisticated scanners with advanced technology.

Therefore, I want us to investigate the cost of these scanners because you are all aware that agencies have always had a habit of inflating costs, and we get a bad deal. Mr Speaker, please invoke our oversight role so that we can establish the cost of these from China, Japan, and Germany because it is within that range, and we should not lose money. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I saw a figure that looked huge. Committee Chairperson, before we put finance on too much pressure, again, specifically meet with the ministry and the Cancer Institute team on the cost because it looks abnormal.

I just consulted Mr Google, and like Hon. Balimwezo said, it says that it should not exceed \$5 million for a new one. It is very important before we ask for this huge sum of money. Please do that reconciliation and by the time you go to the Budget Committee - but also, I will call Finance and we have a meeting over this matter. It is a matter we should close together because it is very critical.

Colleagues, in the public gallery we have pupils and teachers from Active Angel Junior School, Nansana, Wakiso District. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Wakayima Musoke and Hon. Betty Naluyima. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them (*Applause*) Hon. Naluyima on the Floor.

12.21

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. As I go ahead to mainly support this report, we have an issue of Entebbe Regional Referral Hospital. As you are aware, this is the hospital that is available for all international guests and it used to be a district hospital treating several members around.

However, whenever I go there for monitoring, they are let down by the fact that every year, we put their increment of staffing on the budget but we do not attend to it. Much as we have mentioned here that we shall be adding Shs 4.5 billion, I am praying that this time we use our appropriation powers to see that the staffing matter of all regional referral hospitals is given priority.

We shall always talk about this and budget for it only to be told that there is no money. We are even affecting our international delegates because they are being treated in one of these key hospitals like Entebbe.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I pray that on page 21, we get back to this recommendation of having days fixed for boat ambulances. It would be weird when someone reads this recommendation and we leave it like that. I ask, if the House agrees, that we amend this to read that, under part (iii), “the Ministry of Health should designate specific areas for boat ambulances and it should sensitise the public to be aware of the areas.” I beg to request.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The questions will come later. Hon. Nyeko Derrick, Hon. Makhoha, Hon. Walyomu and Hon. Nyangweso.

12.23

MR DERRICK NYEKO (NUP, Makindye Division East, Kampala): Thank you, Mr Speaker and allow me to thank the committee as well. If we mentioned in this House that Kampala could be one of the hard-to-reach areas, we would all be amused. Kiruddu Hospital is not reachable. Just last week –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Works and Transport, we have a hospital which is not reachable and you are also not reachable, it seems. *(Laughter)*

MR NYEKO: Mr Speaker, in the recommendations, I did not hear Kampala but the fact is that we lose more than four hours in traffic jam and this is caused by Gen. Museveni - *(Interjections)* - They block the road for four

hours. Literally in Kampala, we lose more than six hours in traffic jam.

Part of the critical people that want to access health centres like Kiruddu – Just two weeks back, we lost a gentleman around Nsambya, very near the hospital. They could see the hospital, but the road was blocked for two hours and people could not access the hospital.

This is general. Kiruddu is one of the referral hospitals but people cannot access it because on a daily basis, the road is closed for four hours.

I call on the ministers; maybe Gen. Museveni does not know the pain that the people are going through at the expense of him travelling to Kampala. Let him find other means or else, we are losing very many people. So far, we have - *(Interjections)* – Yes, colleagues, this is something that looks minor but we need to look at the – *(Interruptions)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a point of order. Hon. Walyomu -

MR WALYOMU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In this country and as per now, we are trying to budget meaning the budget that we are discussing is from the Executive and we know that the head of the Executive is President Museveni and the Minister of Health operates on behalf of the President.

Therefore, is the honourable colleague in order to say that the President is not aware of the pain Ugandans suffer?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, please, the Floor here cannot discuss the security of the President. His movement is part of his security. It is not a matter we can really come and discuss here. Hon. Nyeko, please conclude.

MR NYEKO: Mr Speaker, as I conclude, like I said, this is a health issue and our people are passing on because they cannot access the hospitals in time. I want to call on colleagues that if an ambulance cannot pass through

the motorcade – the jam created by these insecurities that you claim that the President is going through then we should find other means that do not inconvenience Ugandans.

Mr Speaker, this is something we need to take seriously or else the communities are going to feel very insecure and it was going to cause more insecurity for the President. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Margaret Makhoha.

12.27

MS MARGARET MAKHOHA (Independent, Woman Representative, Namayingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I have a list. You do not need to stand up because I am concluding. I have already written you down on the list.

MS MAKHOHA: Thank you for giving me the opportunity. I also want to appreciate the chairperson and the committee for the good report. The committee observed that Namayingo is among the hard-to-reach districts. I want to appreciate the committee for that observation. It is very true that Namayingo is one of the districts that received the water boat ambulance with joy and we thought it would help our people.

However, as we speak, the water boat ambulance has no fuel. For the last three weeks, I was in the island of Lolwe and the people were telling me, “Tell your Government that the ambulance is not helping us.” They ask the public to provide money for fuel. They have now asked us to buy canoes and engines so that they can go back to the old methods of saving lives. Ministry of Health, please, can you find the fuel? Can you make sure that these ambulances are of help?

Mr Speaker, the second challenge is that Namayingo has one constituency in the island, and two on the mainland. On the mainland, we have no ambulance to complete the travel cycle. When you come out of the water-boat ambulance you are put on a motorcycle or a

bicycle, it makes no sense. I ask that they provide Namayingo with road ambulances so that we can make the travel cycle complete.

Mr Speaker, Namayingo has various scattered islands. Yesterday, I was on two of the islands, that is, Yebe and Biisa. They do not even have a clinic, and they requested me to put there at least a health centre II. As a Member of Parliament, where do I get the resources to provide a health centre II for my people?

I ask the minister in charge of health that as we look for the resources, consider the people of Namayingo so that those scattered islands, which also have Ugandans who pay taxes, can also be attended to. As Members of Parliament, it becomes very hard for us to check on these people because of the cries in the health sector are beyond our ability to handle.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, on some of these islands, it is not easy to build the toilets because that – *(Member timed out.)*

12.30

MR MOSES WALYOMU (Independent, Kagoma County, Jinja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to add my voice to that of the honourable colleagues by thanking the committee for its observations and recommendations, especially on the drugs in both referral and general hospitals and in the health centres.

Mr Speaker, you are aware that National Medical Stores is mandated to procure, store and distribute essential medicines to all hospitals. However, when we go to the communities, one of the problems is the scarcity of drugs in those health centres. Although Parliament allocates money for drugs, the National Medical Stores, instead of procuring the drugs according to the requisitions given to them by the hospitals, supply other drugs. It means that at the end of the day, the required drugs in those hospitals are not taken there.

Mr Speaker, I will give you an example of Buwenge General Hospital. When you go there, they tell you to go and buy drugs from

the nearby pharmacies. Recently, we lost a life. One of the attendants was told to go and buy drugs from the pharmacy across the road. As she was trying to cross the road, she was knocked down. The person who was attending to a sick person was brought back to the hospital in critical condition.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, as we budget and allocate money, there is need for the Ministry of Health to take a keen look into those people who have pharmacies around general and referral hospitals. When you go to – (*Member timed out.*)

12.33

MR DENNIS NYANGWESO (Independent, Samia-Bugwe Central County, Busia): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I applaud the committee for the report.

Mr Speaker, when the ministry for finance was shifting from the sector-wide approach of planning to the programme approach of planning, they told us that the budgeting was going to focus on outcomes as opposed to outputs.

Looking at the committee report on pages 20 and 21, the committee has noted that the ministry procured 115 ambulances, but, first of all, not all of them were deployed. Therefore, we do not really see much of the outcome. The few which were deployed were not facilitated to function. There is no money for fuel and maintenance. Some of them are not functional. Busia District was supposed to get one for Samia-Bugwe South but we have not received that ambulance.

I support the committee's recommendation of Shs 17 billion, which is requested for here to make the ambulances functional by providing for some fuel and maintenance. Otherwise, the number of procured ambulances does not translate to improvement in the livelihood of our people, which is the focus of the budget.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, towards the end of 2023, the Ministry of Health procured x-ray machines under the Global Fund. However, these x-ray

machines have not been deployed to date. I have been on the Floor of Parliament over this. The Prime Minister told us that the x-ray machines, including those for your hospital in Busia, have been procured. However, they have not been deployed, so there is no outcome on this one.

We have budget performance reports from ministries but there is no outcome that our people are getting from this budget. I implore the House that when it comes to budgeting and oversight, let us focus on the outcomes of these decisions. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

12.36

MS STELLA ATYANG (NRM, Woman Representative, Moroto): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I join my colleagues to appreciate the committee for the work done. I have a few concerns.

One, the committee's report states that 16 oxygen plants were installed and operationalised. That excludes Moroto Regional Referral Hospital. However, Moroto Regional Referral Hospital also got this type of oxygen plant installed, but not operationalised. It is two years down the road. I want to know from the ministry when the oxygen plant will be operationalised, because the hospital is apparently paying for the provision of oxygen to the patients. It is not enough, and this is affecting the operation of the hospital.

Secondly, Moroto Regional Referral Hospital has broken-down x-ray and ultrasound machines. For three years, we have been reporting this to the ministry with no positive response yet these services mostly affect the majority of the poor who are not able to go to private hospitals to access these services. When are you going to respond to that issue, to save the majority of the poor?

Thirdly, Mr Speaker, we are talking of low staff levels, but we have staff who actually have two jobs. They work in government hospitals and, at the same time, have their private health facilities. The two jobs actually affect the effectiveness of the hospitals, because –

especially for the specialised staff such as the doctors – you find that these people are not in the hospitals as required. They will have two days in the hospital and three other days in their private clinics, hence affecting the services of the hospital to the people.

I ask the ministry: when they will take action to discourage this kind of double workers to ensure the effectiveness of these health workers in the hospital?

Fourthly, we have many stalled hospital structures across the country. The ministry has continued planning for new structures across the country, leaving the old ones uncompleted. I do not know why the ministry cannot decide that – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Chemonges and Hon. Amos Okot.

12.39

MR WILLIAM CHEMONGES (NRM, Kween County, Kween): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join my colleagues in supporting the report. However, I have noted that very critical areas in health, especially in Sebei, have been left out. I do not see anything supporting us. For example, when we came up with the policy to halt the creation of district hospitals, we accepted because we knew this would be a chance for us to have health centres III in all the subcounties, which has not happened.

We already had a district hospital in Bukwo District but around 2023, it was downgraded to a health centre IV, Mr Speaker. Now Bukwo, which is a district bordering Kenya, does not have a district hospital and yet it is a highly populated area.

I have also noted that the statement does not include the creation of a regional hospital in Sebei, which we were promised when we started this Parliament. We were told that the referral hospital for Sebei will be in the budget and now it is not there.

Even the health centres IV that we were promised do not appear anywhere and yet

they would help us, who are in areas without the district hospitals. For example, in Kween, we are patiently waiting for a district hospital which we thought would be covered by having more health centres IV and health centres III.

I want to end by also adding to what Hon. Mudimi said about Mbale Hospital. The situation in Mbale Hospital is really bad and yet this is the referral hospital supporting all of us; the entire Sebei district. All of us go to Mbale Hospital. I request that even as we wait for others, help us allocate this Shs 5 billion to complete this structure in Mbale because it is highly – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Amos Okot? I had forgotten Bunyoro, Hon. Akiiki and then the Leader of the Opposition.

12.41

MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago): Thank you, Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just a minute, let me make it clear. I did a round and looked at subregions which had not been captured. That was why I picked Sebei and Karamoja, to ensure all of them and every region is captured in the health report.

MR AMOS OKOT: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join my colleagues to thank the chairperson of the committee.

Mr Speaker, to start with, you have been emphasising the Positron Emission Tomography machine (PET) for testing of cancer.

There is also the dialysis machine for those who are - all of us are victims of kidney failure and the associated problems it comes with. I, therefore, recommend that we should put aside some funds so that most of our regional referral hospitals get this machine. For example, Kitgum and Agago - everybody has to run and go towards Oyam.

Secondly, there was a project which the minister had to fast-track. It is about the teaching

hospital in Gulu University; to construct that wing. We held several meetings about it and the subregion acquired land waiting for that project to be launched. Maybe you will get some time and fast-track it.

Thirdly, I support the idea of turning Kitgum Medical Hospital into a regional referral hospital. Many people who come from eastern Acholi have to go - not even go to Gulu Regional Referral Hospital, but instead to Lacor. That tells us even the services at regional referral hospitals - Much as we are emphasising the private wings of hospitals to be developed into proper services, those services at regional referral hospitals have to change and improve.

The Government has changed the policy of health centres II into III. I think they have to revisit this policy. We have parishes without health centres II and those with health centres II have not been changed to health centres III. Some parishes are as big as subcounties and a point in case is in my county.

Finally, as I conclude, I have written to the Ministry of Health. They have talked about it. Kalongo Town Council, for all this period, does not have government facilities like health centres III or whatever kind of health centre unit you want to place. Why don't you put some small money aside for this? This is because it is the centre of Agago North County.

Besides the ambulances, which you have not given to us, let us roll it out. Many of us are now talking about those things – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Akiiki?

12.45

MS FLORENCE ASIIMWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Masindi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I thank the chairperson and the committee members for the good report.

For starters, wealth is health or health is wealth. I am hoping to address myself to

Masindi Hospital, which was built in 1922. It has actually outlived its existence. I am happy that it has been highlighted as one of the beneficiaries. We just hope that our dream will come to pass this time around because it has been appearing in all these financial years, but nothing has come to pass.

Secondly, on the issue of national insurance, the Committee on Gender, Labour, and Social Development visited Zambia and we found out that Zambia's national insurance policy is working. Zambia is one of the poorest countries. We have a good report. I do not know whether it has ever been presented here, but Zambia is doing very well on national insurance. Let us probably have another debate on this insurance. It is workable, practical and it will solve a number of our problems.

Thirdly, in the report, I do not know whether there is a budget for prevention, which is better than cure. Committee chairperson and minister, do we have a budget for prevention? This is because some of these diseases can be prevented so that we do not go to hospitals. What have you put under that item so that we have very few people going to hospital and prevent disease?

Lastly, on Village Health Teams (VHTs), have you put anything for them because they do a lot of work in our communities? Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, was it Hon. Amos that raised the issue of dialysis? Minister for finance, what is so special about the PET machine? Last time, we were here with you and you remember how emotional Hon. Kawooya became, here on the Floor, and said, anyone who has not yet been diagnosed with cancer is the one who does not know what a PET machine means.

A PET machine is basically for early diagnosis of cancer. When you are diagnosed with cancer early, then, sometimes, you are able to treat it successfully. Most times, we diagnose it when it is late because if you want a PET machine,

you have to go to Nairobi. How many people can afford that?

I checked, and the Minister of Finance had put around Shs 37.5 billion in the budget, whereby Shs 4 billion was for reagents, and then Shs 33.5 billion was for the construction of the centre. The question is, how do you buy reagents before buying a machine?

I do not want us to go to a situation, which we had here when we were handling the policy statement for agriculture where they brought castrated bulls for the breeding programme. Honourable minister, I request that you cross-check with your team on the issue of the PET machine.

12.49

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, yes, I remember you raised the concern here and you asked me to follow up. The Minister of Health can confirm that we have made a provision in the next financial year's budget, which we are considering now for the machine. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, honourable minister, I agree and that is why I have appreciated Shs 37.5 billion, but they are saying they need Shs 60 billion. Dr Ruyonga, I want us to sort out the issue of the PET machine, and then, the Minister of Health will tell us - if the Minister of Finance gave you money for the project, how would you start by buying reagents when you do not have a machine? In the budget, I see money for reagents.

DR RUYONGA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. We had an interaction with the Executive Director of Uganda Cancer Institute about the PET machine. He was talking a lot of English but we requested him to write a comprehensive report of the progress on the PET Machine project and present it to the committee. After that, we will be able to present to the Floor of Parliament. That is my humble request. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am requesting that you also meet the minister for finance because the money being asked for looks to be a lot, compared to what the ministry has already given. Chairperson, you need to go into details because I can see Shs 4 billion for laboratory reagents, before you get the machine. How are you going to use them? The Leader of the Opposition.

12.51

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to begin with some slight housecleaning - it is actually not very slight, if you critically look at it.

Rule 204 of our Rules of Procedure provides that our reports should be signed by at least a third of the committee members. This particular committee is listed to have 25 people and the people who signed are less than a third. It is important that - and this is a caution to the chairman - we cross every T and dot every I, because that speaks to quorum.

Mr Speaker, you know that some decisions of this House have been challenged successfully in court because they have been taken without quorum. We want to avoid situations where somebody can challenge such a report because it is challengeable if somebody chooses to.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have cross-checked and I would tell the Clerk to upload the report which has enough signatures. I think, when we were putting them under pressure, they signed early and it was uploaded. Therefore, they need to upload the one which has enough signatures, which I understand. The Clerk will sort it.

MR SSENYONYI: It is now only the Speaker who has the correct document. That is also a problem. Anyhow, going forward, we need to improve how we operate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The document is correct - the content is correct. The signatures are not affecting the content.

MR SSENKYONYI: I do not want to get into a debate with the presiding officer but I think it is important that we caution our colleagues because the document we have is a different matter. Anyhow, let me move away from that; the point has been made.

Mr Speaker, colleagues have spoken literally about everything. I will focus on one item: functionality of lower level health centres. I think this is important for all of us because you heard colleagues complaining about health centres in their constituencies, including ministers who are saying their hospitals are sick and all of that. Can we begin to focus money on this because it is important for all of us.

As a Member, you might get a challenge in your constituency. Sometimes you only think about these things when you are the one in that situation and the nearest to you, is that health centre. If there are no medical personnel, medical equipment, you will have a challenge. Let us, therefore, do this for all of us. There is where we can find money. I know the Minister of Finance is going to tell us that there is no money but I know where we can find money.

I made a case here when we went with colleagues to see what was happening at Lubowa Specialised Hospital construction site, which should have been completed a long while ago. As of today, we have injected over Shs 700 billion into that project. After we made a lot of noise about it, I am told there is a shell of a structure that has been put up.

On an opportune occasion, we shall demand accountability for the Shs 700 billion, because that shell that has been put up, I do not think, accounts for Shs 700 billion for a specialised hospital that should have been completed a long while ago, and there are comparisons that we can make.

Mr Speaker, there is a 1500-bed hospital in Turkey, in the region called Kayseri - I might be mixing up the name. It cost \$200 million, a specialised hospital.

One of the ministers recently got treatment at that hospital. I will not mention which one, but I got good quality medication, which obviously they could not get here. \$200 million. For Lubowa Hospital, we have spent close to that, and this is a 264-bed hospital. That is what it is poised to become.

There are just so many things that are confusing, and that is why I was saying, instead of continuously injecting money into what seems like a white elephant, why don't we appropriate this money to health centres that are already in place? Their problem is that there are no drugs and equipment. Why don't we do that?

This entity we are injecting money into is a white elephant, and I call it so deliberately because we do not know what is coming. Each time you keep coming here for more money, we do not know what is happening. Even when we want to inspect it, we are not allowed to. Why are we continuously injecting money into something we cannot touch? It is like groping in the dark.

We have our health facilities, all of us in this House. Why don't we appropriate this money to those health facilities? I am saying, while we shall be told there is no money to deal with these issues, that money can be found. That is the only thing I wanted to talk about, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. Honourable minister, you do not need it answer each and everything. Focus on issues related to the budget.

12.56

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Anifa Kawooya):

Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson of the health sector committee and all members for a good report which spells out how far the health sector has walked the journey and where we are walking to. I do appreciate and feel your concerns.

I am also a Member of Parliament representing a constituency, where all of these facilities and issues you are raising - if I were to be the other side, maybe I would raise more.

I agree with the Leader of the Opposition (LOP), Hon. Enos Asiimwe and every Member. Every time issues on health come here, it is a concern for each and every one of us. We all feel that we must have a healthy community if we are to have a healthy economic nation.

Mr Speaker, again, I would like to appreciate you for having guided or given us information that the health sector has unfunded activities, to nearly Shs 1.7 trillion. We are in the time of budget processing. The LOP and other honourable colleagues have said this is the time when we should come together, as Members of this august House, and appropriate money to the health sector. Mr Speaker, if you have the chance to also raise issues in your constituency concerning the health sector, somewhere somehow, we shall move.

There was a question that the Rt Hon. Speaker and other honourable colleagues raised. If, as the Government, we can prioritise some sectors like the Parish Development Model and roads, at this time of budgeting, why don't we now make the health sector an issue? By international standards, the health sector should get 15 per cent of the budget. It is the least budgeted for, yet it is the driving force of everything.

I appreciate the committee report. Where the ministry has been directed to implement, we are going to do that. Where the committee has requested the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, it is my prayer that together, we will look into that and sufficient funding will be given.

Mr Speaker, like you have said, even at times when you pass the funding - the PET scan which you have talked about is in the budget for the financial year and we agree that it is an urgent matter. However, what the Speaker and Members are saying is that can't we – *(Interjection)* - yes, we have raised it in Cabinet.

Members are concerned that while it is in the financial year, the question to the ministry is - and this is what the LOP said - is there no way we can find this money and ensure we have the PET scan as soon as possible? The new financial year is coming in July and will maybe be operationalised in August.

The Members are asking the Ministry of Health to look at what we have at the Uganda Cancer Institute. The Rt Hon. Speaker can bear witness; he has been there. I have been there; many colleagues have been there. Everyone has been there.

Our concern is to find ways and means to sit with my colleagues. In Cabinet, we have said that this is an urgent matter of concern. I will leave that one. All the issues that have been raised concern the insufficient funding of the sector. Give us the money and then come and ask, "You have this money; you have not implemented". *(Applause)*

The policy was to bring services closer to the people; that we must not have people walking long distances to the hospitals and congesting them yet some diseases can be treated at the lower level hospitals. That is why we moved in and said the policy should be to have a health centre III at each subcounty. Give us the money and then ask us, "We gave you money for this health centre III. Why isn't it constructed?" *(Applause)*

The issue is on the wage. As a ministry, we have a structure that has been approved but we do not have the wage. Give us the wage and we will recruit, and put them there. *(Applause)* I see you pointing your fingers at me who has been here for some time and I am still with you. *(Laughter)* This belongs to all of us.

If we want to have a strong economy, we must think about the health sector. If you want the equipment to be maintained, it is not a matter of opening them. There must be sufficient money allocated for maintenance of the equipment. Some of the equipment is new; they cannot be operated because of wage.

This is the right time for all of us, Members. Thank you so much for all the questions you have asked. Can we put our heads together and give money to the sector? *(Applause)* Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Health on the ministerial policy statement and Budget estimates for Financial Year 2025/2026 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The recommendations of the committee are referred to the Committee on Budget for harmonisation, reconciliation and consolidation, in line with Rule 149(2) of our Rules of Procedure. Congratulations, chairperson and thank you very much, honourable minister.

Hon. Musa Ecweru, the road?

MR ECWERU: First of all, I congratulate my honourable colleague. I would like to give information to my brother-in-law, Hon. Atkins.

Regarding the road that he talked about, I had to step out to check what was going on. The truth is that there were some delays. However, I am happy to report that the contractor who has been given that road has been directed, this morning, to start what we call “forward maintenance” as he prepares to do the actual work on rehabilitation of the entire road. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I can see you had to compromise Hon. Atkins by bringing out issues of cross-pollination on the Floor. *(Laughter)* Next item?

BILLS COMMITTEE STAGE

THE SUGAR (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 7 February 2024, we started Committee Stage for the Sugar (Amendment) Bill, 2023. We stood over the Bill because we had some clauses which had an impact on subsequent clauses.

We stopped on clause 3, where we needed the Attorney-General to guide us on a few things which we have done, and to also have more talks, negotiations and reconciliation between the millers and outgrowers. Let us now resume from where we stopped.

BILLS COMMITTEE STAGE

THE SUGAR (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, honourable colleagues. It would be very important for us to first give Hon. Bahati a minute to update us on the negotiations and engagements that we had between the farmers and the millers. Hon. Bahati?

1.08

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Yes, we adjourned and agreed to do more consultations. I want to report to the House that we have held consultations with the farmers, millers and members of Parliament from the sugarcane-growing areas, namely Busoga, Bunyoro, some parts of northern Uganda, and to confirm that after the consultations we have agreed on a number of things, including the composition of the council, the formula, and we are now ready to continue the process of legislation.

Also, we want to thank you, Mr Chairperson, for the work and time you put in this Bill. You chaired almost four meetings, and you have

worked long and hard to ensure that these negotiations come to a close.

Therefore, we are now ready. You have informed us that you have consulted His Excellency, the President, and he is in harmony with the proposed amendments that we are going to go through. So, we are at peace and harmony to pass the Sugar Amendment Bill.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, honourable. I want to thank the colleagues who participated because every day that we delay sorting out the formula issue, the outgrower loses out. Clerk?

MS NAYEBALE: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Proposed amendments to the Sugar (Amendment) Bill, 2023

Clause 3: Substitution of section 3 of the principal Act

Clause 3 is amended by -

- (a) Numbering the proposed Section 3 as subclause 1, and
- (b) Inserting immediately after the sub-clause 1 the following; “The Council shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal, with power to sue and be sued in its corporate name”.

The justification is to establish the council as a legal entity in order to reduce the liability of individual members. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Government -

MR BAHATI: Mr Chairperson, we agree with the amendment.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I put the question that clause 3 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Katali Loy-

MS KATALI: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I am suggesting an amendment to Clause 4 of the Bill in the proposed Section 4 as follows:

- (a) In the proposed subsection 1(C), by substituting for the word “four”, the word “three”
- (b) In the proposed subsections 1(D) and (F), by deleting the words “who shall have no right to vote”.
- (c) In the proposed subsection 3, by substituting for the words “in consultation with stakeholders milling, sugar cane or growing sugar cane in Uganda”, the words from “among the persons nominated by the sugar cane outgrowers and sugar cane millers”.
- (d) By inserting immediately after the proposed subsection 3 the following, “The tenure of the office of the chairperson of the council is two years and shall be held in rotation among the representatives of the sugarcane outgrowers and representatives of sugar cane millers”.

Justification

- (i) The amendment proposed in subsection 1 (c) is to give outgrowers more representation in the council since there are more outgrowers than sugarcane millers.
- (ii) The amendment proposing sub-section 1 (D), (E) and (F) is to allow representatives of ministries responsible for Finance, Agriculture and Industry to participate fully in the affairs of the council.
- (iii) The requirement to have the chairperson appointed from representatives of millers and outgrowers on rotation basis is to ensure that no group monopolises the chairmanship of the council. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Government-

MR BAHATI: Mr Chairperson, we have studied the amendment of the Honourable Member, and we think it can bring harmony within the council. I agree with the amendment.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Nandala, further amendment-

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Chairperson, if you look at the council, there is only a chairperson but there is no provision if the chairperson is absent. I wanted to bring a clause, "That in the absence of a chairperson, the members in the meeting shall choose among themselves a chairperson of that meeting".

Justification

A human being cannot always be there; he can fall sick, and if a chairperson is not there, the people may decide not to call the meeting because he is not available.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General-

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. That amendment will not be necessary because if you look at Schedule 2 of the Principal Act, it provides that "the chairperson shall preside at every meeting of the Board and in the absence, the members shall elect from among their number an acting chairperson". That provision already exists in Schedule 2 of the Principal Act.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: I agree.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that clause 4 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: I received a notification from Engineer Hon. Kyobe; he has an amendment.

MR KYOBE: Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

Clause 5: Amendment of Section 5 of the principal Act.

Clause 5 of the Bill is amended in paragraph A in the proposed subsection 1 by substituting for the word "four the word two".

Justification

To reduce the tenure of office of members of the council to ensure that many people get the chance to be members of the council and are able to bring in new ideas regularly, and all players can participate in the regulation of the sugar industry. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Government –

MR BAHATI: Mr Chairperson, since this is a council that has a private sector dominating it, we agree with the reduction of the years from four to two for flexibility.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that Clause 5 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 6

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that -

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Clause 6 says that they will not be entitled to a salary but to honoraria - is it going to be allowed to charge tax?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Clause 6 should come as a consequential amendment because clause 12 - can you repeat what you are saying for the Attorney-General to -

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Chairperson, this is about the remuneration of the people

serving on the council. I want to find out from the Government: If you are saying they will not be paid, where will they be getting the money from when someone is invited to a meeting? Will it have its own way of collecting money?

MR KIWANUKA KIRYOWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The sugar council will generate their own funds from both the millers and growers as we get through the process, so they are not getting salaries from the Government. The council will determine what they will be paying to their people.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: If that is the case, we have here representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Cooperatives. Who will pay these people? Will they be paid by the Government, or will they also be paid like the council members?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, that is why I thought we could make this a consequential amendment. Let us first handle the financing issues because the council has powers to regulate itself. When you look at this Bill, it is in such a way that we want these people to go and regulate themselves. They will determine honoraria and allowances that are related to sittings.

MR WALYOMU: Mr Chairperson, the information I want to give to the honourable colleague is that even the Government's representatives are taken as members of the council.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Hon. Leku?

MR LEKU: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. To take you a little bit back, the composition of the council –

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: No, honourable member. That is not how we work. That is covered. We are already beyond that. In legislation, when we are at this stage, you have to be very cautious so that you do not lose track.

Honourable colleagues, I put the question that clause 6 stands as part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 6, agreed to.

Clause 7, agreed to.

Clause 8, agreed to.

Clause 9, agreed to.

Clause 10, agreed to.

Clause 11, agreed to.

Clause 12

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: On clause 12, I have a notification from Hon. Florence Akiiki, for an amendment.

MS FLORENCE ASIIMWE: Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

Substitution of Section 17 of the principal Act

Clause 12 of the Bill is amended by substituting for the proposed Section 17 the following-

“Funding of activities of Council

- i) The activities of the Council shall be funded by the sugarcane out-growers and sugarcane millers in the ratio to be determined by the minister, in consultation with the Council, by regulations;
- ii) The usage of the funds of the Council shall be determined by the minister, in consultation with the Council by regulations.”

Insertion of new clauses immediately after clause 12

The Bill is amended by inserting two clauses, immediately after clause 12, the following-

“Amendment of Section 28 of the principal Act –

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable member, we go clause by clause. Let us first sort out the issues of clause 12 regarding funding. I have picked the principle that issues of funding details, in terms of managing the funds, will be in the regulations – they cannot be in the main law. That is what you are pushing for. Thank you. Government?

MR BAHATI: Mr Chairperson, since we are not establishing a new fund, we concur with the proposal by the Member.

MR WALYOMU: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. My worry is that it is the minister, again, to determine when we have the council. I would propose that we leave the council to determine that, instead of the minister.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General?

MR KIWANUKA KIRYOWA: The issue here is that we needed the minister to make the regulation. So, it is determined by a regulation and it is in consultation with the council. If you do not have the council, you cannot move to make the regulation.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General, what about instead of saying “in consultation with”, we say “on the recommendation of”? Wouldn’t it be better? That is so that the council meets and makes recommendations on how to manage the money, and if the minister agrees, he includes it in the regulation.

MR KIWANUKA KIRYOWA: Yes, we can do that, but I think the issue of “recommendation” is that you are saying, “they tell you, you write”. “Consultation” is that “we confer”. That is why the regulation - the moment the minister signs, he or she is responsible for the regulation.

However, the issue of consultation has been variously addressed, even in concert. Without it, you cannot do the act. Once you do not have the consultation, you cannot do the act. Therefore, the minister cannot move without the consultation.

MR TEIRA: Mr Chairperson, when we go with “recommendation,” the Attorney-General will not own those regulations and their contents. However, for “in consultation,” he also brings in other legal considerations that speak to those regulations. So, the appropriate word should be “consultation,” not “recommendation.”

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Walyomu, are you okay with that?

MR WALYOMU: Yes. Mr Chairperson, I concede.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that clause 12 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 12, as amended, agreed to.

New clause

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: I have many notifications.

MR TEIRA: Mr Chairperson, Hon. Florence Akiiki had raised a concern on clause 12 and, so, I was inviting her to raise it at this stage because you had asked her to delay it until after we have finished the previous clause.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Clause 12 is done. So, it is a new clause now.

MR TEIRA: Yes, she had proposed a new clause after clause 12.

MS FLORENCE ASIIMWE: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. The Bill is amended by inserting two clauses immediately after clause 12, the following:

“Amendment of Section 28 of the principal Act

Section 28 of the principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after subsection (2), the following - (3) The regulations made under this Act shall be laid before Parliament within four months from the commencement of this Act.”

“Insertion of Section 29 in the principal Act

The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after Section 28, the following-

The transitional provisions

- i) The minimum percentage of 55 per cent referred to in the formula to determine the minimum price of sugarcane, under Schedule Three to this Act, shall take effect 24 months after the commencement of this Act.
- ii) Notwithstanding subsection (i) from the commencement of this Act, the minimum percentage of sharing proceeds prescribed under Schedule Three shall be 50 per cent.”

Justification

To stagger the application of the minimum percentage of 55 per cent for two years to enable the industry to adjust operations before the percentage takes effect.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable minister?

MR BAHATI: We agree to the amendment.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that a new clause be inserted in the Bill as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

New clause inserted.

New clauses

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson?

MS NAYEBALE: Insertion of new clauses immediately after clause 12.

The Bill is amended by inserting immediately after clause 12 the following -

“Amendment of Section 19 of the Principal Act

Section 19 of the Principal Act is amended by substituting for the word “Board” wherever it appears, the word “Minister.”

Amendment of Section 20 of the principal Act

Section 20 of the principal Act is amended in subsection (1) by substituting for the word “Board” the word “Council”

Amendment of Section 21 of the principal Act

Section 21 of the principal Act is amended -

- (a) In subsections (1) and (2), by substituting for the word “Board”, the word “Council”;
- (b) by inserting immediately after subsection (3), the following - “(3a) The Council shall, within the time prescribed by the minister, by regulations, consider the application and make a recommendation to the Minister to grant or not to grant a license.
(3b) Where the Council does not recommend a grant-

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson, I think we go clause by clause. You have different clauses so we need - the first one is a consequential clause whereby we have substituted the “Board” with “Minister.”

MS NAYEBALE: Then “Minister” with “Council.”

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: That is for Section 19. I hope you have the Act.

MS NAYEBALE: Yes.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Is that Okay, Attorney-General? I need it on record.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Yes, Mr Chairperson, the consequential amendment of replacing the “Minister” with “Council” is okay in Section 19.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: I see an honourable member is confused, saying it should be with the council. You can just highlight Section 19; what it says for now.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Section 19 of the principal Act states: *“A person shall not establish or operate a sugar mill, jaggery mill or plant to process the by-products of sugarcane without a valid license granted for that purpose by the board.”*

Therefore, the proposal by the committee is to replace the “Board” with “Council.”

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: But it says minister.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Section 19 of the Principal Act is to replace the provision referring to the “board” with “minister”, as proposed by the committee and we agree with that.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Why?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Licensing is a fact of regulation so once you have been authorised by the council to do this act and you get a recommendation from them, then the person who issues you with the license to participate in that space is the minister.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Bayigga?

DR BAYIGGA: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Within that amendment, I would like to find out whether that recommendation has the force; that the minister may not refuse to offer the license. We need that guarantee.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: A minister should have the power to either accept or not to issue a license.

DR BAYIGGA: We also need those reasons why the minister may not accept. This Parliament should clarify that.

MR WALYOMU: Thank you, Mr Chairman. The reason we are saying that it should be a council is because in the Principal Act, it is the board. We are amending from the “board” to the “council.” Everything should remain with the council instead of again bringing in the

minister because in the principal Act, it is the “board”, not the “minister”.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: I think here there will be a need to read sections 19, 20, and 21. Section 19 is prohibitive. It prohibits you from doing something that you cannot do without the minister, but the process of the application is in Section 20. The participation of the board is in Section 21, which now we will have as the council.

Therefore, it is a recommendation of the council for the minister to issue the license. If it pleases you, Mr Chairperson, we could address Section 20. We could just stay this over for a minute so that we address sections 20 and 21. We can go through those together and then we can come back to that because the recommendation is made by the “council” to the “minister.”

MR OGUZU: Mr Chairperson, I am seeking clarification from either the minister or the Attorney-General as to whether the licence being talked about here covers the labourers.

Why do I say this? The sugarcane industry has relied on cheap labour from the West Nile for a very long time. Even from Acholi, there is a man who worked for 47 years. The only thing he went back with was a bicycle. If it covers, I move that during the consequential amendment, I need the labourers to be part of the council. We do not want exploitation anymore; the minister should clarify whether the license being talked about here covers those who will supply labour or covers the labour to the sugarcane industry.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General, I want you to liberate West Nile from providing cheap labour.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: I can understand that, but I think we may stray into a space where we may not be able to regulate because labour is offered freely. A person cannot be required to provide labour they do not wish to. If you say that we should have the labourers in here, then they have become participants in the business, which they are not.

What we can do is we have sufficient provisions in the Employment Act which address any challenges that an employee may have in our Employment Act and the necessary labour legislation.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, the Attorney-General requested that if we could handle sections 20 and 21, then it would help us on the other clause so that we do not amend in anticipation. However, if the other ones are not amended, we just have them as consequential clauses. I propose that.

MR OGUZU: I think my issue is not addressed to my satisfaction. Why? What is happening is you have companies that go and pick people from the villages and then come and give them to the sugarcane industry. Oftentimes, nobody is speaking for these people. If we want to regulate the industry and get value from it, we must ensure everybody in the value chain gets the benefit.

That means we must be able to regulate the activities of people who supply this kind of labour and there must be guarantee for those. That is why I was saying there is a need for these people to be represented if the licence covers that kind of activity.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleague, the Attorney-General guided on issues of employment to the Employment Act. Let us not mix roles; let us be very clear.

MS NAYEBALE: “Amendment of section 20 of Principal Act
Section 20 of the principal Act is amended in subsection (1), by substituting for the word “Board” with the word “Council”.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Chairperson, when you propose an amendment, you also give a justification.

MS NAYEBALE: Mr Chairperson;

i) To harmonise the provision of sections 19, 20 and 23 with the principle of the Bill

relating to the grant of licensing by the minister and the recommendations of the council.

- ii) To penalise a miller who pays below the price set by the formula by having his or her license revoked by the minister.
- iii) The requirement to establish a sugar plantation capable of supplying at least 50 per cent of the installed capacity of the miller is to ensure self-sustainability in the period where there is an insufficient supply of cane from outgrowers. I beg to submit

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Chairperson. Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA-KIWANUKA: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. We have no objection to the proposed amendment in Section 20 to replace “Board” with “Council”.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I put the question that Section 20 be amended as proposed - it came in as a new clause.

Honourable colleagues, I put the question that a new clause be inserted as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

New clause, agreed to.

New Clause

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: New clause, honourable chairperson? 21?

MS NAYEBALE: Amendment of Section 21 of the principal Act. Section 21 of the principal Act is amended -

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: You are amending Section 21 of the principal Act. So we need to insert -

MS NAYEBALE: Okay, insertion of a new clause.

i) In subsections (1) and (2), by substituting for the word “Board” the word “Council”

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: We have already passed that one.

MS NAYEBALE: Yes, we have. There is an insertion. By inserting a new subsection immediately after subsection 7 as follows – I beg your pardon, Mr Chairperson. By inserting immediately after subsection 3 the following;

(3a) The council shall, within the time prescribed by the minister by regulations, consider the application and recommend to the minister whether to grant or not to grant a license.

(3b) Where the council does not recommend a grant of a license to the applicant, the Council shall, in writing, notify the applicant of the decision.

(3c) The applicant shall, within 30 days of receipt of the notice of the decision of the Council made under subsection (3a), apply to the minister for redress.

(3d) The minister shall not make a decision on the application for a license where the Council refuses to recommend a grant of a license to the applicant until after the expiry of the time prescribed in (3c).

ii) In subsections 6 and 8, by substituting for the word “Board” the word “minister”.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: That is “C” because it is important for numbering.

MS NAYEBALE: That is “C”. I have ended there.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, you have “d” in your -

MS NAYEBALE: I have read it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: “d”? Because you have stopped at “d”

MS NAYEBALE: “a,b,c,d”. Mr Chairperson, I read “d”

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Can you read “d” again so that I am with you?

MS NAYEBALE: The minister shall not make a decision on the application for a license where the council refuses to recommend a grant of a license to the applicant until after the expiry of the time prescribed in subsection (3c).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: And then “c”?

MS NAYEBALE: The applicant shall, within 30 days of receipt of the notice of the decision of the council made under subsection (3a) apply to the minister for redress.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: You know, I read through your report and I received everything so I have tried to reconcile to ensure that what is in the report is what you are reading. Allow me to consult here – Chairperson, if I may consult with you and the Attorney-General? Chairperson, resume.

MS NAYEBALE: In subsections (6) and (8), by substituting for the word “Board” the word “Minister”

iii) By inserting a new subsection immediately after subsection (7) as follows;

(7a) A miller shall within that time prescribed in subsection –

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Chairperson, I am sorry for interrupting you. You see, they have to number when they are polishing and complying with the law. You have “c” in subsections (6) and (8) by substituting for the word “Board” the word “Minister.”

And then in “d” by inserting a new - you get it? So, give me the details of each where you have a “c” or, “d” so that we capture it on the record.

MS NAYEBALE: Okay. So, (7a):

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: That is under “D”.

MS NAYEBALE: Yes, under “d”. A miller shall within the time prescribed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable Chairperson, let me see your-

MS NAYEBALE: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. “C”-

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, you know the chairperson took over this in between. Therefore, the way the report was captured—so she is doing a great job.

MS NAYEBALE: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Continuation on “C”. In subsections (6) and (8), by substituting for the word “Board” with “Minister”.

d. By inserting a new subsection immediately after subsection (7) as follows:

(7a) A miller shall, within the time prescribed in subsection (7), establish a sugar cane plantation capable of supplying the miller at least 50 per cent of the miller’s instilled crushing capacity.

e) by substituting for subsection (9) the following: (9a) “*A person aggrieved by the decision of the minister may apply to a court of competent jurisdiction to review the decision of the minister.*”

Justification

To harmonise the provision of Section 21 with the principle of the Bill relating to the grant of license by the minister on the recommendations of the Council;

To provide for a procedure for the grant of a license by the minister;

To empower a person aggrieved by the decision of the Council not to recommend him or her for grant of license to seek redress from the minister.

The requirement, if I could finish, Mr Chairperson, to establish a sugar plantation capable of supplying at least 50 per cent of the

installed capacity of the miller is to ensure self-sustainability of millers in periods where there is insufficient supply of cane from outgrowers in order to ensure security of supply of sugarcane to the suppliers.

I beg to submit. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Government?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. We do not have a problem with the proposed amendment A, to subsections (1) and (2).

We have no objection to the amendment B, in as far as (3a) is concerned, but just to make a clerical error, the committee report reads: “*The Council shall, within the time prescribed by the minister, by regulations, consider the application and make a recommendation to the minister to grant*” and it has ‘to’ instead of ‘to grant or not to grant.’

Mr Chairperson, we have an objection to –

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: That is a clerical correction.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Clerical correction. It was just ‘to’ replaced by ‘or’. However, for (3d) we would seek, the committee chairperson and members to reconsider because it reads: “*The minister shall not make a decision on the application for a license where the Council refuses to grant a license to the applicant until after the expiry of the time prescribed in (3c).*”

Mr Chairperson and colleagues, (3c) relates to the time within which a person aggrieved by a decision could apply to the minister. Once a person applies to the minister, the operation of (3c) has ceased. We are proposing that (3d) be dropped because the decision of the minister, when made, they are proposing can be appealed to the court as you go further down. We have no objection to the rest of the proposed amendments up to section 21.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Hon. Walyomu?

MR WALYOMU: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. That is why I was worried about replacing the board with the minister. You know, there is a situation where they wanted to create zoning by giving all the powers to grant or not to grant to the minister. It would create a situation of zoning in that a minister can either grant within a certain radius, or maybe not grant this factory, or this miller to put a factory here. By doing that, it would be one way of indirectly creating zoning.

I will go by the committee chairperson's recommendation that the minister should not make a decision against the Council. Why? Because we already have the Council, and it has the mandate. If we are saying that the Council has the mandate, but again one of their mandates is just to recommend to the minister, means that the Council will not have anything to do. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: If my honourable colleague agrees with the committee, then he agrees with me because I just agreed with the committee. The only thing that I said was to remove part 'd'. We are on the same page.

MR WALYOMU: Mr Chairperson, what I am saying is that we should not remove 'd' because 'd' says that the minister should not reject a decision of the Council.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable Attorney-General, just to allay the fears of the Member, I need you to help us. The Member is saying that if the Council recommends that company A be granted a license in this area, the minister should not have the power to reject the decision of the Council. That is what I am picking because the Member fears that this minister - because it is like a self-regulated industry - so, he is saying if the Council gives, the role of the minister would be to issue the license.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: I think here we need to agree and I agree with the Member that the minister may hold a different view from that held by Council. That is why we are talking about dual processes. The Council makes a recommendation to grant or not to grant. If the Council makes a decision to grant, and the minister says, "I don't think it is correct," you do not have a problem with that.

However, if he says the Council refuses - the argument we are having here is that what you are trying to prescribe against the minister, even the Council itself could be a subject of that same issue. Therefore, what we are saying - let me finish - here what we are saying -

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I am going to give you time, okay? Let us allow one another; when one is on the Floor, give them time to finish then I allow you. Let us listen.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: What the committee has done, it has said Council sits through the application. Therefore, in the application process, the minister does not participate. The Council makes the decision and the only way the minister gets involved is when a person is aggrieved. If the Council sends a recommendation to the minister to grant or not to grant, and the person who applied does not complain, the minister cannot get involved. The minister can only do that which the Council has recommended.

However, this clause is saying that where the applicant is aggrieved, he goes to the minister and says to the minister, "The Council has mistreated me for these reasons or those reasons." That is when the minister can get involved in making a determination whether to grant or not to grant.

The committee has gone further to say that even when the minister has made that decision, if a party is aggrieved, maybe now the Council is the one that does not agree with the decision of the minister, it can then apply to the court to review that decision.

Therefore, it is important, honourable colleagues, that this applicant has got a remedy provided to them in case a decision is made which they do not agree with. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Hon. Joab?

MR JOAB BUSINGE: Mr Chairperson, I would like to agree with the Attorney-General because the minister is a minister of the Government, and the spirit behind this amendment is that the minister is deemed to be as neutral as possible. However, the Council has an interest because it is in business. Yes, in fact, in the Council, we have the millers, the growers, and the representatives of the minister, but this Council, to me, can be more biased when it comes to the recommendation of individuals to enter into this business. Therefore, I agree that the minister should maintain that status.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I do not want us to have an exchange on this. because the Attorney-General has put it very clear that; “the minister will only be involved if the party that has applied is aggrieved.” And what are the situations of being aggrieved? I applied to the council but they have denied me a license.

DR BATUWA: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I seek clarification on that very matter. The Principal Act that we are managing, that is the section 21-

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: We are not managing here. *(Laughter)*

DR BATUWA: The Principal Act we are amending, that is Section 21, has only three subsections. However, when you look at the suggestion of the meeting, it cites sub-section (6) and (8). In those two sub-sections - first I should confess that we are blind as to which subsection (6) he is talking about and as to which subsection (8) he is talking about.

In being that blind, we now see that the word “board” in those two subsections where we are

blind should be replaced or substituted with the word “minister”. We wonder that the functions that should have been of the board are going to the minister. If sub-section (6) and (8) are listened to properly, maybe it will clarify the position the minister is trying to state.

Therefore, I ask that the committee re-reads subsection (6) and subsection (8) clearly and we see their effect.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable, do not accept to be blinded. It is very simple. When you are introducing something beyond what is already provided, that is when it becomes a new clause. When you have a new clause, you can go beyond what was provided in the Principal Act.

For example, if the clauses being amended are around section 21(a), (b) and you have new ones, you can add and go to c, e, f, g, that is number one.

Then in 20, we agreed that we shall come to it later because it is a consequential amendment. Once we agree that the powers of the license do not stop at the board but go to the minister, then we must go back to 20. It is a consequential clause, but it can only be that if we agree with section 21 and 22. Once we finish those, then you will have amended the other ones indirectly, so you must go back and you amend it. That is 19.

Hon. Akamba, do you have an issue with the same? Then Hon. Teira -

MR AKAMBA: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I have a problem with the proposal because, much as the learned Attorney-General is said that it can be dual, the section says, “if the applicant is aggrieved”. We may need to change to say, “the aggrieved party”. Then it can cover both the applicant and the board in case the board is aggrieved by the decision of the minister.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General-

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: I Section 3(b) and (c) relate to the applicant; “if the applicant is aggrieved”, if the applicant goes to the board, makes an application for a license but the board, for example, says no, the applicant is aggrieved and the applicant can go to the minister.

However, if the council is aggrieved, you go to Section 9 which says; “the insertion that the committee is proposing...” – “a person aggrieved by the decision of the minister...” whether it is the applicant or the council, that is when you apply to the court.

The aggrieved parties can be two in respect to a decision of a minister but the aggrieved party can only be one in respect to the decision of the council.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Teira -

MR TEIRA: Mr Chairperson, the spirit of creating the council with a composition of farmers and millers was to create a self-regulating entity that shall give very proper guidance to the sector.

The reason we are not comfortable with the view that the decision of the council should be vetoed by the minister was because we do not, first of all, want to politicise the sector. We want it to continue self-regulating in a business manner.

Number two, it is more convenient for an individual to go to court in case he is aggrieved than getting the consensus of council members who, probably if the matter was put to vote and four were saying yes and three are saying no, would even oppose the resolution of the council to go to court when they are going against the decision of the minister.

We would rather say, the aggrieved party should go to court than having the council to go to court against the decision of the minister.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: So, the powers of the minister are only of granting the

license on recommendation of the committee? Hon. Kibalya -

MR KIBALYA: Thank you. Mr Chairperson, when we were in the consultative meeting you called, these are the scenarios we tried to avoid, Hon. Bahati was in the meeting and we agreed clearly that the powers of the minister will be to grant, after the Council has agreed.

We are envisioning a scenario where the minister also has space to say that if the council says no, I can say yes and we find a way. Or if the council says yes, I can say no and this is what we are discussing here now.

We agreed on principle that the minister would take the decision of the council and not sit in office to do something different from what the council has done. That is why we said that if there is any party that will be aggrieved, that party will go to court.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Hajji Iddi-

MR IDDI ISABIRYE: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. The consultative meetings that you held were trying to cure such scenarios. If you consider the Principal Act, we are only replacing the board for council. What the board ought to have done in the principal Act is exactly what we would have expected the council to be doing.

So, if we are giving a minister room to determine whether to be a board or council because the council is the regulator, promoter of the industry – I would ask the Attorney-General – I will take the information –

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I am allowing you time to debate, but you interrupt each other with information –

MR WALYOMU: Thank you, Chairperson. The minister in the council is already represented. There are three members representing the Government. This means that you are sending somebody who already has a representative to take the decision where his representative is -

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Just wait a bit. Honourable colleagues, we had a long process that members are referring to. If members are saying that if you are aggrieved by the decision of the council, you got court. This did not come from Government; it came from the committee.

MS NAYEBALE: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. We concede on 3(c), “the applicant shall within 30 days of receipt of the notice of the decision of the council, under subsection 3(a) apply to a court of competent jurisdiction to review the decision of the council”. That should be the council, not the minister in this case. Therefore, we agree to that.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the new clause, as proposed, be inserted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

New clause, agreed to.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: *(Members rose_)* Honourable colleagues, we have already moved on from that. Can we go to Section 19? It is a consequential amendment.

Honourable colleagues, when I put the question, allow me to move.

MS NAYEBALE: Amendment of section 19 of the principal Act

“Section 19 of the principal Act is amended by substituting for the word “Board” wherever it appears, the word “Minister”.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: That is a consequential amendment. You do not discuss it, because you have already passed clauses 20 and 21. *(Mr Oguzu rose_)* That cannot be a consequential amendment – that becomes a new clause.

Honourable colleagues, go by our rules. The moment you want to propose anything to do with a new clause, you must write to the Speaker and the Clerk. You must give notice

early. They gave notice for all these new clauses. We cannot have new clauses on the Floor.

Let me first put the question on the one they have raised.

Honourable colleagues, I put the question that clause 19 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 19, as amended, agreed to.

New Clause

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Oguzu.

MROGUZU: Mr Chairman, having established that the role of the minister in checking the excesses of the council has been removed, it is important that we have - alongside the millers, outgrowers and the Government - the workers represented on the council.

The council is a body that protects the interests of various stakeholders. We cannot be seen to be protecting the interests of a few when the workers in all these sugarcane-growing areas are being exploited.

Therefore, I move that the workers must be represented on that council so that they can take care of their interests. They can do that through their representatives or the unions, and that has not been provided for.

You have provided for millers, and there are three. You have provided for outgrowers, and there are four. You have provided for the Government, and there are three. Why should you leave the workers out, yet they are being exploited every other day?

As much as you want to protect your outgrowers, you must protect our workers. We are tired of people being exploited. The Government should have been the one to stand for these people. The minister’s powers have been removed.

The only protection we can accord these people is by giving them space where they will be able to express their concerns, so that these concerns are discussed and a solution is found for them. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I think you are also going to move that we have cleaners. Let me go over our rules, please. I want discipline in the House.

Honourable colleagues, we conduct business according to rules. You have been with this Bill and reporting for a long time. Rule 134(4) of our Rules of Procedure says that “The Committee of the whole House shall consider proposed amendments by the committee to which the Bill was referred and may consider proposed amendments, on notice...” That is why the Members gave me notice. We do not read while here. You have not given notice.

Honourable member, you do not access a microphone like that, please. These are not issues of emotions. They are issues of the law – and it is not consequential in any way. We have a law, which was already giving - if you look at the principal Act, it already gave these people this representation. It gave farmers four slots and millers three slots. There is nothing like a consequential amendment here.

MR ZIJJAN: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I agree that Members intending to introduce amendments should, first, seek your indulgence, in writing. Perhaps that would be the general rule, but I would –

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: It is not a general rule; it is what your rule says.

MR ZIJJAN: I would suggest that there be exceptions, in high-stake circumstances like we are in at the moment.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: What is the high stake about this?

MR ZIJJAN: The Member’s submissions concerning amendments that really affect the –

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, you will get a situation where you read from here. We give you these reports in advance so that you can prepare. Members prepared – I have Hon. Kyobe, Hon. Akiiki, Hon. Teira and Hon. Iddi Isabirye. They all brought in amendments.

Listen to me. You have your principal Act— Hon. Zijjan and Members. The composition of this board is in section 4 of the Act. That is number one.

Number two, in the Bill, they also proposed the composition of the council. What I mean is simple: all along, it is an issue that has not just risen. If it was an issue that had not been provided for - for example, if you insert a new clause that talks about the composition of the council, and it has just come up, I would allow amendments. However, if it is something that is historical, I do not handle it as an emergency. Please, that is my ruling and guidance.

Honourable minister?

MR BAHATI: Mr Chairperson, I comfort the honourable member that, one, we have enough laws regarding the labour issues in the country.

The second point is that the Member was worried that the minister’s powers had been removed. That is not true. The minister’s powers have been restricted only in matters of licensing. The minister has the power to make regulations and to appoint the council itself.

So, the Member should not be worried about the powers of the minister, although I welcome his sympathy that the minister should have more powers. *(Laughter)* However, the House has restricted his powers as far as licensing is concerned.

On other issues of regulation, if we find there is a problem in the sugar industry regarding the workers, we will come in and intervene. There is no restriction on this. We have a whole ministry for employment. There is a minister and a state minister for labour, so there should be no problem. When we mix many issues of

workers, regulation, or licensing of the sugar industry, we can create a problem in the sugar industry.

I would like to appeal to the Members to be comforted. The powers of the minister are there; we regulate and appoint the council. The Government is in a position to handle matters of the workers in the sugar industry, like we handle workers of other sectors in the country.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I have discussed this with honourable colleagues. Remember, we just passed the Employment Act. It handled issues of casual labourers, people being denied their jobs, and all that. Most of these were covered.

Secondly, I have explained to Hon. Lee how it was benchmarked with other laws. When you check the laws of Kenya, Tanzania and other countries, there is nowhere on the board that these people are involved.

Thirdly, by contributing financing, we are regulating a business relationship—how these people interact with each other — because these people are in business with each other.

You can see what Hon. Oguzu Lee has said, honourable minister. The minister for labour should have time to discuss the issues of labourers who are exploited in many sectors. It can be in cotton, coffee or anywhere – (*A Member rose*) on which clause? This is because we have already finished this clause. No, honourable, please, we do not repeat the same things. We have –

New clause

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson, section 22?

MS NAYEBALE: “Amendment of section 22 of the Principal Act. Section 22 of the Principal Act is amended –

(a) In subsection (1), by substituting for the words “approval by the board”, the words “the recommendation of the council and approval of the minister.”

(b) By substituting for subsection (3), the following - “(3) A person who wishes to modify a mill shall seek the recommendation of the council and the approval of the minister.

(c) By inserting immediately after subsection (3) the following - “(4) The provision of section 21 shall, within the necessary modifications, apply to an application for modification of a mill.”

The justification is:

1. To harmonise the provision of section 22 with the principle of the Bill relating to the grant of licenses by the minister on the recommendation of the council.
2. To request a miller who seeks to modify a mill to seek the approval of the minister -

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleague, it is “to require.

MS NAYEBALE: I beg your pardon, Mr Chairman.

2. To require a miller who seeks to modify a mill to seek the approval of the minister.
3. To provide a procedure for applying to the minister for modification of a mill.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable minister?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Mr Chairman, in light of the discussion we have just had with the council looking to regulate itself and remove “the minister”, this was a proposal from the committee.

However, in the principal Act, the modification had always been left with the board, which is now replaced by “the council.” We propose that we leave the provision of section 22 as it is in the current legislation. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Hon. Batuwa?

DR BATUWA: Thank you, Mr Chairman. We have debated severally on the interference of the minister in the works of the council. Recognising that even the chairperson of the council is appointed by the minister and that there are permanent secretaries there, some of these approvals should be left to the council to sort out. They are technical people. We should really see minimum political interference with the council.

I pray and suggest that in agreeing to insert that new statement, the council should make the recommendation and the approval. We should not have recommendations, but an approval process handled by the council.

Therefore, the word “recommendation” should not suffice. Let the process be managed and concluded by the council. The minister only gets to be informed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: I think that was what the Attorney-General also said. Why should the minister be involved in the modification of a mill?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: We propose that the provision of section 22 of the Principal Act remain as it stands in the Act now.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: That satisfies what Hon. Dr Batuwa said. We just do the consequential amendment of the board, just changing the board to council. Thank you. Committee chairperson?

MS NAYEBALE: We concede.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Chair, under that, you had “changing board to council.” We can do it and come back to that later.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Mr Chairman, we are suggesting that the proposal by the committee be adopted only to the extent that where “board” appears in section 22, it is replaced by “council”, but the rest of the provision remains as it stands in the Act.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Chair, do you agree with the proposal?

MS NAYEBALE: Yes, we agree.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. That was very straightforward, hon. Kibalya. I do not know what you want us to say about that.

MR KIBALYA: Are you going to move the motion? Mr Chairman, we wanted the Attorney-General to clarify on something which we are passing. In our areas -

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: What is something? Here we do not deal with something.

MR KIBALYA: It is what I want to mention. We have used a blanket statement to say “mills”, whose capacity we have not defined. In the area where we grow sugarcane, we have cottage industries and jaggeries. The word “modification” may affect a person who has a jaggery, just improving it on something. Or these cottage industries that manufacture a few things. Is this person also supposed to seek permission from the council? This is because these are small industries.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable, whenever you license, you license for the sector. You do not license for small and big - It is a sector.

MR KIBALYA: Chair, this is where the worry is. Now, these people are going to get affected. Some people have small cottage industries -

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Yes, but they should. Hon. Kibalya, the problem you had is simple: You have a sector that is not regulated. Now, you want to have a sector that regulates some and does not regulate others. Let everyone come clean. Let all of them reach in.

Then, under the council and in regulation, they would go into the inner details, and the process of the small ones. They can say, for

example, the small one can be handled by the subcommittee jaggery. Then the big ones can be handled by the full council. Those are details that you go into. You cannot go and say, we are rejecting people who produce waragi and leave distilleries for them. We have those who use drums and all that they should not be - no, sector - what will be the purpose of the Law? Honourable minister?

MR BAHATI: Mr Chairperson, the English say, “You cannot eat your cake and have it”. You are not going to organise the sector and then also remain with some parts which are disorganised.

The reason we want to regulate this sector is to bring everybody on board and have the benefits of a properly regulated and organised one. Even the small ones, when doing regulations, we shall take care of them. There should not be any problem.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that Section 22 of the principal Act be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Section 22, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 13

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Joy Katali already gave me a notice on clause 13. It was Hon. Florence Asimwe - you know, I got many - anyone with an amendment to clause 13. Honourable, you need a microphone to go and record.

MS FLORENCE ASIMWE: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Clause 13, substitution of Schedule 3 to the principal Act. Clause 13 is amended by substituting for Schedule 3 the following:

Formula to determine the minimum price of sugar cane. PC, which equals PS times R times D. Where PC is the average price of sugarcane per tonne. PS is the average price of raw sugar

per ton. R is rendement, to be fixed at (8.5) per cent; however, millers and out growers may negotiate for a rendement above (8.5) per cent, subject to prevailing circumstances. D is the minimum percentage of sharing proceeds that our proceeds shall be (55).

Justification

To provide a fairer formula for determining sugarcane prices.

THE DPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable minister.

MR BAHATI: Mr Chairperson, I agree with the amendment and this is one of the things that we have been looking for; to harmonise the formula. I want to confirm with the Members because there are some fears from the farmers, how about those farmers that have already negotiated and signed agreements for the rendement of above 8.5 per cent.

We want to confirm that those agreements will continue in force so they will not be affected. After all, 8.5 per cent is lower than the 9 like Kinyara has already signed. I, therefore, agree with the amendment.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a group of 29 sugar cane growers from the Greater Mukono Sugar Cane Out-Growers Cooperative Society. They are represented by Members of Parliament from the Greater Mukono region. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* I can see some of the faces that we had in the negotiations. Thank you.

Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a group of scouts and Girl Guides leaders from the Uganda Scouts and Girl Guides Association, who have been participating in the meeting with regards to the amendment of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides Act. They are here to observe proceedings of the House on the invitation of Hon. Ssasaga, Member of Parliament for Budadiri East,

who is also the Deputy Chairperson of the Association. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Thank you. Hon. Batuwa.

DR BATUWA: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On the issue of rendement, I do not want to differ so much from what has been agreed. However, my contribution is that the 8.5 per cent should actually be the minimum.

My argument is that if we are to understand the rendement as how sweet your sugarcane, you the farmer, how sweet your sugarcane is - and we who grow sugarcane, we know that when you leave it for long in the garden, it becomes sweeter.

Therefore, rendement, meaning that 100 tons of sugarcane- how many tons of sugar will it give? Here, we are saying 8.5 per cent of the tons of sugar -

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Minimum.

DR BATUWA: Minimum. We are saying the word negotiation should not arise, saying that those who negotiate for a higher rendement. Let there be a procedure in that those whose sugar cane has been tested and found to produce more than 8.5, at least get what they deserve. However, the minimum remains at 8.5.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable, those are issues which the council will handle -

DR BATUWA: In their regulation.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

DR BATUWA The word “negotiating,” honourable minister, should not arise. We should be fair to a farmer who has fertilised and given long for the cane.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that Clause 13 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 13, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 14, agreed to.

Clause 1, agreed to.

These are clauses that we stood over, because we needed to first sort these issues. I put the Question that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill.

Clause 1, agreed to.

Clause 2, agreed.

The Title, agreed to.

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

2.34

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Mr Chairperson, I beg to move a motion that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(The House resumed, the Deputy Speaker presiding.)

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

2.35

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Mr Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of the whole House has considered the Sugar Amendment Bill, 2023 and passed it with amendments.

MOTION FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE HOUSE

2.36

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the report from the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

BILLS
THIRD READING

THE SUGAR (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023

2.36

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (Industry) (Mr David Bahati): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Sugar (Amendment) Bill, 2023” be read the third time and do pass.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the Sugar (Amendment) Bill, 2023, be read the third time and do pass.

(Question put and agreed to.)

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED, “THE
SUGAR (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2025”

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. *(Applause)* Honourable minister, I would like to congratulate you, the chairperson, Members from the sugar growing areas and honourable colleagues for supporting them. *(Applause)*

I really thank, in a special way, the Members who participated in the negotiations to listen to their farmers. These outgrowers here are very

happy that at last *–(Applause)–* we have this resolved. I will raise Hon. Oguzu Lee’s issues later.

Every day that we delayed, these outgrowers were suffering. Even when we were putting the Government to task to come here and address issues of the sugar sector, like getting low prices for their cane, there was no basis. The basis is now clear in this, especially that formula.

Honourable colleagues, thank you for fighting for your people and guiding us. *(Applause)* They were hard, and there is no way a Presiding Officer could proceed without first reconciling with honourable colleagues from the sugarcane growing areas.

For the outgrowers and farmers, honourable colleagues had a fear that there are people who did not want this law to pass and therefore, will go and blame other honourable colleagues. Whatever you did not achieve, it is because your MPs went and passed a law. What we have passed here is what was negotiated between the millers and outgrowers. The MPs came to support and to ensure that you get a fair deal.

So, I do not want my MPs to be blackmailed or not supported. It might force some of us to come and explain to the people who negotiated. For those who negotiated, please let us stand by that negotiation and explain to our people why it was very important to pass this important law. Honourable minister?

MR BAHATI: Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you in particular for all the effort you have put into making sure that these amendments are passed. You have chaired several meetings. We have negotiated, built consensus, and it is this consensus that we have passed.

I thank the Members for supporting the amendment. We passed a law in 2020; it is coming up to five years. I would like to assure Members that we are now going to work on the regulations. They might even come before the four months, so that we implement *– (Applause)–* the Sugar Bill and organise the industry.

Mr Speaker, it could be an appropriate time for us to check our sugar levels at this time. Thank you. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Madam chairperson, we made you suffer by inheriting a Bill in between, but you have done a fantastic job. We would like to thank you. *(Applause)* Please, do you have any comments you would like to make as the committee chairperson?

MS NAYEBALE: Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. Allow me to join the Honourable minister in thanking you for the tremendous job you have done. I will be very honest. The first time I joined the meetings for the millers and outgrowers, I thought it would not end, but I would like to thank them for finally having something on the table.

I will definitely thank my fellow honourable colleagues from the sugarcane growing districts and constituencies. They have joined you in this battle, and it has been successful. Thank you so much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the House is suspended for 30 minutes, so that we can do lunch and be back here.

(The House was suspended at 2.40 p.m.)

(On resumption at 3.14 p.m., the Deputy Speaker presiding_)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Welcome back, colleagues. Let us resume. Next item.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Committee Chairperson, our tradition is that we use 15 minutes because we read the report, the whole report is captured on the *Hansard*, so that we can save more time for members to debate.

(The report is attached hereto.)

3.15

MR HERBERT ARIKO (NRM, Soroti East Division, Soroti City): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. On behalf of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, I am pleased to present to you the report of the committee on the ministerial policy statements for five Votes and three subventions.

We present a report on Vote 017 - Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development;
Vote 139 - Petroleum Authority of Uganda;
Vote 019 – Ministry of Water and Environment;
Vote 150 - National Environment Management Authority, and
Vote 157 - National Forestry Authority.

We have subventions which comprise the National Water and Sewage Corporation, the Atomic Energy Council, and the Uganda Electricity Credit Capitalisation company. Before I go into the crux of the summary of our report, I would like to note that a few colleagues may be hearing that we return and talk about National Forest Authority.

To this end, the Bill rationalising National Forest Authority has not been assented to, and we believe that as a committee, we must be able to deal with our institution as long as it has not legally been rationalised yet.

Even as we go into the report, there has been severe underfunding of the Ministry of Water and Environment, where over the last financial year, they have experienced a cut of 54 per cent on the budget that this House approved.

You will also note in our report that there is a very fundamental issue of poor funding for rural electrification as well as electricity scale-up projects, which are crucial for the transformation of this country.

One of the final and key issues is the continued accumulation of unpaid water bills for the National Water and Sewerage Corporation to a tune of Shs 107 billion, which is, to this end, threatening the healthy operation of the corporation.

Therefore, I would like to go straight to the committee observations and recommendations, where I will delve into some of the issues I have highlighted.

The Energy and Mineral Sector

7.1 General Observation

The committee noted that there was over-budgeting for the Midstream Petroleum Infrastructure Development Project Phase II, which led to the inflation of the ministry budget.

The budget for Vote 017 - Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, for the Financial Year 2025/2026 is projected to rise by Shs 501.9 billion and this will go to Shs 1.714 trillion from Shs 1.212 trillion in the Financial Year 2024/2025.

This artificial increase is on account of the project called Midstream Petroleum Infrastructure Project Phase II, where the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has lumped up a total of Shs 653.4 billion as external financing, without any details of this project, not even its work plan.

The Ministry has also increased the Government of Uganda funding for this particular project from Shs 10.4 billion in the Ministerial Policy Statement to Shs 32.9 billion.

This artificial inflation or increase in the budget estimates is the one that has resulted in a rise in the ministry's budget.

Recommendations

The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development explain the basis for budgeting for Shs 653.4 billion under the Midstream Petroleum Infrastructure Development Project Phase II without any work plan against the multi-year project spending plan laid out in the House.

Specific objectives –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, will you go into all the details and manage? Focus on the recommendations.

MR ARIKO: Underfunding of the mineral sector

The committee notes that out of the planned Shs 1.713 trillion - Mr Speaker, these are units for debate in the House because it is three minutes, and it is off. I beg that the flow may continue.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Information Technology (IT), allow Hon. Ariko to show cause.

MR ARIKO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Note that the petroleum sector is provided for with only Shs 33.55 billion, and out of this, there is only Shs 9 billion, which is provided for the development budget, which represents only 1.9 per cent.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the Government should provide adequate funding for various interventions under the mineral sector, such as exploration activities, quantification of mapped minerals, and regularisation of artisanal and small-scale mining.

7.2.3 Capitalisation of the Uganda National Mining Company

The Government established the National Mining Company with a view to increasing beneficiation from the mineral sector. The committee noted that we need at least Shs 4 billion to be provided for the capitalisation of this company.

Recommendation

The committee, therefore, recommends that the Government should provide Shs 4 billion to the Uganda National Mining Company to take up its strategic mining operations in the country.

7.2. The Establishing and Gazetting of the artisanal mining zones and biometric registration of artisanal miners

The committee recommends that the Government provides additional funding of Shs 2.9 billion for the regularisation of artisanal mining and the gazetting of artisanal mining zones.

Honourable colleagues, I am advised to concentrate on recommendations, whereas this particular sector would have required us to delve into the details of the committee findings. However, because of the challenges of time, I trust that you can follow the details in the report itself.

Value addition

The committee recommends that the Government provide additional funding of Shs 10.5 billion for the construction and equipping of beneficiation centres. That is in terms of value addition, insofar as minerals are concerned.

The Building Substances Bill

Mr Speaker, while processing the Mining and Minerals Bill 2022, the committee recommended that it was – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry! Honourable member, you started working here much earlier than I. You are the one who recruited some of the people in the Information and Communication Technology department (ICT), so I am not to blame. You were Head of Human Resources here, in Parliament. If you had issues with the people you recruited –*(Laughter)*

MR ARIKO: Well noted and agreed. I hope that I can return, one day, to do an evaluation of my recruitment processes.

Mr Speaker, the committee recommended that a specific building substances Bill be introduced in the House. It was hoped that by April 2023, this Bill would have been introduced.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the Building Materials Bill should be presented to Parliament by at least the end of the first quarter of the next financial year, as it has significant implications on the budget of the sector.

On the issue of staffing needs of the Directorate of Geological Surveys and Mines, the committee noted that it is important to strengthen the directorate because, at the moment, we have only seven mine inspectors, with four of them working in headquarters and only three in the field.

We, therefore, recommend that:

- i) Shs 2.02 billion be allocated for the recruitment of key personnel in the Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development, which has been cleared by the Ministry of Public Service for the Financial Year 2025/2026;
- ii) The recruited personnel should be facilitated with tools, vehicles and other essential equipment so as to ensure compliance monitoring.

Construction of weighbridges

Mr Speaker, the committee observed that despite securing parliamentary approval through the supplementary budget in the Financial Year 2023/2024 of Shs 10 billion to procure weighbridges, the funds were never released.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the ministry is provided with Shs 4 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026 for the mineral production monitoring system and the installation of weighbridges at key mining sites, so as to track the volumes of minerals extracted.

Non-payment of royalties

Mr Speaker, the matter on royalties has been debated in this House several times. The committee, therefore, recommends that:

- i) The royalties should be remitted – (*Member timed out.*)

Mr Ddungu and team, is that where it is operated from, not here? Okay. Mr Speaker, because these were my staff, I am almost starting to address them directly. (*Laughter*) Royalties should be remitted to local governments and other beneficiaries as per the Mining and Minerals Act, 2022, Cap. 159.

- ii) The Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development should revoke licences for exploration where the holders are carrying out mining as opposed to exploration - indeed, exploration licences must have a specific timeline to avoid people who purport to do exploration while actually extracting minerals for commercial purposes.
- iii) The Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development should strictly enforce all requirements for one to hold an exploration license and weed out the speculators.

Operationalising strategic mineral resources

The committee recommends that, as part of the fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV) and the 10-fold growth strategy, the Government should prioritise reviving Katwe salt and Osukuru Phosphate mines. It should also incentivise local iron ore processing so as to reduce imports, create jobs, and support industrialisation.

Sustainable Energy Development Programme

Mr Speaker, this is where the electricity issues are.

Contractor payment delays under the Rural Electrification Programme

The committee noted that there is a significant delay in the Government paying certificates of completed works, which has totalled to Shs 75.622 billion as of June 2024. The non-payment of contractors has, in turn, resulted in the abandonment of sites in many parts

of the country. Some of the erected poles are beginning to rot away. Some of the un-energised power lines have been vandalised by unscrupulous people, and indeed, this has failed most of these projects.

The committee, therefore, recommends that Shs 75.622 billion be provided to the Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development for payment of contractors, consultants and suppliers of materials to the various rural electrification projects.

Strategy to complete contractor-abandoned electrification projects

Mr Speaker, the committee recommends that the Government should provide the Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development with Shs 20 billion that it has requested to pay the new contractors who have been identified to undertake and complete abandoned project sites.

Counterpart funds to unlock donor financing under the Electricity Scale-up project

Up to a tune of Shs 345.4 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026 is available from development partners. However, the ministry requires at least Shs 21 billion to unlock this funding as counterpart funds.

Under the electricity scale-up projects, it is hoped that up to 1,500 kilometres of network grid extension shall be completed and another 300,000 last-mile connections could be done over the next financial years.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the Government provides for counterpart funding for electricity scale-up projects of Shs 20 billion in the next financial year.

The power tariff reduction and takeover of the distribution system by Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL)

The takeover of the electricity distribution system by UEDCL from Umeme Limited on 1 April 2025 coincided with a 13.9 per cent reduction in the weighted average end-user tariff for the period April to June 2025.

The exit of Umeme, which has hitherto been entitled to a net return on investment of 20 per cent, made it possible for the regulator to provide UEDCL with Shs 75 million dollars of recoverable proceeds from the tariff for immediate investment into the network.

The committee, therefore, recommends that UEDCL is provided with \$75 million as money for capitalisation of the company so as to enable it to run the grid effectively.

Electricity demand growth will soon outstrip the available capacity.

Honourable colleagues, the current installed capacity of electricity in the country is 2,051 megawatts. The actual available dependable capacity is approximately 1,372 megawatts. It is expected that the annual electricity demand is likely to rise by 10 per cent from 7 per cent over the next five years.

This is going to be attributed to the electricity scale-up project, the standard gauge railway, and the intensification of the oil-related industry. This, therefore, means that this projected growth rate is anticipated to increase the demand for electricity to surpass the supply over the next three years.

The committee noted that on average, it takes five to nine years for one to design -

MS NALUYIMA: Mr Speaker, you have given 15 minutes to our committee chairpersons to accomplish these reports, and at this time, we are seeing the committee chairperson going into several details.

Wouldn't it be procedurally right, if upon every point, the committee chairperson, since he already knows each matter, first gives the observation in a small summary, and later on explains to us the recommendation?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, there is a culture of us reading with the chairperson from here; what the chairperson says is what we know is in the report. You are given these reports early, you

have them on the iPad, and so I need you to have time for debate.

The more time the chairperson takes, the less time you get for debate, but from an informed view, you have been with this report since last week. Committee chairperson, five minutes to conclude because already, the minutes are gone, and the whole report will be captured on the *Hansard*.

MR ARIKO: Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, your time is moving.

MR ARIKO: Mr Speaker, I want to be persuaded by what you said. Whereas dutifully and diligently following your guidance, I believe that energy, minerals, water, and environment form the core and the crust of the attainment of the National Development Plan (NDPIV) of this country.

Mr Speaker, we only do not our role, as Members of this House, justice, when we attempt not to want to listen to anything to do with the report.

However, as a committee, we are satisfied that we have scrutinised the ministerial policy statement (MPS) to its very detail, and we can defend the figures at the budget committee. Therefore, honourable colleagues, I shall try to do as requested.

The committee recommends -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ariko, today you are not the Ariko I know. You usually concentrate, but you are allowing forces from the side to interrupt you, and you are very happy today.

Chairperson, I have added you 10 minutes. Like you said, I want Members from every subregion of Uganda to submit on this in terms of a debate.

MR ARIKO: Mr Speaker, I will definitely be done in 10 minutes. In a move to enhance

generation, the Government is exploring the possibility of undertaking an 8,400 nuclear power project in Buyende. Feasibility studies have started. The Government also wishes to start a centre for Nuclear Science and Technology at Soroti University.

The purpose of this is to have a project that will once and for all provide a substantial contribution of power to the grid. In order to attain this, the committee recommends that the Government provide at least Shs 10 billion for the purposes of feasibility study and commencement activities, and another Shs 3 billion for us to acquire the land that will enable us to undertake the 8,400-megawatt nuclear project in Buyende.

Sustainable development of petroleum resources

The committee recommends that the accounting officer of the Petroleum Authority of Uganda should enhance regulatory oversight so as to ensure the timely and cost-efficient completion of critical projects, including the drilling operations, oil extraction facilities, and the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP).

The Status of the acquisition of right-of-way for the petroleum products pipeline (Buseruka to Mpigi)

The committee notes that whereas progress has been made on the compensation of Project Affected Persons (PAPs) along the refined products pipeline from Buseruka-Hoima-Mpigi, the funding for the construction of houses for PAPs that opted for relocation rather than together with titling of their pipeline corridor construction of the community infrastructure, lively restoration is still pending.

The committee recommends that the Government provides adequate funding for all outstanding contractual obligations, including the PAP implementation, as well as the construction of resettlement houses.

The feasibility study for the Tanzania-Uganda Natural Gas Pipeline

The committee recommends that the Government should provide Shs 2 billion to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development for the gas pipeline feasibility study.

Water and environment sector, support to the rural water project, source per village
For every village in Uganda to get at least one safe water source, in line with the presidential directive, it would require Shs 1.5 trillion annually for the supply of the unserved villages in the country over the next five years.

However, given the current financial constraints, the ministry requests Shs 50 billion, as additional funding, to implement a clean water source per village project in compliance with the presidential directive.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the Government should provide Shs 50 billion to support the improvement of the water storage and distribution network expansion throughout the country.

Inadequate budgetary allocations to the service acceleration project

Service Coverage Acceleration Project (SCAP 100) under the National Water and Sewerage Corporation and SCAP 100 under the umbrella project of the ministry is one of the projects where the Government intends to ensure that even the townships, villages, and some rural growth areas receive piped water, as well as increase the distribution. Both of these projects have significantly suffered a severe cut of their budgets. SCAP 100 under national water to the extent of receiving only Shs 1 billion out of the Shs 30 billion, when the project was launched in 2019.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the Government should provide an additional Shs 35.85 billion for SCAP 100 under the umbrella projects.

The committee also recommends that the Shs 30 billion provided to the National Water and Sewerage Corporation for SCAP100 be reinstated.

Water and sanitation Development Facilities

The Minister of Water and Environment, under the Water and Sanitation Development Facilities Project, intends to construct and complete sanitation facilities in 16 towns. The ministry requires Shs 33 billion.

The committee recommends that the Government provides the additional Shs 33 billion to the Ministry of Water and Environment through the Water and Sanitation Development Facilities Project.

Maintenance and operations of the Entebbe Airport weather stations

The committee recommends that Shs 2 billion be provided to the Ministry of Water and Environment for the maintenance and operations of the Entebbe Airport weather station. Water for the production, construction, and rehabilitation of communal and individual valley tanks.

Mr Speaker, the committee recommends that Shs 6 billion be provided for the purposes of procuring de-silting equipment to support rural communities with valley dams and valley tanks.

Restoration of the environment through tree planting and the restoration of critical wetlands

The committee recommends that the Government should provide a total of Shs 15 billion for the environmental restoration through tree planting and an additional Shs 10 billion for the restoration of critical wetlands that have hitherto been affected.

National Water and Sewerage Corporation - see page 30

A number of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies have defaulted in clearing their water bills, some of them taking up to 20 months.

The committee observed that this has resulted in the accumulation of unpaid water bills to the tune of Shs 107 billion. This has significantly affected the efficient operations of the entity.

The committee observed that the National Water and Sewerage Corporation has been one of the remaining Government parastatals that has been operating profitably and in a healthy manner. The result of unpaid water bills has led to failure by the entity to meet its contractual obligations to suppliers, it has also affected its financial standing among the credit institutions.

This is one of the reasons the committee notes here that National Water had appealed to Parliament for the possibility of a debt swap with VAT so as to ensure a healthy balance of accounts statement of the institution to avoid it from going down.

The committee, therefore, recommends as follows:

- i) The Government should clear all the outstanding arrears due to the National Water and Sewerage Corporation.
- ii) That the Government should also ensure that all Ministries MDAs provide adequate budgets for the various MDAs that reflect the annual increase in the demand for water for these facilities; and
- iii) The Government provides for Shs 84 billion to clear the current audited outstanding arrears due to the National Water and Sewerage Corporation.

On the National Forestry Authority

The committee recommends that the Government provides Shs 1.56 billion for the resurveying and demarcation of forest boundaries and another Shs 3.1 billion for the protection of forests from encroachment.

Inadequate provision of funds for tree seedlings

The committee recommends that the Government allocate Shs 2 billion for an additional 10 million tree seedlings to NFA to be able to provide seedlings for tree planting.

The National Environment Management Authority(NEMA)

The National Environment Authority wishes to procure and install an Integrated Environmental Information and Licensing System, which is supposed to facilitate quicker processing of the environmental impact assessment applications.

Provision of this will not only improve the timelines that people have to wait to acquire these licenses, but will also make the institution more efficient.

Secondly, the committee noted that the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) has an establishment of 450 people. 248 are the ones in post, giving them an establishment shortfall of 45 per cent.

This means that NEMA cannot optimally be able to police, inspect, and secure our environment to ensure sustainable use. Therefore, the committee recommends that NEMA be provided with Shs 6.65 billion so as to recruit and provide for the necessary technical staff to run the agency.

The committee also recommends that an additional Shs 10 billion be provided for it to be able to acquire and equip itself with the information system that it requires.

Mr Speaker, I know that the report is comprehensive; the rest, the Members can go through it. I would like to say that we are happy that water, environment, energy and minerals are a critical part of the transformation of this country and I beg that you, honourable colleagues find it fitting to support this report so that we can be able to provide the resources to be able to run the sector. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, well done, Chairman, and your team. Colleagues in the public gallery, we have a delegation of Bulesa Subcounty leaders from Bukooli County, Central Bugiri District. They are represented by Hon. Silwany Solomon and Hon. Taaka Agnes. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me

in welcoming them. Thank you. You can stand up for recognition.

Chairperson, I have seen that you have touched on critical issues. But, colleagues, I think when it comes to the internet, how is it done? I think money is appropriated and then deducted at source and paid to the National Information Technology Authority - Uganda (NITA-U) to facilitate its work. So, for water, because the National Water and Sewerage Corporation, the money they get is the one they reinvest in extending water services to our rural areas.

Now, here, we appropriate money, but when they release it to agencies, they do not remit it or find it as a priority - I think we need the ministry of finance here. Maybe, we should agree that for utilities, money should be directly deducted from the ministry for finance and directly. (*Applause*) Because this will take away the situation of knowing, if you cut off Luzira or Mulago, everyone will riot, and the same system should apply to electricity, seeing as Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL) is a Government company. I think it would work well if they can have money to go and support.

Honourable colleagues, the debate is now open and I will start with the Hon. Bob Okae, followed by Hon. Bwanika, Dr Apio, Hon. Nabukenya Brenda, Hon. Adeke Ann, Hon. Nambooze, Hon. Allan, Hon. Nkunyingi, Hon. Acrobert, Hon. Julius, Hon. Batuwa, Hon. Solo Kayembe - for now, and then I move to the other side.

Honourable colleagues, to avoid delays, etcetera, I usually do not take procedural matters. Hon. Bob, 3 minutes each.

3.53

MR BOB OKAE (UPC, Kwania North, Kwania): Thank you. I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this time.

I would like to thank the committee for the report they have presented. However, I have some concerns about the issue of desilting dams. We have been discussing this year in, year out, but I do not see action being taken.

In my constituency, I happen to have a dam in Olami that was constructed during my time as the district chairperson, about 10 years ago. I still remember that the Government wasted over Shs 5.6 billion to construct this dam. The dam has gone back to its original state, and the Ministry of Water and Environment has taken no action. Every year, you will hear them saying they are going to desilt dams.

I would like the committee to come up with the specific dams. If you just say, “we are giving them this amount of money for desilting dams,” and you do not come up with the names of these dams that will benefit from the money given to them, it will have no meaning.

Secondly, I would like to talk about the electricity scale-up project. We approved this loan when we had just joined - I think in the second year in this Parliament. I have not seen this project in my constituency. In Lango, they are going to other districts, I think only one district, but in my constituency, I have not seen even a single pole. I would like to know the criteria you are applying to the beneficiaries. This is just like – Mr Speaker, I am sorry, I did not talk about health. I want to talk about health.

Kwania District Local Government does not have a theatre. We have a health centre IV that the Minister of Health visited and condemned the theatre. I do not see it in the budget this year. There is no single ambulance in Kwania District. They are using my ambulance and the ambulance – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Bob was the LC V Chairperson of Kwania District. Hon. Dr Bwanika?

3.56

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to agree with you that money from utilities should be deducted and remitted directly to the entities so that it facilitates these entities in building the infrastructure and including water.

Mr Speaker, on the water for production, the report provides that there is money that is going to desilt the valley dams and the valley tanks. Sometime back, the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries informed Parliament that the Cabinet had taken a decision that water for production must go to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

Now, from this report, I can see water for production as a function of the Ministry of Water and Environment. This is going to affect - we have been complaining because it affects the functions of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries in ensuring that our farmers can access water for production.

I would like to submit that the Government should be coordinated. They made a decision that water for production must be a function of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries, so that it can be coordinated well and our farmers can access water. This might be the reason dams and valley dams are not desilted, because it is not the function of the Ministry of Water and Environment. It is a function of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries, and they can best handle that function.

I would like to pray that that Vote be moved to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Dr Apio, followed by Hon. Nkuningi.

3.58

DR EUNICE APIO (UPC, Oyam County North, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to commend the committee and its chairperson for the good work done. It has been a very heavy report, and I am trying to squeeze everything that I would like to comment on into two minutes. First, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Three minutes.

DR APIO: Yes, three minutes. Mr Speaker, information available in the public domain

indicates that Uganda exports electricity to neighbouring countries, virtually all the neighbouring countries; Kenya, Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Sudan, name it.

However, I have scanned through the report, and it seems to be silent on this. I am wondering whether it is classified information not allowed to be debated on, and if it is - because it definitely has implications on the budget, I would like to draw attention to that.

Relatedly, Mr Speaker, my attention was drawn to the list of the districts that have stalled electricity extension projects, and all of those, or almost 100 per cent of those stalled projects, appear to be from one subregion or one region. There is nothing at all reflected in other parts of the country. In my part of the country, no mention. I am wondering whether we are very unlucky as a subregion or as a region not to have any electricity or network grid extension projects in our area. I suspect that there is an obvious disparity when it comes to the allocation of that project.

I also have issues with the current scale-up project because there is nothing, not even a single pole, for Oyam County North. I request that the ministry or the Government do something for Oyam North as well.

Finally, Mr Speaker, the issue of water. We have had a very bad experience with the Umbrella Water Project. Dry taps, a very thirsty district headquarters for months on end, and stalled projects as well. There is one that they tried to install in one of the town councils, Iceme Town Council, about five years ago, and it was abandoned. No communication, no nothing. So, I request that if the umbrella water is not working, we cannot serve our people adequately – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Muwada?

4.01

MR MUWADA NKUNYINGI (NUP, Kyadondo County East, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker and the committee for the

report. However, I am concerned as they present a report talking about supporting the Entebbe Airport Weather Station, with Shs 2 billion. We also want to learn whether you have interrogated this operation. Recently, we have been experiencing landing issues at Entebbe International Airport attributed to the same weather station, among other issues. We need to learn from the committee whether there was a thorough interrogation of how best we must equip it to function. We have a lot of landing issues at the airport.

Secondly, when it comes to national water, as you have revealed, the Government agencies and the Government are failing to pay water bills. We are also concerned that consumers are now shouldering the burden. Did the committee interrogate what must be done in terms of funding to improve water metres?

Now, an ordinary consumer pays a bill even after disconnection. Sometimes, without water, the metre works. Did you interrogate who provides these meters? Do they function? Do we need to phase them out, and new meters are procured? The ordinary consumer is shouldering the burden of high bills as the Government agencies are defaulting.

Lastly, on the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), you talked about funding, especially for recruitment. As the MP representing Kyadondo East, where we have the Kiteezi Landfill, I have never seen the importance of NEMA when we had the landfill explode and destroy houses, yet there was an Environmental Impact Assessment. How are these assessments issued, and who monitors them? What is the challenge we must interrogate as we discuss this budget in Parliament? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nambooze?

4.03

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE (NUP, Mukono Municipality, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the elaborate report and make these few observations.

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of this House to the development budget – the underfunded priorities – under the mineral sector. Mining can positively contribute to poverty eradication in the country in a very short time if we can invest money around that area. If we can invest money in this sector, it can deal with poverty much faster than any other sector we can think of.

In areas like Busoga, where it is reported now that there are gold reserves that have not been properly explored, let us resolve that this sector be given money; especially now that we have learnt that the classified budget is available, we can get money from this classified sector and fund this area.

The other matter concerns where the pipeline is passing. Those whose land was earmarked for takeover for the pipeline corridor have not been paid. They do not know what to do, and they cannot use their land because compensation is not forthcoming.

Mr Speaker, there have been proposals to use our garbage to manufacture electricity, and when we invest in this area, we would be hitting two birds with one stone. If we fund the turning our garbage into electricity, we would have dealt with the garbage and also get the electricity. I do not know why this area has not been prioritised.

Last is about remittances to districts; every financial year, we resolve here that districts should be given their royalties, but I do not know why it remains just a resolution year in and year out.

Decentralisation is collapsing. I want to know for sure how much money is owed to districts in arrears. Around the loyalty – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nabukenya, Hon. Ssewanyana-

4.06

MS BRENDA NABUKENYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Luweero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson for a substantive report.

The chair raised an issue on exploration, where they need Shs 10 billion to do a feasibility study on the occurrence of uranium. I think this is a very good opportunity for our country.

We have relied on hydropower for a long time and time has come for us to look at a diverse energy source. Therefore, I support that we give them the Shs 10 billion to do the feasibility study and we move to implement the uranium project in Soroti University.

Also, I understand that it goes beyond Busoga. It is in Buhweju, Arua according to the mineral occurrence report in Uganda. Therefore, we need to extend because it is a very good opportunity for us to empower and also have a diverse energy source.

On the issue of the CUP 100-umbrella, whenever you provide water to the community or to Ugandans, you will be broadening the resource base for this country.

There might be issues with this 100-umbrella problem because usually, when you put a system in place, you must review it constantly. We have a bigger population coming up, and when you supply, you need to improve the system constantly but also resource the Ministry of Water.

They do not receive enough money and MPs usually come here complaining about town councils with no running tap water. If it is there, it is not functioning. We need to give them this Shs 35.85 billion, then they can come back and account. We need to see water everywhere in Uganda. If we do not do this, then we cannot question them.

I support looking for the funds and resource them. The Chairperson said that we should give them money to do afforestation. I think that money should be invested in supplying water to the people because people have built in wetlands, and by the time you remove them, roughly Shs 20-something billion can be used to provide water to the communities. Thank you and thank the chairperson for the report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssewanyana?

4.09

MR ALLAN SSEWANYANA (NUP, Makindye Division West, Kampala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will also re-echo the same plea by the chairperson of the committee and the committee, they suggested that the Shs 100 billion which is owed to national water by Government should be discussed and be allowed at least to pay VAT for National Water and Sewage Cooperation.

That is a lot much money and it has affected the supply of water in most areas, especially the rural areas where water has not been extended, which is almost everyone's problem here.

Secondly, I have read in the report that the National Environment Management Authority in Uganda, especially in Kampala, only has one staff to try and help them enforce environment conservation in the city, which has led to the delay of issuing out environmental assessment certificates to those who wish to construct their buildings in Uganda, that is too much.

In Kampala, people submit plans for environmental assessment and they take two years. That forces them to construct buildings without an environmental assessment certificate and then later NEMA comes and destroys their property. This is a problem and leads to loss of finances by our people.

Therefore, if they have only asked for Shs 10 billion, we should recommend that they provide that Shs 10 billion so that they can enforce the national environment management offices in the city and all other areas in Uganda and easily protect the environment in our country. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I am finishing this side, so I have Hon. Adeke, Hon. Mayanja, Hon. Kayemba, and Dr Batuwa, then I go to independents.

4.11

MS ANNA ADEKE (FDC, Woman Representative, Soroti): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the committee for doing a very good job –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Colleagues, are you all present? Including Hon. Solo? Okay. I said I would finish the Opposition then go to Independents.

MS ADEKE: Thank you. I thank the committee for doing a very good job. I would like to start from where you stopped. Last year, about this time, you still voiced the same sentiments about national water, if you recall and directed the same thing. This year, you have repeated the same statement and I hope that Government is going to heed to what the House has directed regarding the arrears that national water requires to be paid.

There has been an allocation of Shs 50 billion to rural water. I want to support this allocation. Our women, who come from very rural parts of Uganda, grapple with access to clean and safe water.

I urge the ministry to see how to equitably distribute these resources. Many times different constituencies receive access to clean water while others are doing very badly. In Soroti, I still have villages where people drink the same water that animals drink. It is very unhealthy and I request the ministry for water to, please, support us.

Mr Speaker, there has been an allocation for restoration of the environment, and I differ with Hon. Brenda Nabukenya on that. It is very critical to allocate funds for the restoration of the environment.

The effects of climate change have become more real to us today. Mr Speaker, the vegetation cover of our country is being depleted. I beg that we budget not only for restoration, but also enforcement.

I come from Soroti District, which is the corridor that many people who are burning

commercial charcoal use to bring charcoal from the greater northern part of Uganda. The greater northern part of Uganda used to be very green, but now most of the indigenous trees, such as - I know it in Ateso: it is called *Ekunguru*. (*Interjection*) It is the shea nut tree. It makes very good charcoal, but most of those trees, in northern Uganda, are endangered because of that.

Mr Speaker, charcoal burning is a source of revenue to the local communities and that is why they are unwilling to stop it. A truck will leave Acholi, Lango – (*Mr Amos Okot rose*) – It is just an example, honourable colleague - and come all the way from – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, you were giving us a very critical information.

MS ADEKE: The trucks are loaded and they keep paying money at every roadblock, and continue until they reach central Uganda.

Mr Speaker, I beg that we look at enforcement so that we save our environment. If we leave it as a battle for Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) and National Forestry Authority (NFA) at the grassroots, we are going to end up losing all our green cover. Thank you, Sir.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson of the natural resources committee, this is the issue that I assigned you. It is disheartening. The chairperson assured me that he will be going to Zoka Forest immediately after this process. He and his team will be able to bring us a report. These are the issues I want us to look into. I had already picked Hon. Allan Mayanja.

4.16

MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke): I thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

Mr Speaker, the committee has recommended Shs 20 billion for electricity access scale-up project. I totally concur with the committee,

because when you go to the villages in our constituencies, most of them have never accessed the electricity. The villages are in darkness. On top of the Shs 20 billion, we should add more money for this project because our people need electricity in the villages.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, when the committee recommends Shs 50 billion for water provision, specifically for consumption, it is very right. We need water for our people in the villages. For instance, in Nakaseke Central, most of our girls drop out of schools because they fetch water from very far places at night. If they have enough water sources, they can concentrate on their education.

The last point concerns the Shs 2 billion recommended for tree seedlings. Mr Speaker, we need these funds in the sector. This can also help Members of Parliament obtain trees to provide their electorates because the demand for these seedlings is too high. I really support the committee's recommendation. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

4.18

DR TIMOTHY BATUWA (FDC, Jinja South Division West, Jinja City): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I will address the issue of the payments by government entities that are due to the National Water and Sewerage Corporation. The figure that has been given to us is Shs 100 billion. Mr Speaker, in as much as that can be addressed by budget support, I believe there is an element of policy that should also be directed towards addressing the issue of government entities paying money to National Water and Sewerage Corporation.

The way we perceive National Water and Sewerage Corporation is that there is a thin line between it being a service company and a profit-making company. This is a company that is completely owned by the Government. To us, where we sit, we believe that it is supposed to give a service of delivering water, thereby improving sanitation. However, it seems to them that they are there to make profit.

I am really concerned, as a policy person here, that if they have enough money to cover their administrative costs, maintenance of their infrastructure, water treatment and delivery of water – if their operating costs are within the money that they collect from the direct payments by private individuals, I wonder why those bills that are due to government entities really push them to cut off water supply to a general hospital and school –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, we are appropriating money to these entities and they are not paying. They prefer to make other choices because they know that if they cut off water, Hon. Batuwa will bring a matter of national importance here.

DR BATUWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is where the problem lies.

DR BATUWA: There was some wisdom I was speaking with, being the Shadow Minister of Health, that hospitals, such as Jinja Regional Referral Hospital, are given a particular amount of money to manage other things, that being one of them. However, now that these hospitals are overcrowded, they see numbers that are beyond what is planned for, and their utility bills normally go up.

This year, the accounting officer of Jinja Regional Referral Hospital wanted to sink a borehole, but officials from the National Water and Sewerage Corporation wrote a very strong letter, outlining laws that limit sinking a borehole in an urban area. I believe that, inasmuch as we should give them budget support, there should be an element of policy to address this organisation. As long as their operating cost is covered from the money they collect, the Government, being their owner and – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, if you run a company that way, it will collapse. *(Laughter)* Please, if someone is entitled to pay bills, we cannot come to this Floor and encourage entities not

to pay bills. That is wrong. Let them budget, and let us ensure that money for utilities is budgeted for during the budgeting process.

Honourable colleagues, I remember in the 10th Parliament, when money for water in urban areas was being raised, the issue was simple. We got more from urban areas to support rural areas, through public support. This money that you say, once they collect, they should go and pay bills for hospitals - you have public standpoints in the village. If you supply locals with clean water, they will not come to that hospital. We should focus on that, seriously.

4.22

MR GEOFFREY KAYEMBA-SSOLO (NUP, Bukomansimbi South County, Bukomansimbi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for this wonderful report.

I will go straight to the electricity distribution, which the committee has recommended to be prioritised. Mr Speaker, we have had the same issue in the various reports that have been coming to this Parliament, during the budgeting period. Last week, I was in Hon. Ssentayi's constituency, where I found his opponent saying, "I am bringing you electricity that your incumbent failed to bring."

Mr Speaker, I would like to know when the Government will give us an update on electricity distribution in the places that do not have electricity, like my area Bukomansimbi, Kassebwera Parish, Kiryamenvu Village, where I come from, and other areas. Do you prefer giving the knowledge to our opponents, like I saw with Hon. Ssentayi's?

Secondly, I also thank the committee for recommending more money to umbrella projects. We need to know which towns are going to benefit from this project because they do it in a collective way. We end up finding that in Bukomansimbi in towns like Buyoga, Misanvu, Kassebwera, Kiryamenvu and others have no water. We would like to know the beneficiaries.

We also need to look more into the umbrella project, especially its operation. This is because we see money coming here but we do not benefit from it. I think the minister will tell us more about that. Where I come from in Bukomansimbi, many areas have no water. You need to tell us why?

Thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You did not tell us what your opponent says. Hon. Acrobot?

4.25

MR ACROBERT KIIZA (Independent, Bughendera County, Bundibugyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I would like to seek clarification on the issue regarding delay in payments to the contractors. Time and again, this House appropriates some money, including giving some supplementary budgets. I wonder why the issue of delay in paying contractors arises.

Secondly, it is as if some contractors are given more contracts than their capacity. In my area, I have Modest Company Limited. It was contracted in the year 2019 to date. It is as if these contractors have multiple contracts in Bunyangabu, Kasese, and Kabarole etc. It is the reason there are many stranded projects.

In conclusion, in my constituency, we have two power plants; one on River Ndugutu and another one on River Nsongya. We have a power outage. We have a challenge that out of 14 administrative units in my constituency, only four are connected to power.

I would like to seek clarification why, even when we are producing power, the 10 administrative units are not yet connected. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssenyonyi and Hon. Julius Tusiime.

4.27

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Mr Speaker, I had not intended to make a submission on this particular report, but I thought I would throw a question to the Government.

On an annual basis, there are these gold exporters who do not pay taxes. When you read the Auditor-General's reports, because on average, about 40,000 kilogrammes of gold are exported per annum.

However, due to regulatory lapses, according to Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) and so on, this money is not collected, which is what is meant to be paid in the form of taxes. We are losing out on revenue.

Smaller people are bending their backs over backwards to pay taxes. You see URA closing people's shops and so on, because they are not paying taxes. Year after year, this issue continues to recur. Can the Government help us understand why?

As we are seeking taxes for different things, what the Government normally does - and you will see with the Tax Bills - as opposed to widening the tax bracket, they keep deepening it. They keep going after the low-hanging fruit, those from whom it is easy to collect taxes. They keep deepening and making it more cumbersome for them, and yet we can widen.

Therefore, specifically - now that we are talking about natural resources and so on - the Government needs to - I do not know who is here on behalf of - oh, the Minister of State for Water is here -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a state minister for energy, Hon. Okaasai.

MR SSENYONYI: I had not seen him. There you are. Hopefully, he will help us understand why this continues to happen on an annual basis. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Julius Tusiime and then I go to this side.

4.27

MR JULIUS TUSHIME (Independent, Rwampara East County, Rwampara): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson of the committee for the report. I want to speak to the electricity scale-up project.

When we passed this loan, we all had hope and believed and we still believe that this is going to offer the electricity we need, especially in the rural areas, targeting the public health facilities.

My constituency borders a city and I have two strategic subcounties that are near the city and do not have electricity. We even have a water source that is supposed to support the hilly areas of Rwampara and still there is no electricity. I do not know whether it is because of counterpart funding. If it is the case, I highly recommend that the Shs 20 billion be given to the ministry for energy, and even more, so that the scale-up project is fast-tracked. We all need electricity in our areas to develop the cottage industries that we have, and also other functional systems that we need.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to speak to the water sanitation development facilities. My constituency has drilled four high-yielding water boreholes that have a capacity of 15,000 cubic metres per hour, water capacity, out of the four. However, this project has become a white elephant. The reason is the ministry for water says that its budget was cut. I see the recommendation that they need Shs 33 billion. Can we improve this better so that we can have areas like Rwampara, which are hilly, that are at a decimal 16 percent safe water access, and have access to clean water?

The women - where I move - all say that they do not have water for homestead use. It is important that we address this challenge especially and also provide the Shs 50 billion that is needed to provide safe and clean water at the villages.

I thank you, Mr Speaker. I recommend that we provide enough water and make the ministry for water, especially the water sector, a priority area so that it can be served fully.

I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, there is another problem we are facing. I do not know your areas, but a very good example is my constituency. The capacity

for the only water source that we had has reduced by 70 per cent.

Why? This is because someone planted eucalyptus nearby. It is completely drying at a very terrible rate. I do not know what the ministry for water is going to do about this. I am told the moment they plant eucalyptus around the water source, it starts drying up. You will find very many government projects, which we were counting on, just being white elephants, because they will not be having –

I do not know what the minister will do about that issue. Have they studied it and ascertained if it is true?

If it is true - whether you are thinking of maybe acquiring a corridor of a certain distance or a regulation, or come with by-laws of ensuring we protect by districts - We just have one water source in my constituency, Rutookye, that we have been surviving on, but now it is empty.

Do we have milk? (*Laughter*) The cows cannot give us milk if they do not have - I will go with Hon. Okot-Ogong, Hon. Teira and Dr Otaala. I will come like this, Hon. Lamwaka.

4.33

MR FELIX OKOT-OGONG (NRM, Dokolo County, Dokolo): Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity. I thank the chairperson for the wonderful report.

We need to state facts. I do not know whether Members know that the power lines that we have are so weak. The power outage is too much. We have lines passing by in our constituencies, but every day, power is not there. We have power once in two weeks. I want to know and inquire from the minister why it is happening? What is the problem? If there is an incapacity, tell us. If you cannot control and manage electricity, hand it over to a person who can.

Secondly, we have not talked about the power tariff. Our people cannot afford; industrial and domestic, it is too high. Why don't we provide something in the budget to subsidise? We know our people cannot manage. We are talking of

power everywhere, but when our local people cannot manage. I want to ask the committee or the minister what plan they have for reducing the power tariff for domestic use and industries. Because this affects the performance of our industries. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Teira?

4.35

MR JOHN TEIRA (NRM, Bugabula County North, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Thank you, chairperson of the committee and the members, for the report.

Mr Speaker, one of the offices with the biggest traffic of MPs now is the Ministry for Energy, because each Member of Parliament wants to ensure that there is energy in their constituency. This used to be the same with roads, until we came up with a proposal of the Shs 1 billion per district. I have inquired from the honourable minister, and he tells me that at a cost of Shs 1 billion, we can have almost or over a hundred kilometres of electricity power lines.

The way to solve this challenge of heavy traffic in the ministry by individuals is to agree on a standard formula on how many kilometres of electricity lines are going in each district each year. *(Applause)* When we come to this conclusion, the Shs 20 billion will not be sufficient to meet this. I am of the view that we should increase this money to cover all the districts to a tune of at least Shs 1 billion.

The urgency of this matter, we can agree to compromise on other areas and provide enough money to provide power lines in each district as a standard, so that we stop frequenting the minister's office every day. I do not want to dilute this point, so I will not add another one.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr Otaala and Hon. Lamwaka.

4.36

DR EMMANUEL OTAALA (NRM, West Budama County South, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity, and I thank the committee for a very good report. I

also want to emphasise the issue of pending electrification in most of our constituencies *vis-à-vis* the electricity access scale-up project. The access scale-up project was specifically meant to connect end users, final consumers, to electricity.

Mr Speaker, my concern is that the pace of connecting people has been extremely slow, despite the Government having acquired a loan for that purpose. People are still complaining that they have not been connected. If it pleases the minister, he could inform us of how many people have been connected in the past two years out of the proposed 1 million connections that were made.

Secondly, I want to move to the issue of pending electrification. We all know this is campaign time, and virtually all of us promise electricity to our people. What our people understand is electricity, water, roads, and good health.

I implore this House that we find additional resources to provide for electrification where you see poles were taken but they have not been put, where the poles were planted but they have not been strung and so on and so on. This is a matter which is too urgent because it is an election matter, and it cannot wait. I want to implore – *(Interjection)* - Yes, that is the truth of the matter – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, I think from observation, I was with the chairperson on the Committee of Natural Resources in the 10th Parliament. Maybe the other point we need to look at, if you could remember, is rural electrification- Hon. Mudimi, rural electrification was funded through projects. Since the merger of the Rural Electrification Agency (REA), we have not had any project. Even the electricity scale-up project was done by REA because I remember, we were in the Committee of Natural Resources. There was a very big fight. What if the ministry can also start writing proposals? Because electricity is funded cheaply. KFW, AFD, World Bank, Kuwait Energy Fund, and many funders for electricity. That is how we manage to do projects for rural electrification. Hon. Mudimi -

4.40

MR WAMAKUYU MUDIMI (NRM, Elgon County, Bulambuli): Mr Speaker, you recall, there was a loan, which the Government secured from Exim Bank of China under TBEA. The purpose of that loan was to extend power to all those rural subcounties. A number of them were mentioned, and that is one of the schemes, which the honourable talked about in 2019. Honourable minister, what happened to TBEA? Because some of these projects, even in my place, subcounties, which were mentioned, I do not see, and it brings back the issue of unpaid contractors.

TBEA had money, there was no counterpart funding, and it was a commercial loan by then that we agreed on as a House. That for the sake of power, let us close our eyes and have it done. Now they have unpaid certificates as a result of the money from TBEA. Where does the money of TBEA move to? Can you, honourable minister, tell us about the TBEA project?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Lamwaka and Hon. Ngompek.

4.41

MS CATHERINE LAMWAKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Omoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I join colleagues in thanking the chairperson of the committee for his report on the Floor.

I want to start with the issue of scaling up electricity in rural areas. I want to agree to the proposal of giving money for rural electrification, the Shs 20 billion request. However, the proposal of Shs 20 billion may not be adequate. I would like to request that we consider in detail the proposal of Shs 1 billion per district for the connectivity of electricity.

When you look at the matter of electricity, it comes along to complement a lot in terms of what the Government is trying to do even now, as far as household income is concerned. For us to realise industrialisation, we need electricity. There are a number of districts in rural areas where we have this challenge very heavy. For instance, in Omoro District, you find new value

addition equipment in the community. I have 17 new value-addition equipment, but they are not connected to power, and they are redundant.

Mr Speaker, 29 storage facilities – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have three minutes. Please, IT, crosscheck; it is three minutes.

MS CATHERINE LAMWAKA: Twenty-nine storage facilities are redundant, Mr Speaker. It is important that we look into the matter of electrification very seriously.

Two, an issue was mentioned about duplication of functions, where water for production has been put under the Ministry of Water and Environment, and allocated funds. It is my humble appeal to this House that the Government needs to streamline this matter. Otherwise, it will even force this House to duplicate in appropriation. So, we need to put matters regarding water for production clearly under the agriculture ministry, so that we avoid duplicating resources.

Finally, I support the move on tree seedlings to be distributed in the community, where the National Forestry Authority (NFA) is supposed to take the lead. When you look at our challenge today on climate change, it is paramount that this House adopts a very strategic move and we get very aggressive on the matter of restoring our environment.

It is important that NFA is supported with the funds that they have requested so that they can produce tree seedlings to be distributed aggressively to the community. Otherwise, I sense danger ahead of us as a country if we do not act on this. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

4.44

MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to commend the committee on the report. However, on the enforcement side of the National Environment Management Authority, they allocated only

Shs 1.8 billion, yet we are facing a lot of destruction of natural resources in the country by the local people and international people as well.

If you drive from the Catholic shrine in Munyonyo, Nkaddebakyala up to Kajjansi, you realise that National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) recently evicted people who had built along the swamp. There is life now because people are no longer there and in Lubigi as well. I am requesting the House to allocate more money to NEMA for restoration and enforcement, so that we save our environment from interference by the local people.

Finally, there are very many petrol stations mushrooming lately in residential areas. I do not know who is in charge of issuing licences to these petrol stations, especially in residential areas in Kampala and other areas. The ministry also has to explain to us why they are issuing licences to companies or organisations to construct petrol stations in residential areas. Thank you.

4.46

MR JAMES MAMAWI (NRM, Adjumani East County, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee for the report. I agree with the committee on the issue to do with mineral development, relating to the revocation of the licences for exploration by miners.

We have mining sites in almost every part of the country. When you look at exploration activities, by exploration, we simply mean the miners are supposed to find out whether there is a mineral in this place which is required or not. However, in actual sense, what they are doing is mining, not exploration. By the time they go to get licences for mining, they have extracted all the minerals. Therefore, I totally agree that the licences of those who are found doing exploration to the extent of mining must be revoked.

Mr Speaker, I saw a figure of Shs 1.56 billion under the National Forestry Authority

for surveying and demarcation of forest boundaries. Almost all forests in Uganda have challenges, in terms of encroachment and complaints within the communities, where settlement is supposed to stop and where the forest stops.

I do not know, through the chairperson, if what we have is enough to undertake these activities because our belief is all national forests and forest reserves must be resurveyed and clearly demarcated. We do not know if this money will be enough. We can agree to give them this money, but they should also be open with us.

Why must we create problems, instead of solving them? If there is no encroachment in these forests here, will the National Forestry Authority have any duty to perform in this country? They are saying that people are encroaching but again, they want to go and enforce. Why do you allow somebody to settle first, then you do enforcement later? Let us demarcate, so that we avoid issues to do with the encroachment. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Dr Noah?

4.48

DR NOAH MUSA (Independent, Koboko North County, Koboko): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I join my colleagues to thank the chairperson and members of the committee. I would like to comment on counterpart funding for Government projects.

This is a problem with almost all the Government projects. Recently, we had similar problems with NITA-U for the Backbone Infrastructure project. They only needed Shs 4 billion but this could not be provided. The same thing is happening with roads and now we are seeing it with energy.

We have about Shs 345.5 billion which is locked because the Government cannot provide Shs 21 billion and we know this money from external sources is borrowed as loans and we are paying interest on them. It is, therefore, important that we deliver on this project.

Mr Speaker, I would like to propose that this House considers that in subsequent borrowings, the Government should demonstrate and commit that it will provide money for any counterpart funding which is required for any project and should take priority in the Government budget. For example, under energy, if we implement the Electricity Access Scale-up Project and start using it, this is definitely going to raise resources for the Government, it will change people's lives and we will be able to raise additional money for paying the loans or for funding other Government programmes.

Secondly, I would like to comment on the issue of arrears for National Water and Sewerage Corporation. The Government agencies have this habit of not paying utilities. The same thing has been happening with the internet. NITA-U has been struggling with Government agencies because they are not paying for internet, until they decided that this should be deducted at source.

Mr Speaker, I agree with your proposal that for utilities like water, the money for these MDAs should be deducted at source, so that National Water and Sewerage Corporation can raise the funds to implement its programmes.

Lastly, I would like to talk about the issue of repairs of boreholes in rural areas. I think the minister needs to tell us whether districts get some resources to repair boreholes. In my constituency, I am overwhelmed with repairing boreholes. It is one of the constituencies which has low water coverage in the district and Koboko District generally has about 62 per cent water coverage. This is only in a few subcounties and some subcounties have very low coverage of water.

So, the minister needs to explain whether districts get some resources to repair boreholes because we also need to address mismanagement at the district level. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

4.51

MS GRACE AKIFEZA (Independent, Woman Representative, Kisoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to commend the

committee for the good report. Mine will be on power.

In Kisoro where I come from, we have areas where power was brought - we have hard-to-reach areas - but the poles were placed far away and are very high voltage. We did not get transformers to get this power to people, so there is a situation where we have power lines that are not serving people.

Remember that Kisoro is a tourist area. We have five-star hotels and hotels that host a lot of tourists, but most of them do not have water. The same applies to power. You find that these hotels are using harvested rainwater. Please, consider Kisoro as you do the budgeting.

For the National Forestry Authority (NFA), I side with the recommendation that they be given money for afforestation. It was there but they stopped it. We need this money to afforest Uganda because the environment has to be saved.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ayebare-

4.53

MS MARGRET AYEBARE (NRM, Woman Representative, Mbarara): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson and the committee for the good report. I begin by supporting your idea of paying bills from the source.

I sit on the Committee on Health and during the time of budget framework papers and ministerial policy statements, all regional referral hospitals had water bills of over Shs 500 million, except for other entities that I do not sit on the committees. Saving that and paying bills from the source will solve many problems.

In the wake of the drying up of the river Rwizi in Mbarara city and Mbarara District residents have suffered water shortage. Especially public entities like facilities.

Bwizibwera health centre IV sometimes especially women who have come to give birth are told to come with their own water.

Our hopes have been with the Kagera Water Project. May I know from the chairperson and the Minister of Water and Environment how far the Kagera Water Project has gone?

When it comes to the distribution and extension of rural water, we are looking at equity but also priority of areas that dry so fast, like the cattle-corridor areas where Kashari falls. I request that we look into that when we are giving priority to areas in the extension of rural water.

Lastly, I support Hon. Teira on the issue of solving the water problem, the way we solved the roads problem by providing at least Shs 1 billion for electricity for every district. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Osoru Mourine, Hon. Linda, Hon. Annet, honourable member for Rukugiri and Hon. Betty Engola.

4.55

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. For cities, we all have one alternative source of water, which is tap water. The boreholes and dams, according to the policy of national water, do not apply for the cities.

In the event that there is completely no water, we are disadvantaged. What plans do you have for us as the Ministry of Water?

Secondly, I expected this committee to capture the three people from Arua City who vacated their land for the airfield and to date, they have never been compensated but they are still expecting like others were.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: For what project?

MS OSORU: They gave their land for the airfield.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is physical infrastructure, honourable member. You will raise it.

MS OSORU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Arua City and West Nile at large need more feeders from the UETCL substation in Muni because right now, we only have one line that connects Arua City to Moyo.

On Saturday, a truck knocked one of the lines and the entire West Nile went black for three hours. That means businesses in Arua City and referral hospitals came to a standstill. As we budget, we need more money so that we can have more feeders to UETCL.

Lastly, West Nile now has reliable power, we thank the Government of NRM but we need a mechanism of how it can now attract industries in that region. Since we are battling unemployment.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Linda Irene, Hon. Annet Mugisha and Dr Rutahigwa.

4.57

MS LINDA IRENE (NRM, Woman Representative, Fort Portal City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson and the committee for this elaborate report. My point of concern is under the water grant. Yes, it is true that new cities were created and some parts of them are still very rural, where you find a population of people who cannot afford tap water.

National water does not have the capacity to provide water to every corner of the cities. Therefore, most of the areas do not have water and yet our cities are not receiving water grants, which has become a challenge leaving most of the people without water and sometimes we find ourselves going to sink boreholes and repair them.

My prayer is that the Ministry of Water should consider providing money for water grants to the newly created cities.

Second, is about the scale-up programme. When it was launched, almost every district and county was allocated a number of connections. We

mobilised people who applied and paid money, but only a few were connected.

Some of the people who paid money were the very people who had applied previously in the program of rural electrification.

Most of them are asking; “Why is the Government taking our money but not providing services?” I support the recommendation that the ministry should be given more money and at least each district and city be allocated Shs 1 billion for connectivity of electricity.

4.59

MS ANNET KATUSIIME (NRM, Woman Representative, Bushenyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the committee for the comprehensive report and thank them once again for prioritising rural electrification.

However, I have a concern; number one, I would like to know the plans the ministry has to survey and do the mapping of all villages in the whole country. If this one is not done, then the Ugandans will not be sure that the Government of Uganda is planning for them to get power. I have traversed the whole of Bushenyi district and looked at all the villages.

There are many villages that are not surveyed, and in those villages that are connected to power, some homesteads have power, but half of the village has no power, and yet in the system, that village is taken as one with power.

There is a big problem and since it is budgeting time, why can't we allocate funds to the ministry to do the survey in the whole country? Because according to me that is basic.

We become proactive so that when the money is available, we know where to start. Some members of Parliament have started doing that job but I think it is not sustainable. Let us know those villages that are connected to the grid and those that are not and there, we shall be able to move from one level to another.

5.01

DR ELIAS RUTAHIGWA (NRM, Rukungiri Municipality, Rukungiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would also like to thank the committee for their good report. However, I have the following concerns.

There was a recommendation for Shs 75 billion for the unfinished works for electricity connection, especially in areas where there are poles that are standing and are being destroyed.

Recently, there was an advert for that, and I saw two districts there. I would like to seek a clarification from the minister on whether this advert will wait for this funding in the coming financial year.

Secondly, there is the issue of UEDCL. I do not know their capacity, but I saw some money, in the recommendation, to functionalise UEDCL. For two weeks now, areas of Farmers and Butagatsi, in Rukungiri Municipality, do not have electricity. The transformer got a challenge. Despite the efforts to inform them, nothing that has been done.

I am, therefore, wondering about the capacity of Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited and how they are going to handle our issues.

Thirdly, we had Kahengye Water Project in Rukungiri, which I think is a white elephant. The Ministry of Water and Environment did the project and handed it over to National Water and Sewerage Corporation, but we do not have the water. National Water and Sewerage Corporation is struggling.

I, therefore, want to call upon, maybe, the Auditor-General's office that we need a serious audit of that project. If possible, the Inspector General of Government (IGG) should also come in. We need to understand what took place in the Kahengye Water Project. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, for that Kahengye Water Project, when we were on the tour of Kigezi, it was

also raised to the President. Then, I saw it in the news that you came and commissioned the project, but that the moment you left, you left with the water. It releases air – after spending how many billions.

Therefore, when you see the honourable member from Rukungiri Municipality raising it, it is a very serious issue. How do you commission a project, you pump and it comes out but when you go, it dries up? Did you connect water by Bluetooth to make it release water for commissioning and then now network is not connected? (*Laughter*)

5.05

MS BETTY ENGOLA (NRM, Woman Representative, Apac): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also join my colleagues in thanking the committee chairperson for the report.

I have two issues and one of them is on power. I emphasise that power should be connected to the rural areas. These days, we have trading centres that are very busy. The young people are into welding. The young women are also doing tailoring. In tailoring, they want to do designs and the machines that they have cannot do that, so, we need power. Where there are poles, there are no transformers. We need that fixed.

Number two, and lastly, is on one water source per village. It is not adequate. It is my appeal to His Excellency the President of Uganda that, come 2026, when he is back into office, as he is a good planner, can he plan for two water sources per village? We have women and children in those villages. I know very well that the population of Uganda is growing, so, we need that planning.

To the minister, some of us are carrying a heavy burden, repairing boreholes every month. It is taking a toll on us. Sometimes, in a month, you have to do 10 boreholes. Please, you have to respond to that. Thank you.

5.08

MS NAOME KIBAAJU (NRM, Sheema County North, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I also want to

appreciate the committee for a report and the Government for finding alternative sources of energy. For many years, we have depended on electric energy but it is high time we looked at atomic energy, as we have heard from the report and, especially solar energy, for our rural areas.

Mr Speaker, in many villages, you find that electricity comes and bypasses many homes because they cannot afford to put it in their individual homes and businesses. Therefore, while we appreciate the Government, we want it to look more seriously into the area of solar energy.

On the issue of environment, I do not know why the Government has not been aggressive and putting in place an aggressive policy on tree planting in our rural areas and even in the city. Many times, you find that so many people are involved and they are not coordinated. You find schools planting here, Rotary Club planting there and Lions Club also doing theirs. There is no Government effort, seriously, to implement tree planting in this country, yet, as you can see, the weather is changing and harming our country extensively.

My last point is on the issue that has been on this Floor for many years: plastics in this country. The soils of Uganda – (*Interjections*) – *kaveera* is a plastic bag. The soils are being depleted because of this. I do not know why a policy comes into place and in another year it goes back. We continue to see these plastics.

With the construction of roads in our rural areas, when they open a new road with this new equipment, that is when you see what *kaveera* is made of in this country. There are plastics in trading centres, homes, gardens - I do not know where, in the next 20 or 50 years, this country will be. I urge the Government to take this issue seriously – (*Member timed out.*)

5.11

MS AGNES KIRABO (NRM, Youth Representative, Central): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the committee chairperson and the committee for the well-detailed and good report.

About electricity, I also support the allocation of Shs 20 billion to the electricity scale-up project because we all know that we have excess in generation of power, but distribution is the problem. I think that if this Shs 20 billion is allocated, it will help in our constituencies.

In my district, Luweero, we have a problem of power shortage. Power is on for two hours and off for the next five hours. This has affected health facilities, schools and other institutions.

I visited Kyalugondo Health Centre III in Katikamu Subcounty and I found the hospital using lamps in maternity wards, which touched me, and I had to raise it. The ministry should help fund work on that problem.

I support the recommendation of the committee to allocate Shs 50 billion to National Water and Sewerage Corporation to provide a clean water source to every village in Uganda. I am overwhelmed by constructing and repairing boreholes in my home area. I will not mention. I hope that when this allocation is made, it will help a lot.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Namisindwa, Hon. Muloni, Dr Isamat, and Hon. Onzima.

5.13

MS SARAH NETALISIRE (NRM, Woman Representative, Namisindwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the chairperson and the committee for the good report.

I would like to comment on the issue of arrears on water and give testimony from Butabika Hospital.

Butabika Hospital heeded the advice of the Government to pay water bills as soon as the releases are made. While they were interfacing with our health committee, they testified that they had no water bill arrears because they followed those directives.

Secondly, they have tapped into water harvesting. They installed tanks around the

hospital, which help in general cleaning. I propose that even as we allocate resources in the development and construction of new premises in hospitals, we should put a provision for water harvesting so that this water is harvested to help in the general cleaning of hospitals to reduce the bills incurred when they are brought forward.

The other issue is electricity. Power fluctuations to government institutions, especially hospitals, are taking us back because of unstable power, destroying the machines that we buy and install in these very hospitals, which are costly.

I appeal to the minister for energy that we know that hospitals have arrears, but power fluctuations in the hospitals are again giving us another burden by destroying the equipment that we spend money on buying because the power is not stable.

Let us deduct money from the source and pay the bills, but also ensure that power in our government institutions, especially hospitals, is stable to make sure that we save the machines that we buy.

Lastly, on surveying and demarcation of boundaries in our national forests, I know most of us and our constituents are living in fear, because anytime, the National Forest Authority can come up and say that you are within the national park.

I remember the last time the Speaker gave a testimony about his father's land and many people around – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think that was sabotage that you do not raise my complaint. Conclude it. Speak for me, honourable.

MS NETALISIRE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. When we were debating the report on the forest reserves having proper demarcations, the Speaker did mention that there are sub-counties, and town councils, including his home and his father's place, which were all included in the national park, and yet they have lived there for many years.

I believe that once this money is provided, resurveying will be done, and the proper boundaries will be marked and opened. It will save the conflict that is between Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and the Speaker, and his family will be saved (*Laughter*). Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I am not a chimpanzee to live in the forest (*Laughter*). It is the forest that encroached on our area, and that is why we need to survey properly, so that I stop being categorised as a chimpanzee or a buffalo. Hon. Irene Muloni?

5.17

MS IRENE MULONI (NRM, Woman Representative, Bulambuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I join colleagues in thanking the committee for a very elaborate report, observations, and recommendations. In principle, energy, water, and the environment are very critical. We need to give them full support so that they are able to give us the services and address the challenges that we are all talking about.

When we look at energy, since the mainstreaming of the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) to the ministry, we have seen a good number of projects stall. We do not know what is happening. The minister needs to update us on what is going on. Many of the contractors who have been constructing those lines are not paid. They are going bankrupt.

In terms of arrears, the Government is crippling the private energy sector. They are closing their companies; so who is going to do the work for us? We will end up with foreign companies taking on the role instead of supporting our own local companies to do the work in the energy sector.

Therefore, the arrears of about Shs 76 billion, which was tabled, need to be secured so that these contractors are paid and continue to finish these projects.

When you look at the counterpart funding for these projects, the Committee on National Economy used to have criteria where all boxes would have to be ticked before a loan is approved. How come at the time of implementation, the counterpart funding disappears? What is the problem? I would like to hear from the minister.

When we look at the Scale-Up project, in many places where these materials were distributed, work is incomplete. We set out here to electrify all sub-counties in this country. I would like the minister to tell us how many sub-counties are still without electricity because the Tibia loan was secured. It was for electrifying all sub-counties in the country. Where are we at this material time?

Now that Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL) has taken over, if we do not support it and capitalise it to do work, we are going to slide back. We must avail this Shs 75 billion for UEDCL to capitalise it so that - (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. On that Tibia project - and committee chairperson, I hope you will get time and give it attention. I have asked several times here. I want to know one transformer it did. I can see the minister shaking his head. Honourable minister, I participated in the passing of that project's loan as a member of the Committee on National Economy.

Two, I was a member of the Committee on Natural Resources. My areas, which you included to benefit from that project, none got - That project was for the whole country. Every subcounty in the whole country was supposed to get electricity. When I hear some of this new - you wait for the subcounties - what happened to that project?

Honourable chairperson, I know you know about it very well. I will not need to appoint a select or an ad hoc committee; I will assign you this issue of the TBEA project, a special assignment on the Tibia project as

the Chairperson of the Committee on Natural Resources.

If it worked, Members of Parliament would be here – I have not heard MPs here saying TBEA Company Limited (TBEA) - I do not know.

Colleagues, tell us if you know TBEA delivered that project for you. Therefore, Dr Isamat, I had allowed Dr Isamat, followed by Hon. Onzima, then Hon. Leku, Hon. Sowedi and the Member from Kapchorwa.

5.22

DR ISAMAT ABRAHAM (NRM, Kapir County, Ngora): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson and the committee for the good report. My issue goes to the town councils and other urban town councils, which were mentioned in a statement made by the minister at Kololo.

My town council, Mukura Town Council in Ngora District, was among those that the minister said that this financial year, the work to extend piped water would be complete. However, since the beginning of this financial year, nothing has been done.

I want to believe that it is the same thing happening to other town councils, and since town councils accommodate a lot of human population, I implore the chairperson and the Minister of Water and Environment, those town councils should be given priority so that some of those unfinished projects can also be completed.

Secondly, I would like to borrow from a colleague who proposed that according to the current proposal, a village is supposed to have a borehole, but I was shocked that in Ngora District, when the LC V said that in every financial year, it is only two boreholes are allocated to Ngora District.

He went ahead to say that in the ministry, Ngora District is said to have been covered 90 per cent, meaning that almost every village has a borehole. A colleague has just mentioned that she is always burdened to repair and even

drill boreholes, and that is what is happening in those districts where boreholes are very few.

It is even worse in water-stressed areas like Ngora District, Soroti, Katakwi, Amuria, Agago and others- (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Continue.

DR ISAMAT: I would call this a pandemic of water scarcity and in a situation where water is generally scarce, things cannot go well.

Lastly, in Teso, we have a lot of fear and our voters have always tasked us to explain what is happening in Teso. We have had so many planes hovering from flying school, over the water and everywhere. Some have even landed on the rocks. People are asking, what are those planes doing?

The common knowledge that is there now is that they are doing mineral surveys, and so forth. Now the question is, in every village in Teso, people are asking, where have they discovered the minerals?

The honourable minister is from our area; he should be able to- he is even my friend, he should be able to give us the details because the recent report which was presented by Hon. Lokeris, the Minister for Energy and Mineral Development identified Kyoga Basin as one of the areas with oil and minerals.

Now, they want those details and if we do not tell them the details, some of us might have issues when it comes to the 2026 election. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Leku- Sorry, Hon. Onzima first then Hon. Leku.

5.27

MR GODFREY ONZIMA (NRM, Aringa North County, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I also appreciate the committee for the very good report. Colleagues have touched on most of the issues but mine is the emphasis.

Under the Rural Water Project, which was implemented and funded by the World Bank, a number of water projects were started and many of these projects were abandoned. According to the Ministry of Water and Environment, the value of the money kept on deteriorating and therefore, the earlier earmarked projects could not be finished; this includes around three projects in my constituency.

When we passed the budget for this year, after the President returned the Bill, one of the areas that were considered were the water sources that were supposed to be produced. They were drilled but what was left was production.

The argument was that part of the money would be meant to finish these projects but up to now, there are two sources in my constituency, that is in Rodo Parish, Kei Sub County, and also in Awoba. The sources have just remained like that. There is no status report as to what has happened.

My understanding, therefore, is that if this Shs 35.5 billion is meant to finish these water sources, to produce water across these various districts where piping of the water had stalled, I support this.

Secondly, the issue of Shs 75 billion for electricity. We have been talking about the issue of electricity here day and night. The President was in my district on Saturday. When I was moving in my constituency in those various sub-counties to mobilise people, they kept on challenging me because some of those poles have been there since 2017. Up to now, nothing has been done.

We are now thinking of starting other projects. I think that we should finish with these projects which we have already started and the lines which have been abandoned and extend the power.

Thirdly, the issue of giving around Shs 3.1 billion to the National Forestry Authority (NFA) for the protection of natural forests. In my opinion, the NFA is responsible for the destruction of our forests.

Nobody will understand this, but I come close to a full - (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Onzima, can you conclude that point?

MR ONZIMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before the encroachment of Kei Natural Forest, our home was the last home towards the forest but I saw people encroaching on this forest while the officials of the National Forest Authority were watching on. It appears as if it is a strategy because once people deplete this part of the forest, they go and start planting eucalyptus and teak. It is as if the encroachment is a good strategy for them to deplete the forest, then they go ahead and plant these other species and yet these have been a natural resource and natural trees.

Therefore, when you go there, the indigenous tree species are disappearing while they are planting new ones. The question is, "Who are those who are planting these trees?" They have not come out clearly. It is as if there are people within the National Forestry Authority who look into this and use it as a strategy to plant their own trees.

I, therefore, do not support this. Hon, Ann Adeke had said here that many of these people who deal in charcoal come all the way from Northern Uganda up to Kampala and the dealers keep on bribing.

Actually, the people who have been bribed are National Forestry Authority staff. Therefore, claiming that they need more money for protection, I do not support this because I see what they do. When they were – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, on the issue of charcoal, honourable colleagues, I was engaging Prof. Mnason Tweheyo – Hon. Ariko, committee chairperson, when you are handling that Zoka issue, I kindly request you to invite Prof. Mnason Tweheyo from the School of Forestry, Makerere University. I will give you his details.

He told me there is a species that grows in two years and produces charcoal. That is how many countries are now managing charcoal. You plant it and in two years, it is ready to harvest, and you make charcoal. It might be difficult to do away with charcoal. These people who are cutting down trees in the parks and forests - You know, I think it is a matter of strategy, as a country, on where we want to go. If people want to use charcoal, can we, maybe, see a way of people being helped to plant trees that you can harvest quickly and you get charcoal? Otherwise, now it is going to be a business of cartels and it will be profitable for those who are well-connected and powerful. Yes, Hon. Leku followed by Hon. Sowedi.

5.33

MR JOEL LEKU (NRM, Terego West County, Terego): I thank you, Mr Speaker, and the committee for a good report. I agree with the debate that we need affirmative action for electricity in Uganda because it forms the backbone of the development of this country. We really need it.

We still have many sub-counties that are not connected, including some in Terego. They are not connected and yet we had the TBEA. Mr Speaker, I agree with you. We need an investigation into the TBEA Project because very many kilometres of the TBEA Project got lost, and many of them are on people's farms. They are diverted to connect farms in this country instead of connecting subcounties. Therefore, we need an investigation into the whole project to see where the lines went.

Mr Speaker, I will address myself to policy issues; the issue of net metering in this country. We do not have a policy on net metering. Net metering is where, if you have a renewable energy source in your home or your entity, you can be able to sell it to the grid when you have excess or buy when you have low. We need this policy to come in because many people have taken up renewable energy; they have a lot of power, but they do not know where to source, and they could earn from it.

The other issue is the energy mix, which I think should be incorporated into the building board, especially for commercial houses. We could say that they should be able to generate 20 per cent of the power within a building so that we stop using generators in this city. We can start with Kampala and go to other cities. When power goes off, especially in Kampala, everybody goes to the generator. This is something we can avoid. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Sowedi?

5.36

MR SOWEDI KITANYWA (NRM, Busongora County North, Kasese): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to join my colleagues to thank the committee for the beautiful report.

Mr Speaker, I have two issues. One is on clean water per village. In this country, particularly in my constituency, I have villages where people bathe in turns. If you bathe on Monday, you will be told not to bathe on Tuesday because of the scarcity of water.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, I thought that was because of witchcraft – (*Laughter*) Do they also sleep with their wives in turns? The day you do not bathe, you do not sleep together.

MR KITANYWA: Mr Speaker, it is such a big problem that we have areas where women walk distances; five to 10 kilometres looking for water. If a lady walks to collect water, she will not do any other work. Their productivity in terms of contributing to the family is very low because they waste a lot of time.

In the report, the committee is recommending Shs 50 billion per year. In my opinion, Mr Speaker, they deserve more than that. I would like to thank the Ministry of Water and Environment because whenever resources are allocated to them, you usually see work being done. They are only being betrayed by the resources. This time, I beg the House to give

them enough resources so that our people can access clean and safe water.

In the morning, Mr Speaker, when we were debating the report on health, one of the colleagues said that we need to focus on preventive measures so that we do not spend a lot of money at the hospital in procuring supplies. My opinion is that if we invest in clean and safe water for the rural areas, we shall have arrested many diseases and therefore, we will not spend a lot of money in terms of supplies in the health centres.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I would like to speak to the issue of surveying and demarcation – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member for Kapchorwa, Kiruhura, and then Hon. Kyooma.

5.39

MS PHYLLIS CHEMUTAI (NRM, Woman Representative, Kapchorwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity and I thank the committee for the good report.

I have two issues. One is a complaint about the unstable power in Kapchorwa and the whole Sebei region. As many people have said, it is really very bad in our subregion and is affecting so many businesses, operations in hospitals, and so forth.

I would like to thank the Government for giving our people Operation Wealth Creation, UWEB, GROW, and PDM. The money is now with the people. They are trying their best to make money, but electricity is betraying them. The youth who are working in salons cannot do it. You switch on the power, it is on for a few minutes, then it goes off. You are cooking and mid-way, it is off. It is very annoying and it is my humble request to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development to ensure that the power that we are receiving is very stable so that we are stable in all that we are doing in our villages.

The other thing is about tree planting. Tree planting is one of the things that we need to do to mitigate climate change. I have moved around the whole of Uganda and seen some areas which are badly off and need trees. To this effect, I request the Ministry of Water and Environment to equip us with seedlings. As we go out there for campaigns, we need to add value to our campaigns by delivering seedlings to the people. Those are my few remarks. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member for Kiruhura?

5.42

MS JOVANICE TWINOBUSINGYE (NRM, Woman Representative, Kiruhura): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to join my colleagues in thanking the chairperson and the committee for a very good report. My first point will be on electricity. I also support the committee's request of Shs 75.6 billion for electricity supply.

People are really suffering in our districts. We have mobilised the community about value addition and people have gone into that. Some cooperatives have bought milk coolers but we do not have electricity.

We need to support the entity to provide electricity to ensure development. There is a colleague who proposed that if we can provide a stable income like Shs 1 billion, like how we did for roads, we would have solved a lot.

We cannot talk of any development without electricity. I have sub-counties of Rwetamu, Kinoni, Kenshunga, Kiruhura Town Council – *(Interjections)* – yes, and very many others where we need electricity. I really support the committee on the issue of electricity.

Also about water, we are really suffering, especially the villages. You find that in the whole subcounty, there is no clean water. In the sub-counties of Kikatsi, Rwetamu, Rwenshande, Kituura, Akayanja, Kashonji, people are badly off. Women are moving distances of 10

kilometres to go and look for water. People are still sharing water with animals. We need water and electricity in my district of Kiruhura and I really – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the President first focused on serving others before he can go.

5.45

MR GOLI OGWAL (NRM, Dokolo North County, Dokolo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the chairperson and recognise that this committee provides two major service delivery areas, especially to almost all of us, including Dokolo North.

Dokolo Town Council provides water to Lira City. However, the people where that service is from do not have piped water. I request that you consider and support the people from Kachung so that they can have piped water because we have tried to sink boreholes but the water is salty. What should we do? I request that you consider that.

The second issue is, for the budget which we have had here of Shs 50 billion, I request that we ring-fence at least Shs 14.6 billion for repair of boreholes. Not new ones, because we are spending a lot on repair.

Lastly, on electricity, we are doing very badly on electricity and I request the minister to pronounce himself because we have gone to him many times about electricity in Dokolo North but it is not yet there.

The scale-up project which you are mentioning does not touch the areas where we are connecting subcounties. Let us have that cleared because I do not see a budget that is not in the area of scaling up. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kyooma –

5.47

MR XAVIER KYOOMA (NRM, Ibanda County North, Ibanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson and his

committee for the report. Right away, I want to talk about this scale-up project which gave us much hope when we had just started this term.

Our good friend, Hon. Okaasai, the minister, had even given us records of what would be done in our constituencies in terms of connections and the kilometres to be covered.

However, up to now, nothing is done. When you read the report, it is very clear. We just need Shs 21 billion to unlock the other Shs 345-plus billion. Surely, I want to ask the minister and the finance officials who are here, how much have we paid in the form of commitment fees since we approved this project up to now? It could even be more than Shs 21 billion. What are we doing?

Therefore, I support the committee that we get the money for this scale-up project so that we benefit from these funds. For example, in my constituency, our biggest town is Ishongoro town but power just bypasses the central market. We have money which has been there and by now, I am very sure the commitment fees could be close to or more than Shs 21 billion and it really defeats logic.

Secondly, about UEDCL take over from Umeme and then the reduction in the tariffs, my emphasis is on the reduction in the tariffs. We appreciate the reduction. Actually, when you pay now, if you have been used to paying a certain uniform amount, you will see the units becoming more.

However, like other colleagues have already said, we are facing a lot of – I do not want to call it load shedding but there is no power. It is on and off and people's gadgets are being destroyed. Why I do not want to call it load shedding is because I know that the power we are using is less than the power we are generating. Why can't we have – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Itungo - How come it is in Uganda where if it threatens to rain, power goes off? *(Laughter)* Honourable minister Okaasai, I am just asking

about the uniqueness of the power projects and programme in Uganda. When it threatens to rain, power goes off and yet in other countries, it rains and even thunderstorms but power remains on. Once it clears properly then power is back. Why is power in Uganda scared of rain?

5.51

MR NATHAN TWESIGYE (Independent, Kashari South County, Mbarara): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I also want to join my colleagues to thank the chairperson and the committee for the report. It is common sense that water is life and these government agencies, including individuals, who are not paying for water bills are bordering on terrorism. As you guided, we need to move a motion that water or utility bills should be paid directly to the National Water and Sewerage Corporation, not through these agencies. I have seen reports where utilities are underfunded priorities. In an agency, how can water, which is life, be an underfunded priority?

Honourable colleagues, for these good government programmes, such as the Parish Development Model (PDM) and the rest, without water for production and electricity, there is no value for money.

Mr Speaker, allow me to move a motion that the utility bills be deducted and sent directly to National Water and Sewerage Corporation so that we avoid this crisis. Otherwise – even in the previous financial year, we were discussing the same arrears and it is as if we are not getting a solution.

Finally, Mr Speaker, on the issue of electricity, in 2019, I got a project in my constituency, from Rural Electrification Authority (REA). The project is up – transformers, poles, wires, and everything. However, during the COVID-19 period, because of strict movements at night, a line was vandalised, and up to now, six years later, there is nothing that has happened.

When I asked Umeme Limited, they said that was not their project. Honourable minister, people gave their land on the assumption

that they would get connection but the entire subcounty is in darkness. They see transformers, wires and poles all over, but need just a wire to reconnect the line and the people get power.

I want to find out whether the issue is about money. The issue may not be about money. For the TBEA project that they are talking about, the loan was approved. There must be an error in the equation, but the issue may not be money. I want the minister to find out what happened to that project. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

5.53

MR RICHARD OSEKU (NRM, Kibale County, Pallisa): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would also like to thank the committee for the report.

However, it is very unfortunate that in the recommendation for Shs 20 billion towards the electricity access scale-up project, it is taking the House to temptation. Mr Speaker, as you are aware, the money that was approved, in terms of a loan for this project, was \$331.5 million. The question was asked: how much money do we pay in terms of commitment fees? I recall that the ministry needed Shs 100 billion for - if I remember well - counterpart funding on this project.

Therefore, to say you require Shs 20 billion only is to say that the project is not going to deliver as we expected. 2022 was when we approved this project and in 2025, we are still on “on your marks”. Something needs to be done.

When the honourable minister came for this loan, he assured the House – and we want the minister for finance to explain - that they had the money for counterpart funding. Mr Speaker, the House should not be taken for granted all the time. We will need the minister to take responsibility for all the money that we are paying in terms of commitment fees for this project.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, we have a problem. Kenya banned the burning of charcoal and

now, we are serving two countries. Uganda is the supplier of charcoal to Kenya. The rate at which charcoal is being burned in this country is too much. Environmental degradation is high and we are going to stand the risk of the worst effect of climate change, as a country. This charcoal passes through our border posts. What is happening?

The ministries of internal affairs, security, the East African Community and all the concerned need to be questioned. They must answer this question: how does charcoal pass through international borders to go to another country?

Lastly, Mr Speaker, we have talked about energy mix. Whereas we are talking about powering our areas using hydroelectric power, we should also be talking about how to support people with solar power – *(Member timed out.)*

5.57

MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I have listened to a number of honourable colleagues and what comes out clearly is that there is mismanagement of projects within the Government. TBEA project money did not do anything, and now they are saying the country has arrears of over Shs 70 billion to pay. I would not want to invite Members to approve that without understanding what happened to the money that we borrowed, because the money we borrowed could have solved all those problems.

To date, nobody is accounting for how that arrear arose. We have not seen people being prosecuted for mismanaging the project. We cannot have these things going on as usual. The other time we were talking about Umeme Limited, and the people who signed the Umeme Limited contract are among us; they are not from heaven. They made a raw deal and the country is paying a heavy price. I expected the committee to tell us about the money that Umeme Limited owes the Government, because we are here grappling with resources.

The other time the minister was saying, Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Limited (UETCL), which was supplying power to Umeme Limited, is owed Shs 512 billion for the supply of power. Why are we not reflecting that money anywhere?

I expected the committee to give us innovative funding sources. For example, there is climate funding. I know the World Bank and African Development Bank have come together to electrify 300 million Africans. How are we going to tap into this? How are we swapping our climate commitments for support from the donors, who are ready to finance climate change? All those are not done.

Key, Mr Speaker, is that if someone is looking for a sign of backwardness, they need to come to our country. Why do I say that? Up to 93 per cent of the population in Uganda depends on biomass such as charcoal for energy. We cook using it. Even people here in Kampala use it. When you cook using biomass, yet there is a gas cylinder, and you continue to tax gas and the cylinder, making it very expensive, it means you do not want to save the environment.

The reason we are cutting down trees and some areas have become dry and our crops cannot perform well in certain areas is because there is no water. All that is happening because we are depending on biomass.

Going forward, I invite us to increase that budget – *(Member timed out.)*

6.00

MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Can the minister clarify to us whether the law that we passed here to rationalise National Forestry Authority (NFA) has been signed? We are getting information that it has not been signed. If it has not been signed, by law, it means the NFA has remained. Can you clarify to the House on what happened, because we know it takes only 30 days? If it expires before it is signed, it automatically collapses.

Two, Mr Speaker, on the issues of incomplete projects, the committee chairman knows that in 2018-2019 – water for production – the ministry came and drilled holes in Kasilo County, Soroti County and in Amuria. The one of Serere, specifically in Bugondo Subcounty, has never been evacuated. How can we not have that money to complete that project, seven years down the road? I have raised this with the ministry many times and it has not happened. Can we get to know why it has happened?

Honourable minister for energy, the project under your ministry which we started - I think it gives clouds to the Government when you come and commission them. If they are completed and you do not commission them, what does that mean?

May I now invite you to Kasilo County to commission the project that you set up there? Of course, there are some irregularities. Please, that is how a Government can be felt.

There is the issue of afforestation. The National Forest Authority (NFA) has land in Bugondo Hills in Bugondo Subcounty. It is a forested place with baboons and is the only natural forest that we have in Kasilo. However, people have encroached it. Your staff are there, and they are not helping the situation. People are cutting down trees, and if it is not followed up, it will be a very big problem in the next one or two years. It will just be a desert. Please, I request you to ask the NFA people to up their game and have that issue sorted.

Finally, on the rural electrification extension, when we passed that law here, we thought it would be passed to every subcounty - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nandala-Mafabi?

6.03

MR NATHAN NANDALA-MAFABI (FDC, Budadiri County West, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We passed a loan here for water for irrigation in the last Parliament for every constituency. I do not know whether Hon.

Bahati is here. He really fought for it, and the loan was passed, but I do not see this water in these constituencies. What happened to that money?

Of course, I want to ask the chairperson and the members of the committee to investigate that loan and find out what happened to the money, because the money was released, or is it hanging somewhere?

Secondly, energy is very vital for production. In fact, if electricity is provided everywhere, deforestation will stop. Even if we do not have enough, first of all, where it is, a normal person cannot afford it. For example, to have a connection, you need maybe half a million. I have a house which is worth Shs 100,000. How do I spend half a million to have power in my house? I think it must be a deliberate effort for the Government to have free connections to these villages. If we do not connect to them, they are going to steal it. That is how people are dying; they use chain links and barbed wire to make illegal connections. That is a loss to electricity.

Therefore, I ask the minister, what efforts have you made to ensure that the connections are there in places where they are? Of course, there are some places where there is nothing.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I think we produce the best hydropower in the world. I do not see why this power is very expensive and is not reaching people. I would like to ask the Government to do the costing again. Of course, we know one of the problems is with Bujagali, with criminals who are overpricing power because they are using it for an investment engine and that is where they are even stealing from Ugandans. Why should our power be expensive?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, who are those that you are calling criminals?

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, we signed a contract here where people charged us twice. One, we pay a return on investment; they get dividends, surplus, and profits. At the

end of the day, we lose. There was a report here that said we had made a loss and these people should pay our money. That report has never been implemented up to date, and they are very busy coming every minute to ask for tax exemptions. Mr Speaker, these are known.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, I know how you treat your colleagues and respect the corporate sector. If an investor who negotiated with you, as a country, and you signed - The language can change because they are not here to defend themselves. Kindly, change that language.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, if the language was very hard, what I am trying to say - I withdraw those other statements. There are companies which are really fleecing Ugandans in overpricing our own products, and these need to be investigated further. I think that is better. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is better than calling someone a criminal. Thank you. Honourable minister? I will start with the one in charge of water.

6.07

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (WATER) (Ms Aisha Sekindi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to thank my colleagues, honourable Members of Parliament, first of all, for the support you have given to us, as a ministry, and I thank my chairperson, together with the committee members, for the good report.

The questions were many, and they were just appreciating and sympathising with us.

Honourable members, I have realised that you know our problems and you have given the Government support to give us money. Thank you very much.

I would like to clarify three issues: I want to provide information on the Kahengye Water Project. Honourable Member of Parliament, the information I have is contradictory. The Honourable Member of Parliament and the

Speaker said that the project is down and not serving its purpose. The technical people told me that the Kahengye Water Project is working, but what we need is money to extend water from Kanoni -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, can I request that you visit this project next week and tell us what you are doing?

MS SEKINDI: That was my suggestion, Mr Speaker. I will go there myself to ascertain what is happening. I was told that we lack the money to transfer water from the Kanoni tank to other parts. I pledge to go there next week.

About conditional grants, I feel bad. It is true that the MPs are suffering. You are the ones who make repairs of these boreholes and yet the Government provides money to each district every financial year.

Mr Speaker, with your permission, allow me to provide information for the last four financial years, from 2021 to date, concerning the releases that have been going to our districts. I will do it. I would like to suggest, as a way forward, that we constitute a district water committee at the district level, and these honourable Members of Parliament should be the head of those committees, in the same way we have been doing with roads committees in our districts. I am going to write to the Members of Parliament and to the CAOs so that we can constitute those committees.

I am sorry for the cities; the law does not allow us. The Honourable member who requested that we give cities conditional money, we cannot because the law does not allow us; you cannot eat your cake and have it. We requested for the cities and we got them, then the law caught you. I am sorry, Honourable Member of Parliament.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this time *-(Interjection)* - the law. I understand by the time the chairperson was beginning to read the report, he gave us thorough information about the National Forestry Authority (NFA), maybe if you were *-(Interruption)*

MR OKUPA: My question was, if it is true that the President has not assented to the law, then NFA has remained an authority. Is that the case? I have not heard that. That is what I want to hear from you. As a ministry, you should be able to confirm to us that NFA is safe.

MS SEKINDI: Thank you, honourable. Let me give my chairperson the opportunity to answer that one because it is indicated in his report.

MR ARIKO: Thank you, honourable minister. Mr Speaker, while Hon. Okupa was not yet back, the committee reported that in as far as the information we have is concerned, the Bill has not been assented to yet. Normally, where the law does not specify, it is implied that it is allowed. The committee and the ministry will go ahead to ensure that the institution continues to operate until such a time when it does not.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister for Energy, not issue by issue, but in general.

6.14

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Sidronius Okaasai): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I thank you for guiding the debate today. It is well guided, and I would wish to thank the committee for articulating where we have challenges in the energy and mineral sectors. In the committee presentation, it was very clear that we have challenges in electricity distribution. There is nothing that we can hide about electricity distribution, and all the questions that have been raised about electricity distribution are actually valid.

Everybody would want to have electricity. Every village would want to have electricity, but the limiting factor, as you have rightly identified, is funding. I liked what you raised on the Floor. If you gave electricity, Shs 1 billion per district, it would be a one-off because when I calculate, one kilometre of a medium voltage cost me about Shs 100 million. If you gave me Shs 1 billion, I would be able to take 100 kilometres on average to every district. That is medium voltage.

That would enable me to also bring low-voltage to the areas where I want to bring it. It is very little, and that tells you the type of funding I would require: Shs 1 billion or Shs 100 million per kilometre. That tells you the magnitude of funding. We know that in the energy sector, we need at least \$4 billion to electrify this country fully, so it is right that we need money.

Also, you have made the observation that if we do not invest in generation—going by the rate of demand for electricity—we will not have excess electricity. Four years down the road, we shall go back to load shedding. Continuously invest in the energy sector, generation, transmission, and distribution.

You were right about the stranded poles. You have talked about the unpaid companies; the Shs 75 billion that we need. Even if you gave me that money and I have not paid the arrears to the companies that are now in the receivership, we may not be able to deliver electricity as we would wish. We need to clear our arrears because there is a lot that we owe to our own companies that construct those electricity lines.

Therefore, Shs 75 billion that has been asked is very important to enable us to go forward. If you gave me the money and these companies are not paid, even the lines which you say are stranded, some of them have got running contracts, but the companies are shy to commit their own money. They will generate a certificate, but I do not have the money to pay them, and they will stop the work until I have paid them. They now want to be paid by a certificate of work which has been done, unlike before, when they were accepting because they had confidence in the Government to pay. So, we need that money.

Regarding the electricity access scale-up project, you are right to say you have not seen a pole because I need to compensate for every pole I am going to take out. This is an issue which we can debate as a country. You demand electricity, I bring it, and then you want me to pay to give you electricity. Some of these are Government of Uganda-funded projects; we do not go for compensation. You see some of the

lines which are going on. It is because there is no compensation, and those are Government of Uganda-funded projects.

For the donor projects or where we borrow money from the World Bank, they need us to pay for every pole that we put up. This is an issue that we, as a country, can reflect on and then see. First of all, finance says, yes, we shall give you counterpart funds, but at the end of it, there are no counterpart funds. As a ministry, we debate among ourselves and say, “Why do we accept this money, which requires counterpart funds? Why don’t we borrow the money fully and do a little work that the money can cover, even if it means compensation?”

We should actually now be discussing whether we can even use the World Bank funds that were borrowed to do the compensation. Counterpart funds are extremely important for the implementation of those borrowed funds which we get from the World Bank, African Development Bank - Islamic Development Bank is slightly more lenient. I can proceed to construct a line even if I have not compensated, so long as I promise. For the World Bank, any single pole which is not compensated can bring the whole project down, if there are complaints so, counterpart funds are very important.

On mining, I appreciate that you have given us Shs 10 billion – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have a procedural issue, Hon. Oseku?

MR OSEKU: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to beg your indulgence to understand this. As the minister was responding, a major question raised was that the TBEA money was a loan. The funds were availed and projects were ongoing but midway, the whole thing stalled. He is responding and has gone straight to mining without answering that question.

Wouldn’t it be procedurally right for him to specifically answer the question on the monies of TBEA, Mr Speaker? *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, you can elaborate on it, but you also know we have assigned a committee to specifically look into that matter, so that it is not crowded with others.

MR OKAASAI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for that guidance. However, there were a number of projects that were running at the time when you had REA, and that question was raised. Some of those projects actually expired because of counterpart funding. KfW ended without doing anything because they required counterpart funds. The majority of them ended without completing the work.

On TBEA, it was meant to deliver electricity to all sub-counties. The question was asked about how many sub-counties were covered. Slightly over 400 sub-counties were covered under that project, and we are remaining with 200 sub-counties which are not covered countrywide. How does this come about?

First of all, we continued dividing subcounties so that money could not actually cover all of them. The majority of the subcounties which are not covered are new. There were very few that were not covered by TBEA. So, I would say TBEA did a commendable job to the extent that we are now writing a second phase on subcounty projects.

As long as we continue dividing –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it also TBEA? *(Laughter)*

MR OKAASAI: It is not going to be TBEA; we are looking for alternative sources.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, let the committee look into it. We know a lot of allegations on that issue, whereby subcounties which were covered under other projects are now put into accountability as if –

I can tell you, honourable minister, that in my own area, there are areas where one project would be played against another. They get a project which was done, especially under

GOU, and put it under another project. We know some of these things are open secrets.

I hope the committee will do a good job because the chairperson knows a lot about that project. I am only cautioning you about your statement and the commitments you are making here.

MR OKAASAI: Mr Speaker, I am not going to dwell on TBEA; it is back to the committee, so I will end my discussion on TBEA.

Tariffs are coming down. On the transition night, the tariff came down by 14 per cent. For health facilities, the tariff is the second lowest for all hospitals. It is now Shs 350 per unit. This is an affirmative action for health services.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I do not have much time.

MR OGUZU: You could tell us about e-mobility and dimmed energy.

MR OKAASAI: That question was not raised; let me deal with what was raised. *(Laughter)*

On the electricity strategy, if you gave me Shs 1 billion, I would go district by district, but electricity is for productive purposes. We have to target those productive areas. For example, we shall take it to the growth centres, health centres, and schools if we can.

If I put solar in a school or health facility, it is electrified, according to me. It is not about grade; grade is very expensive. For those areas where there are finished lines, I will take it upon myself to go and commission to show visibility.

On the confidence in UEDCL, first of all, I must thank the House for accepting to get us money for the Umeme buyout. I must thank you very much but at the same time, when you were giving me that money, you committed \$50 million to support UEDCL. Through the tariff, we also got \$24 million and we are comfortable that we shall be able to deliver better power supply.

The confidence is coming. Umeme was investing about \$30 million per annum. The Government of Uganda, through you, has given \$74 million so, I do not have any reason to doubt that I will deliver power.

There are transformers that have gone off; we are aware of them. During the transition period, we knew that Umeme could not invest in transformers, and 113 of them are known to have gone off at the time of transition. We know where they are, and we have already committed to putting those transformers back two weeks from now – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, do not continue allocating yourself time. You should conclude.

MR OKAASAI: In conclusion, I wish to thank you again for a healthy and positive debate and understanding that we need money to deliver electricity to every community in this country. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on the ministerial policy statement and Budget estimates for Financial Year 2025/2026 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Chairman, would you like to thank your members and honourable colleagues?

MR ARIKO: Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you very much. I would also like to thank honourable colleagues, particularly my ministers: the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, and the Minister of Water and Environment.

I would like to thank the committee, the technical staff and all of us here for a very good interaction that we have had in as far as the

water and environment sector, and the energy and mineral sectors are concerned.

Mr Speaker, at an appropriate time, I will get an opportunity to clarify one or two things that honourable colleagues raised here, especially the one of Hon. Dr Batuwa, regarding the pricing of water.

Mr Speaker, contrary to what colleagues said here, the water meters are run by the flow of water. There is no way a meter can roll if water is not going through it. We will come to – *(Interjections)* - Mr Speaker, thank you very much and we appreciate. At an appropriate time, we will interact about this. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item?

V. COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, 20 minutes.

6.31

THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (Mr John Teira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am here to present the report of the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs in regard to the ministerial policy statements. With your permission, I beg to lay on the Table the report of the committee, the minutes of the proceedings of the committee –

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Committee Chairperson, I forgot one important step. Honourable Colleagues, the recommendations of the committee which have been adopted are referred to the Committee on Budget for consolidation, harmonisation and reconciliation, as per Rule 149 of our Rules of Procedure. I am sorry about that.

MR TEIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay on the Table the report of the committee, the minutes of the proceedings of the committee and bring it to the attention of the House that I

have a minority report, which I also beg to lay on the Table. I beg to lay.

We scrutinised ministerial policy statements for the entities under the Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee, which includes the following:

1. Vote 007: Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.
2. Vote 133: Directorate of Public Prosecutions
3. Vote 102 -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure, Hon. Kibalya -

MR KIBALYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The report of the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs is a very sensitive but none of the ministers in the docket –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, by the time you go for debate, they will be here. I am taking note and they are monitoring – *(Laughter)* The chairperson of the Parliamentary Commission is here as one of the entities which are required. Honourable chairperson, continue -

MR TEIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Vote 105: Uganda Law Reform Commission

Vote 104: Parliamentary Commission

Vote 101: The Judiciary

Vote 148: Judicial Service Commission

Vote 109: Law Development Centre

Vote 106: Uganda Human Rights Commission

Vote 103: Inspectorate of Government and

Vote 119: Uganda Registration Services Bureau.

We also received a presentation from the shadow Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and it formed part of our consultative process. In the interest of time, I will go to the committee recommendations and observations.

The committee made the following observations and recommendations under the different Votes:

6.1 Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.

i) Completion of the JLOS House.

The Judicial Law and Order Sector House is an infrastructure development project aimed at strengthening good governance principles by making it easier for justice sectoral institutions to coordinate and offer better services to this country.

This project was started and the institutions that will have their offices housed after completion include Uganda Prisons, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, the Uganda Human Rights Commission, Tax Appeals Tribunal, Uganda Law Reform Commission, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Judicial Service Commission and Office of the Directorate of Public Prostitutions.

The committee was informed that phase one was being concluded while phase two, which is the construction of the police headquarters, is at 40 per cent, and the parking deck was still behind schedule which requires Shs 55 billion and Shs 17 billion, respectively.

These are contractually supposed to be completed by the end of the Financial Year 2025-2026. Out of the required amount of Shs 72 billion in total, only Shs 16 billion has been provided, leaving a funding gap of Shs 56 billion.

The committee, in consideration of the value added to the sector by the completion of the JLOS House, recommended an additional Shs 56 billion be provided in the Financial Year 2025/2026 to enable the ministry to complete this house.

ii) Construction of African Humanitarian Agency offices and residential houses. The African humanitarian agency is a specialised technical agency for the African Union, which is charged with the responsibility of coordination and provision of humanitarian responses to the affected member states.

As Government, we bided for this House to be headquartered here in competition against other countries. The agency presents the opportunity of employment for citizens, demand for local services like accommodation to visitors, advertising the country as an investment destination, and promoting tourism, among others.

The challenge we will have is that if we do not provide funds for this house within two years, the opportunity will go back and be open to other countries to take up.

On this background, the committee recommends that Shs 180 billion be provided in this financial year to enable the ministry to start phase one of the project so that we do not lose out on this opportunity.

The third is that Uganda has a number of cases internationally for arbitration and others in the International Court of Justice.

The ministry has won a number of cases and saved us billions of shillings but they find a lot of inconvenience in failure to appear reasonably in defending these matters.

The ministry, by virtue of its mandates, attends all negotiations at regional level like the African Union, UN and other international fora. This requires about Shs 2.8 billion to be done.

A total of Shs 20.5 billion and Shs 8.7 billion was provided, leaving a funding gap of Shs 11.8 billion to attend this very great cause.

The committee recommends that an additional Shs 11.8 billion be provided this financial year to enable our very able Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to represent the Government effectively in cases outside this jurisdiction.

iv) Operationalisation of five additional regional offices

The Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs saved the Ugandan government Shs 2.7 trillion in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Whereas the expansion of the Judiciary to 25 operational High Court Circuits is commendable, it has created a serious challenge in regional office operations since they have not matched that expansion.

It is increasingly becoming challenging to cope with all the required court appearances given the long distances of up to or over 300 km from regional offices' respective courts, moreover with only one vehicle and yet some regions have more than four High Court Circuits.

In 2026, the ministry expects an increase in cases requiring defending Governments in courts relating to electoral petitions, which have a very serious time-bearing.

Currently, the ministry does not have regional offices in the following 17 High Court Circuits, and we have named them down here.

The ministry requires Shs 8.37 billion to cater for rent, utilities, furniture and fittings, conferencing facilities, security equipment and power, among other utilities.

Out of the required total amount of Shs 8.337 billion, only Shs 2 billion was provided, leaving a funding gap of Shs 6.33 billion. It is our recommendation, as a committee, that this money be provided this financial year to enable the ministry to properly dispense justice to the Ugandans.

v) Court awards, Arrears and Compensation

The ministry is faced with an outstanding bill of Shs 30.2 billion resulting from court awards and other compensations. Non-payment often results in the accumulation of interest, thus increasing the overall debt.

Additionally, delays in paying individuals or business owners by the Government significantly hinders their ability to invest or operate effectively.

The committee has learnt that the Government has made an allocation of Shs 4.5 billion to cater for ex-gratia in the Financial Year 2025/2026,

leaving a funding gap of Shs 25.7 billion. We recommend that the Government prioritises payment of court awards and arrears to reduce the principal amounts that attract interest by providing an additional Shs 25.7 billion.

vi) Cattle compensation to war debt claimants

The Government agreed to compensate war debt claimants in Teso, Acholi and Lango subregions for the loss of livestock and other property during the insurgency in northern Uganda. The committee commends the Government for providing Shs 40 billion during the Financial Year 2024/2025 and an allocation of Shs 80 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026 for compensation of war debt claimants.

However, the committee was informed by the ministry that the total liability for cattle compensation, verified by the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs after verification by the district officials, amounts to Shs 521.698 billion. Mr Speaker, this is a very serious political issue in the respective areas. The committee recommends that the entire outstanding bill of Shs 521 billion be settled during this financial year. *(Applause)*

vii) Establishment of a comprehensive war debt compensation policy

The committee notes that the ongoing war debt compensation scheme is limited or restricted to only three subregions of Teso, Lango and Acholi, with no clear timelines on when other affected areas in the country will be included or considered in the process. Therefore, there is need for the Government to establish a War Victims Compensation Fund, catering for all war-affected areas in the country. This policy would acknowledge historical injustices, promote healing and reconciliation and support post-conflict recovery and development in affected areas.

The committee recommends that the Government establishes a comprehensive compensation policy for all regions that have suffered the effects of war and conflict since independence.

Judiciary

Out of the 263 operational courts, only 48 per cent are housed in judiciary-owned buildings. Most of the current court buildings are dilapidated and others premised in uncustomised facilities for persons with special needs. Some of the gazetted courts cannot operate because of lack of premises.

The committee recommends that Shs 8.7 billion be provided in the Financial Year 2025/2026 for the renovation of dilapidated court buildings across the country and undertake the construction of courts in the above mentioned areas to bring judicial services nearer to the people.

Strengthening the adjudication of cases

The committee was informed that the Judiciary wants to implement legal representation at the expense of State, as per the Judicature (Legal Representation at the Expense of State) Rules, which we passed in 2022, and facilitate justice to people who cannot afford legal services in cases, which are capital offences. The committee has learnt that out of the required Shs 269 billion, only Shs 206 billion was provided, thereby leaving a funding gap of Shs 63 billion.

The committee recommends an additional Shs 63.9 billion to be provided this financial year to strengthen the adjudication of cases by enhancing judicial capacity, expediting case backlog clearance and improving access to justice across the country.

Strengthening the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution

The committee has noted a funding gap of Shs 8.81 billion during the Financial Year 2025/2026 to strengthen the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms with the aim of promoting faster, cost-effective resolution of disputes and reducing the burden of formal court processes. We recommend that this money be allocated.

The committee noted that there is need to provide transport equipment to facilitate adjudication of cases. Out of the required total amount of Shs 18.46 billion, only Shs 17.46 billion was provided, thereby leaving a funding gap of Shs 1.41 billion.

The committee recommends that additional Shs 1.41 billion be provided to the development budget of the Judiciary to procure transport equipment and a boat to improve dispensation of and access to justice in island areas.

Automate more courts to eliminate delays in the management of cases

Out of the Shs 49.23 billion required, only Shs 24.09 billion was provided for automation of court systems, leaving a funding gap of Shs 25.141 billion. This shortfall will affect the effective implementation of the planned activities. We, thus, recommend that an additional Shs 25.141 billion be provided during this financial year to cater for that shortfall.

Building capacity of judicial officers to handle complex cases

There is need to provide finances to build capacity to provide skills for complex cases in the Judiciary. This required Shs 12.96 billion, but only Shs 7.92 has been provided, leaving a funding gap of Shs 5.037 billion. The committee recommends that this money be provided to provide special skills for complex cases.

Management and payment of accumulated bail funds

The committee noted with concern an accumulation of bail funds by the Judiciary, from Shs 16.17 billion in the Financial Year 2021/2022 to Shs 24.291 billion in the Financial Year 2024/2025. The committee proposes that a bail amount should be refunded immediately after conclusion of the trial, provided the accused person complies with court conditions.

The committee recommends that the person should be paid his bail refund immediately after the conclusion of the trial, whether on conviction or acquittal.

Inspectorate of Government (IG)

The committee notes that the Inspectorate of Government requires funding to complete the construction of the head office. The total project cost of the IG head office is Shs 107.9 billion. By the end of this financial year, the total expenditure is expected to reach Shs 64.808 billion.

In order to conclude the project within the allocated period of time, the IG requires Shs 43.92 billion. However, only Shs 20.57 has been allocated, leaving a funding gap of Shs 22.535 billion. The committee recommends that the IG receives the Shs 22.53 billion to cover the funding gap.

Additional wage for recruitment of critical staff

The Leadership Code Act, 2002 was amended by Parliament and subsequently assented to by the President. The amendment, among other things, expanded the scope for requirement to declare to the IG from leaders in public service to all public officials and persons who draw their salaries from the Consolidated Fund. This requirement, therefore, increased the number of declarations received, processed and verified by the IG from 25,000 to 380,000.

In the current Financial Year 2024/2025, the IG (Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) was not adjusted to provide additional funding for the increased workload in conducting verifications of the declaration received and investigation of breaches. In order to effectively implement the above amendment, there is need to provide additional funds, totalling to Shs 8.980 billion but only Shs 3.2 billion was provided – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Committee chairperson, five more minutes.

MR TEIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will go to Parliamentary Commission. The committee noted that the medium-term expenditure framework of Parliamentary Commission, as per the budget call circular, was less than the approved budget by Shs 60.14 billion. This reduction of the budget should be rectified by uplifting the MTEF.

Mr Speaker, we are aware that this is a statutory budget and we did not want to dissect too many details. We believe that this discussion shall be concluded to cover the wage shortfall, the non-wage recurrent shortfall and the development budget shortfall for the Parliamentary Commission.

Electoral Commission

i) Administrative unit's elections, 2026

Mr Speaker, in summary under the Electoral Commission, there is a shortfall. The committee recommended that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should prioritise and allocate Shs 58.134 billion in the coming financial year to facilitate for effective organisation and conduct of the elections of administrative units and women councils.

Then, there is a funding gap on continuous voter education, which is a very paramount requirement when it comes to this election cycle. There is also need for wage enhancement and remuneration of staff and operations in the new electoral districts.

The committee has recommended that funds be found to enable the Electoral Commission to organise sensible elections without challenges.

The National Consultative Forum facilitated activities for the year with Shs 3.3 billion, but only Shs 0.45 billion was provided. We have included a list of the funding gaps under the Electoral Commission that need to be addressed.

Law Development Centre

The Law Development Centre requires funds to complete its multi-sectoral building, which it has started on. This will save a lot of money that is being spent. The Government needs to provide Shs 8.7 billion for the completion of phase 4 of the multi-story building in this financial year.

Office of the Directorate of Public Prosecutions

The committee recommends that an additional Shs 5.6 billion be provided to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to facilitate the recruitment of staff, with the aim of increasing the scope of criminal prosecution across the country. We increased the number of magistrates and judges, but we do not have prosecutors so you find judicial officers seated without prosecutors. At the station, there is one prosecutor and we need each prosecutor assigned to each judicial officer to dispense justice.

We have also recommended that Shs 10 billion be provided for the development budget of the office of the DPP to construct their own upcountry offices and residential premises.

Mr Speaker, in the interest of time, I will go to the general recommendations by the committee.

The committee observed that all the in all the MDAs that we dealt with, their budget allocations for HIV/AIDS related activities, which fall under the mandate of the Uganda AIDS Commission, across MDAs, we recommend that they should be consolidated and re-channelled to the Uganda AIDS Commission, which has the mandate to coordinate and manage the national HIV response. This will enhance efficiency, reduce duplication and ensure a more streamlined and impactful use of resources.

The committee observes that MDAs often focus their attention or efforts on supervising the construction of their office buildings, which is not their core mandate. This function could

be more effectively managed by specialised entities such as the Ministry of Works and Transport or the National Housing and Construction Company.

The construction of all government office buildings should be centralised under the Ministry of Works and Transport, which possesses highly skilled and competent engineering staff. This will enhance quality control, ensure adherence to standards, and promote cost-effectiveness through centralised planning and oversight. This is in a bid to cut down on government expenditure and avoid double budgeting, which is a waste of taxpayers' money. It will also be helpful to align with program-based budgeting, since some of these activities or programmes do not form part of the core mandate of the respective agencies that had budgeted for these programmes.

In conclusion, in light of the above, it is the prayer of the committee that this House adopts this report and approves the budget estimates that incorporate the committee's recommendations for the respective Votes for the Financial Year 2025/2026. I beg to report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, committee chairperson. The honourable author of the minority report? Ten minutes.

6.55

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a minority report, and the foundation is late under paragraph one, introduction, which I would like to skip because of time.

The gist of the dissent in the minority report under paragraph two is the fault line in the program-based budgeting approach. The main argument in favour of this approach is to ensure a direct linkage between planned expenditure and results for improved service delivery.

The committee was informed that targets and indicators were set and imposed on the entities from the NDP. This lazy approach of merely filling in the target outputs and indicator columns makes it difficult to assess the entities' actual performance outcomes.

For example, the Office of the Directorate of Public Prosecution set a target in numbers of prosecuting 120,000 criminal cases and 80,000 appeals. This approach puts pressure on the Office of the Directorate of Public Prosecution to prosecute a high number of cases to meet the set target, even when the cases do not disclose any offense and are worthy of prosecution. The use of numbers rather than percentages as indicators uniformly must be reviewed as certain targets are better measured in percentages, rather than in numbers and vice versa.

Another big confusion, perhaps intentional, is the duplication of activities across different MDAs. Our recommendation on this, for the time, is that the minority report recommends a comprehensive review of the monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework in the ministerial policy statements for the various MDAs to an acceptable SMART level. It is further recommended that the program-based budgeting be reviewed to align it with Vision 2040 and NDPIV in its entirety.

The second decent areas are the key policy areas identified for reform.

a) The procurement method

The minority observed that one of the foundations for corruption in Uganda is embedded in the procurement plans. The following procurement methods will be implemented prominently across all 11 entities;

- (i) Quotations,
- (ii) direct procurement,
- (iii) restricted bidding,
- (iv) individual consultancies, and
- (v) micro procurement.

These procurement methods are carefully spread across different budget items, segmented to circumvent the full intent and import of the PPDA law. They eliminate best practices in procurement such as fairness, competition, transparency, integrity, value for money, and accountability, and their whole purpose is to facilitate corruption.

The minority recommends that Parliament rejects the approval of these procurement methods per budget item or departmental level. Procurements should take into consideration the aggregate worth of the items being procured, and PPDA is invited to urgently review the guidelines to prohibit this ploy within the Government.

b) Consultancies

It is the observation and finding of the minority that consultancy services are gaining prominence in government expenditures at a huge cost. The Government is capable of employing any skilled personnel directly, just as it does with consultant doctors at Mulago. In areas of engineering, architecture, surveying, research, law, etc. can be employed permanently within the MDAs to perform those tasks that consultants do at a much cheaper cost.

The minority recommends that Parliament bans the practice of procuring consultancies and instead move for the recruitment of staff on a permanent basis with a pool of skills for the different fields to provide services to the Government in areas of need.

c) Motor vehicle

The policy of the Government is that vehicles are used for up to 250,000 kilometres or five years. Additionally, we have seen the procurement of luxury cars that has become a competitive phenomenon within the Government. As a result, some officials in Government allocate more than one government vehicle to themselves for use by their family members.

The committee did not find any information from the vehicle manufacturers that says vehicles get obsolete at 250,000 kilometres or five years.

The minority, therefore, further observe that scenarios of over budgeting for replacement and acquisition of digital number plates are quite common. The MDAs have budgeted for 750,000 instead of the 150,000 for the replacement of digital number plates. Digital

number plates for new motor vehicles have also been budgeted for, yet a new vehicle is bought together with its number plate, which comes fully registered.

The minority recommends that procurement of motor vehicles by the Government be halted and no funds be approved for buying of new vehicles until a comprehensive review of motor vehicle policy is adopted with alternatives of best practices in acquisition, utilisation, and disposal.

The current allocation for vehicle purchases in the budget must be re-budgeted to cater for specialised diagnosis and treatment machines for hospitals and adequate cancer drugs. Budget estimates for digital number plates must be revised downwards to Shs 150,000.

Donations

The minority observes the continuous allocation of huge budgets for donations. In most cases, the donation budgets per office bearer are larger than the development budgets of a district Local Government, hospital or university. Why allocate taxpayers' money to an individual rather than to a service area that benefits the general public?

Why should an occupant of a public office which is charged with a duty to plan, budget and deliver services to Ugandans, be given money to donate? Why not use your public office to donate the required policies and budgets to the health sector, to education, for treatment of kidney diseases, heart patients, education etcetera?

The minority, therefore, recommends that all budgets for donations for the Financial Year 2025/2026 be rejected and that the Government introduces a law to prohibit and criminalise donations out of public funds.

Printing and stationery

I will just read the recommendation. The minority recommends that Parliament approve 50 per cent of the proposed budget lines for

printing and stationery and require entities to re-budget the other 50 per cent to unfunded priorities.

It is further recommended that the Government adopt digital mechanisms to eliminate the use of paper.

Next is staff establishments

The minority observed that many Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) have numerous vacancies in their approved staff structures. No significant allocations have been made to recruit staff to fill these positions. The big question then remains whether these vacant positions indeed require filling. For example, the Parliamentary Commission was unable to avail the staff establishment to the committee.

In fact, the Parliamentary Commission informed the committee that there will be no recruitment in Parliament in the Financial Year 2025/2026, although the Commission allocated money to an activity called CV screening in the budget estimate. It is also observed that Parliament is saturated with general administrative staff rather than skilled expertise. This is according to the NDP IV report required to support quality legislative output.

Similarly, the under-deployment of highly skilled personnel staff in Parliament is worrying and is a recipe for attrition. In other jurisdictions, like in the United Kingdom, Parliament recruits and deploys persons with a high level of education and experience to support legislative work.

The recommendation by the minority is that a comprehensive review of staff structures across all MDAs be undertaken with a view to ascertain the required level of staffing for each.

Additionally, all MDAs, including Parliament and without exception to any should resume the best practice of advertising vacancies available and stop non-competitive recruitment methods based on alien considerations.

Furniture and fittings

The recommendation is that the Government halt budgeting for furniture and develop a new policy on the procurement of furniture with a view of creating uniformity in standards. The proposed budget for furniture and fittings for this financial year will be re-budgeted to enhance the salaries of primary school teachers.

The next one is buildings

It is noticed that the MDAs are either constructing or have planned to construct new offices and residential buildings. Other MDAs are also in the process of buying land. It has been observed that many buildings have been unduly delayed, with others spanning as many as 10 years.

The following buildings, the IGG building, the new Parliament Chamber building, the JLO's house, are all behind schedule. With some, like the Parliament Chambers, it was not even possible for the committee to verify the progress as reported. All previous attempts by the committee to visit the new chamber buildings were denied. The question is, what is that which is being hidden, yet an additional Shs 20 billion is planned?

The irony of all this, therefore, firstly is to ask the question, what happened to the Government buildings used by the past Governments? Secondly, why is the Government happy to gift free land to private individuals around Kampala and turn around to require the taxpayers to pay to buy more land?

The minority recommends that approval of budgets for the acquisition of land be withheld until the Government avails to Parliament the full inventory of all public lands in Uganda.

Further, no funds should be approved for the new buildings anywhere until all buildings currently under construction are fully completed. It is further recommended that stalled and delayed buildings should be inspected and audited by the relevant authorities to establish the facts and appropriate recommendations be made before money is approved.

Seminars, meetings and workshops

It appears the modus operandi of the Government is organising seminars, workshops and meetings while offering zero service to citizens. Compared to other countries in East Africa, the Government of Uganda is a leading convener of workshops, seminars and meetings on a daily basis, whereas in Kenya, for example, it is the private sector that leads in hotel booking for workshops, seminars and meetings.

A serious Government cannot spend the entire week, Monday to Friday, organising workshops, seminars and meetings at the expense of direct services to citizens.

The minority, therefore, recommends that the Government reviews the budget on workshops, seminars and meetings with a view of scaling down and saving taxpayers, money with associated idleness and wastefulness.

The next is the compensation of cattle in Lango, Acholi and Teso

The minority recommends that the Government adopt a policy to pay all households a minimum uniform reparative payment of at least six cows per household. Two oxen for ploughing, two cows for milk nutrition and two for livelihood security.

If I may add, Mr Speaker, the lack of milk in the entire Lango, Teso and Acholi has given people an opportunity to ridicule us in public, especially our ladies. People were asking our ladies why they do not have *nyash*, etcetera (*Laughter*) – how do we get it when we do not have milk to take? So, it is recommended that the Government –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable *Owekitiibwa*, order. What is *nyash*? To help our Clerk to capture it well.

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, *nyash* has been defined as that body part capable of producing water. (*Laughter*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: And it is because of milk? *(Laughter)* –

MR ODUR: It is therefore recommended, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, order! Let us listen to Hon. Jonathan.

MR ODUR: The minority recommends that the Government adopt a policy of paying all households a minimum uniform reparative payment of at least six cows per household. I have mentioned two for ploughing, two for milk, and two for nutrition. This should be done in phases.

It is also recommended to the Government to appreciate the missed opportunities out of the deprived ownership of the cattle and the Government should offer special affirmative action for Lango, Teso and Acholi in the areas of higher education.

Next is the funding of the Committees of Parliament

The minority observed that funding for the oversight function of Parliament through committees has been under-budgeted at Shs 25 billion for a total of 28 committees. In essence, committees of Parliament, which are constitutional, have been allocated significantly lower budgets in comparison to certain individualised positions.

Each of the Commissioners of Parliament, for example, has been allocated personal to holder expenditures of Shs 1.372 billion, in total Shs 5.488.

The minority recommends that the budget estimates of Parliament be reviewed to free more funds for committees. *(Applause)*

It is further recommended that Parliament provide the budget to committees and that the budget be ring-fenced for exclusive expenditure on the committees' work plans to avoid repeated encroachment and misuse of funds.

The other key departure area which I would like to highlight, is on activities and budget estimates that have been proposed for re-budgeting, and I conclude.

The minority has observed that Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) have opted to budget for activities that do not form their core mandate. Parliament is invited to diligently scrutinise all the budget lines to eliminate unjustified budget allocations.

In principle, the minority recommends that Parliament should not approve any further requests for additional funding, as stated in the Majority Report, until all MDAs revise their budgets accordingly.

Without prejudice, the minority provides the following hints and highlights to Parliament on the budget estimates extracted from the ministerial policy statements that are questionable, justified, and inappropriate.

First, Vote 007: Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. The following items:

1. Medical camp;
 - a. Condom education, distribution and correct/consistent use promotion;
 - b. Physical exercises; and
 - c. Training of Human Resource Management (HRM) in professional courses, has been advised for review and those resources available to the same entity to reallocate to a more pressing issue.

Vote 101: Judiciary

Budget on donations and purchase of motor vehicles.

Vote 102: Electoral Commission

Shs 45 billion for sharing among the seven political parties with representation in Parliament. There is non-adherence to section 14A-B of the Political Parties and Organisations (Amendment) Act, which provides for equal-sharing.

It is recommended that Shs 45 billion be re-budgeted to cater for critical areas such as funding to Uganda Cancer Institute, Uganda National Organ Transplant Council, salaries for teachers, medical workers, policemen, soldiers, prison warders, et cetera.

It is further recommended, especially for political parties with more than 20 million registered members, to collect membership fees from their members to finance their activities.

Vote 103: Inspectorate of Government

Shs 56, 58.6 million, under the Inspectorate of Government, for the activity termed condom distribution, and the reason is that condom distribution can be rationalised at no cost.

Vote 133: Directorate of Public Prosecution

- i) Shs 30 million for prayers;
- ii) Shs 50 million for planting trees;
- iii) Shs 2 billion for security. I would like to provide an agreement with the main report on security. Entities are spending a lot of money to budget for payment of security, and I asked the question, "Who guards the police station if every entity is asking for additional money to pay security officers to guard them? Who guards the barracks? Who guards a police station?"

In other words, if you aggregate all the money in the budget, I am not talking about the 11, Government spending, it can enhance salaries for police officers and the level of security can be upgraded.

Vote 106: Uganda Human Rights Commission

The budget line consultancy at Shs 1.2 billion, which was not justified. Smartphones, because they were also buying tablets, smartphones and tablets can use the same thing. We allowed them to buy -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, conclude because now you have gone so much into explanation.

MR ODUR: Okay and portraits of the President.

Now, on Vote 104: Parliamentary Commission, these are the budget lines available for review. Shs 5.48 billion for Commissioners of Parliament. I have told you the formula of sharing. Shs 10.9 billion for public relations and cleaning the image of Parliament. Let us just do the right thing, and our image will be done. We do not need to pay somebody to clean. I do not know how they are going to clean that.

Shs 3 billion for research. The following offices; Office of the Speaker, Office of the Deputy Speaker, Leader of Government Business, Leader of the Opposition, a total of Shs 37 billion, way more than Shs 28 billion provided for committees to do work. This budget should be reviewed.

Screening of CVs, Shs 12 million. Parliament is not going to recruit, so we do not need money for somebody to screen CVs.

There is money allocated for engagement with CSOs; it is not the responsibility of Parliament to engage with CSOs and even fund them.

Training of local government and exposure visits.

Lastly, additional funding of Shs 52.86 for activities such as modification of toilets at the South Gate of Parliament.

The last one is on the Judicial Service Commission. I have listed them.

In conclusion, the minority humbly pray that this report finds acceptance in the conscience of the honourable members and accordingly be adopted in its entirety, in so just and faithful a manner as to promote the honour and glory, and to advance the good for all Ugandans in whose interests Parliament is committed to their charge. *(Applause)* It is so humbly reported, and this report is signed by one member who presented the report. I thank you so much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Jonathan. We have learnt from you how *Nyash* works on top of the serious issues you have presented. Thank you.

Honourable colleagues, I would like to invite the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs to visit the parliamentary chambers. The committee raised this in a meeting with the Parliamentary Commission, and I told them it was available; they could visit anytime. You can come anytime; there is nothing to hide in the building next door.

Secondly, honourable colleagues, Article 155(2) of the Constitution, says that budgets of statutory institutions shall be prepared and presented to the President who will lay them on the Floor, through the minister responsible and that is also in line with Section 19 of the Administration of Parliament Act.

The Commission did its work of submitting the budget to the President, and they will be waiting for the President to make his comments, return and deliver the budget here. The Parliamentary Commission, before anyone recommends that you reduce the money of the Judiciary or Parliamentary Commission, which are Statutory Votes, the Constitution is very clear on how their budget is handled. I just wanted to –

However, I have read through the reports, and I want to thank you, honourable colleagues, for the issues. The only issue which I got concerned about was going beyond - to go to all entities because now we have here reports which we adopted, saying we get more money for MDAS to build their offices. We have reports which we adopted here, recommending the retooling of MDAS, and buying cars for them. You have, for example, the Judiciary, where they have appointed new judges; they must have vehicles.

Now, we have another report saying, “No, do not do this.” I would request that when we are doing so, we limit ourselves within our sector for now. Otherwise, we are going to have different recommendations adopted by this House from the different committees. That is

the only challenge. Maybe at consolidation, the Budget Committee will help to reconcile all of these issues. I just wanted to give that clarification and then allow members – Hon. Sarah Opendi, Hon. Kayondo -

I would like to first give an opportunity to the honourable colleagues that I have not given an opportunity today. If I can start with Hon. *Hajji Iddi*, Hon. Bumali Mpindi, Hon. Mutembuli, Hon. Feta, Hon. Dorcas - Dr Otara, I gave you an opportunity. I will first give these ones an opportunity, then I will pick more.

7.19

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr speaker. It becomes challenging because I thought the purpose of bringing these reports here is for us to either agree with the committees or not. That is the whole reason why the minority report comes in, because there was disagreement. I think that there is nothing wrong with members discussing just like we did for the Committee on Health report and said that we must find money for the PET scan.

I would like to entirely agree with the minority report on some of these expenditures that create alarms. Just yesterday, most of you saw the online news that commissioners had allocated themselves Shs 500 million. If we do not discuss our own budget, at what point – we do not want a scenario where we shall be told again that you passed this. We still have a pending-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Sarah, I did not give my opinion. I told you your own law. If it was my opinion, you would – let me get you your own law. So, if it was my opinion, then you would say, “oh, Mr Speaker-”

And I am not saying that you should not discuss – this is Article 155(2) of the Constitution. (1) financial year estimates: one says that;

“The President shall cause to be prepared and laid before Parliament in each financial year, the budget...” (2) The head of any self-accounting

department, commission or organisation set up under this Constitution shall cause to be submitted to the President at least two months before the end of each financial year estimates of administrative and development expenditure and estimates of revenues of the respective department, commission or organisation for the following financial year. (3) The estimates prepared under clause (2) of this article shall be laid before Parliament by the President under clause (1) of this article without revision but with any recommendations that the Government may have on them.”

Hon. Sarah, they will come. The President will lay them here. Then, when he lays, we look at his notes, and you make your recommendations. It was not my opinion; it was what the law says. Continue, and you are free to make your submissions.

MS OPENDI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. At what point do we get to make an input in our own budget? As you can see, most of us do oversight work, but no payment is made. And then the commissioners who are supposed to represent us have Shs 5.4 billion allocated to them. For what purpose? Yet they are members of Parliament who belong to committees.

I have seen under the Electoral Commission, the Honourable Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. It is good for us to combine these elections because when we combine, we save money. As you can see, Shs 57 billion will be spent when we merge the election of women councils together with other administrative units. If we do them separately, Shs 45 billion will be provided.

Therefore, I recommend that we merge these elections because it is not complicated. It has been done in other countries successfully, and I believe it can be done.

The Ministry of Justice should also tell us; we have been talking about constitutional reforms. Now we are seeing Shs 700 billion is being provided for the Electoral Commission. Is this money adequate? I heard the Electoral Commission saying that they do not have

an adequate budget to conduct next year's election. Is this money sufficient? If it is not, are we going to do away with these elections, extend them or find additional money? What is in stock for us?

The Minister of Justice should also tell us when we are having the constitutional reforms? We have never gone into an election without reviewing our laws. What exactly is happening this year? Can we hear from the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs? – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable, you took more than four minutes.

7.25

MR FRED KAYONDO (DP, Mukono County South, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, allow me to salute the one-man army's minority report. It was straight to the point with a lot of intelligence.

I want to deviate from it in one area where it talked about the restricted bidding and exposing all the procurements to open bidding. Restriction in bidding favours our local contractors. When you open it up, you are exposing it to the international bidders and our local contractors will be kicked out. There I may not agree with you.

At times, some works services and supplies are urgent in nature and when you expose them to the PPDA tedious and bureaucratic processes, you may end up losing the game.

Mr Speaker, I would like to talk about the case backlogs, most especially the land cases, since my Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs is here. We have so many land cases that have taken over 15 years in court. People have died and left those cases pending, and even the heirs die, but the case is still continuing.

We have some election cases. I belong to the Democratic Party. In 1980, we had a case where DP was taken to court by President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. By then, he was an honourable member. Sam Kutesa defeated

him in Mbarara North, and he took us to court, but up to date, we do not have that judgment. *(Laughter)* If we defeated him, we want costs as a party.

How can we be 45 years down the road and not receive the judgment? If we defeated him, we want to give him the costs. I will deliver the costs to him myself. We cannot have all that for 45 years, and you are crying out for this.

Lastly, the Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs was here, when Hon. John Patrick Amama Mbabazi stood as President, of course DP backed him. There are some recommendations, orders, which were given by the court. But up to date, we have not heard from the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.

We are going into elections and those recommendations were extremely sensitive when it comes to elections. I want to hear my minister commenting about those recommendations that were ordered by court for this Parliament and the ministry. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kayondo has a lot of issues he is still demanding on behalf of DP. Last time, I remember him accusing the NRM. He said, “You went to the bush to fight for the election that had been rigged. It was our victory that had been rigged. When you finished the war, you never handed over our victory to us” *(Laughter)*. He wanted the NRM to hand the victory over to DP. The issues are very many.

7.28

MR MPINDI BUMALI (Independent, PWD Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the report, more especially on the recommendation of availing money to government agencies to construct their own offices.

A lot of money is wasted on renting. I know we may not have the capacity to give all the agencies money now, but for this financial

year, let us at least start with two agencies. They will construct their own offices, and that will reduce the burden of rent.

Then another one is sort of a clarification, Mr Speaker. It is as if I saw that Shs 4.5 billion is needed to have a portrait for the President. Is it true or not, Shs 4.5 billion for just portraits of the President?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hajji Iddi-

7.29

MR IDDI ISABIRYE (NRM, Bunya County South, Mayuge): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee chairperson for the report. I want to address myself to Article 87(a) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda that establishes the Parliamentary Commission, with the mandate of offering strategic guidance to the Parliament of Uganda.

Mr Speaker, I listened to the submission of the minority report that raises a lot of policy and accountability issues. If all those issues are raised by the Auditor-General, and the accountability committee looks at them, we can debate from a well-informed point of view rather than a sector committee.

Mr Speaker, I associate myself with the recommendations of the majority report because, like you guided very well, you can only be wise, or not wise, to sit on a tree and then cut it. We are aware that Parliament is our House. You cannot be very wise and sit here and begin looking at how Parliament operates from within.

If you talk about the donations, where do they go? Mr Speaker, I have heard you donating to the needy and churches. These donations do not go to individuals. They go to the needy communities. If a colleague suggests that this donation should be removed from the report, there are things that we really should not – *(Interjection)*- I will give you clarification after my submission.

Mr Speaker, the Parliamentary Commission thought it very wise that the offices that you occupy are very sensitive, and the requests that come to your offices are actually not personal. Sometimes, you come in to help the communities. You have seen - and honourable colleagues may agree with me - Members of Parliament buying ambulances, from their own salaries, to donate –(Member timed out.)

7.32

MR YUSUF MUTEMBULI (NRM, Bunyole East County, Butaleja): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I thank the committee for their recommendations, particularly on the aspect of us providing funds for the ministry for justice to have regional offices. This will not only be for the ministry for justice, but for the Directorate of Public Prosecution (DPP).

My own experience, as a practitioner, is that you get to court and find the same state attorney appearing before a grade one magistrate, a chief magistrate and a judge. In that way, we are delaying the dispensation of justice. You will have a judge, but you will not have a state attorney from the DPP's office, and a state attorney from the ministry for justice. For us to have real justice achieved, we need to ensure that we also have the regional offices, and recruitment of state attorneys in these different departments.

Two, on the Law Development Centre, I support the recommendation by the committee for us to have that building. It has taken over six or seven years without it being completed. Mr Speaker, once that building is constructed, we are likely to get not less than Shs 30 billion as non-tax revenue because they will have many students who will be paying. Imagine, they only need little money for us to get Shs 30 billion every year if we have this structure in place. It means that we are going to have many students admitted who are going to be paying, and we shall be realising income from the building.

Lastly, chairperson of the legal committee, I remember when I was still on that committee, the Judiciary came and assured us that every constituency would have a grade one magistrate's court, and that every district would have a chief magistrate's court. You could update us if this has been implemented and, if not, what has happened – because people need justice nearer to them.

Maybe lastly, Mr Speaker, is the issue of visiting the chambers. For the last four years I was on that committee, we tried as much as possible – we wrote letters and did everything – to access the new chambers, but it became very – (Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, I have invited you. Chairperson of the legal committee, even if you want, tomorrow or after here, we can walk there. (Laughter) I do not want someone to paint a picture that there is something being hidden.

By the way, when we met with the committee, I extended an invitation to them. If the committee had told me they wanted to come, they would have come. If they have not been allowing you, please, I allowed you. I want to lead and take you around the building.

The pain you have, honourable colleagues, is the pain that we share as the leadership of the institution. We took steps – the progress that we have registered in the last few months is tremendous. It is because we changed and now pay subcontractors directly. We no longer pay the contractor to pay the subcontractors. We have taken the model of the ministry for finance. That is how they finished their building. The subcontractors are now delivering materials that are needed to finish the building, and the progress is good.

Therefore, tomorrow – if you want – at seven o'clock, I will be around. After here, we can even go. We have lights; they work at night. We can visit in broad daylight or at night – whatever you want.

7.37

MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Let me thank the chairperson and the entire committee for the good report. I tend to agree with the recommendations of the majority report.

Permit me, Mr Speaker, to make a submission on the issue of compensation to the war victims in Lango, Acholi and Teso. The recommendation therein is very good and I agree with it, but I would have been more comfortable, like we debated and proposed earlier, for us to add Lakwena war victims.

During every electioneering season, the issue of Lakwena war victims keeps coming up. We always promise that, yes, everything is going to be worked on and people get excited that, “yes, we are going to be paid, finally”. If we are disposing of this particular item, I will be the happiest to recommend that we include Lakwena war victims.

Mr Speaker, that said, the minority report is talking of abolishing donations. I disagree *-(Mr Kayemba-Ssolo rose_-* Mr Speaker, I seek your protection from Hon. Kayemba-Ssolo. I disagree with the minority report when it comes to abolition of donations in most of the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

I know the three arms of Government have been benefiting from this – it is being done. In the Executive, the Head of State has been supporting many disadvantaged and marginalised people. In the Judiciary, it is happening. If we say we are getting rid of it, when last year, this Parliament participated actively in the run for cancer, run against HIV/AIDS by the Kabaka - the Mengo arrangement - and that contribution from Parliament was well received. I do not know where this money will be coming from when similar activities are organised.

I think it is a good way for us to interact with the public through corporate social responsibility.

Therefore, I implore colleagues, more so my brother Hon. Odur, you have always given good guidance to this Parliament, but today I am surprised that your minority report is really like my colleague observed, a monkey sitting on – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Feta?

7.40

MR GODFREY FETA (NRM, Ayivu Division East, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I thank the committee for the very good report. I tend to associate with the committee recommendation on the establishment of a fund for compensation of war victims.

The country is conspicuously very quiet about compensation of war victims in West Nile. Since 1979, there have been war victims in West Nile, but nobody has compensated them. On 24th and 25th of January 1981, there was the Ombachi massacre where 90 people were killed and those have never been compensated. The victims of the West Nile Bank Front and Kony wars have never been compensated as well.

I thought my good friend, Hon. Jonathan Odur, would not have restricted his report to Lango, Teso and Acholi. I thought the brotherhood of Northern Uganda would have included the West Nile. I am very surprised for the first time that Hon. Jonathan is very selfish. *(Laughter)*

It is my prayer that this fund is established and the whole region is looked at. The President has just come from West Nile and we have reminded him of all these war atrocities in the region. You can imagine that in the country, the war mongers are compensated, but the victims of the war are ignored. It is very absurd.

I, therefore, thank the committee for that recommendation.

On the minority report, I agree with Hon. Jonathan on a number of the recommendations. However, he has recommended a legal

framework to regulate donations. In the absence of a legal framework, what are we regulating now?

For now, we do not have a basis, because the President's office, the Prime Minister's office, Parliament and even Members of Parliament are donating. Every Sunday, you donate bags of cement, iron sheets, so many things and money.

There is no legal basis for restricting donations for now. Until we have a legal basis, then we can be talking equally, but for now, maybe we can say, let us - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Dorcas Acen then Hon. Katalihwa.

7.43

MS DORCAS ACEN (NRM, Woman Representative, Alebtong): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report with some very good recommendations. I also thank Hon. Jonathan for the minority report which also has some very good recommendations.

I would like to address myself specifically on the allocation for the Financial Year 2024/2025, which was about Shs 40 billion and that is something which was good enough just to help us kick-start the process of cattle compensation in Lango, Acholi and Teso Subregions.

In the next financial year, we are seeing an allocation of about Shs 80 billion out of the required Shs 521.6 billion. That was way below. I, therefore, would like to thank the committee for recommending that the total Shs 521.6 billion needs to be allocated so that we can handle the outstanding bills, which are supposed to handle the compensation.

However, there are key areas and issues which were raised by Hon. Jonathan in the minority report. I would like to pick the one on discrepancies on the list of beneficiaries. While the report indicates that about 24,000 have been listed to be compensated, we have heard that was not the right figure on the ground.

There is a discrepancy on the list. Out of about 42,000 which were initially provided by the Attorney-General, only 18,469 were approved, leaving out a total of 23,573 which I would like to request the honourable minister to kindly interest yourself with so that we can see how to reconcile those figures.

Otherwise, the 23,000 cannot proceed to fill out the data cards. They were totally left and not approved - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Donald Katalihwa -

7.45

MR DONALD KATALIHWA (NRM, Mwenge County South, Kyenjojo): Mr Speaker, to begin with, I totally associate myself with the majority report that has been presented to us.

Mr Speaker, I also entirely agree with you on your guidance regarding how budgets of the self-accounting entities, including the Parliamentary Commission, are processed, especially on the issue of the President who gave us guidance before we finally approve it.

I also entirely agree with my neighbour and brother, who guided the House that it is not a good practice to sit in a tree and go ahead and cut the same tree where you are seated. You either fall with it or it falls on you.

Having given those three disclaimers, I am really surprised now when I go to discuss the minority report of my brother Hon. Odur.

There was a recommendation he gave on the issue of consultancy and he said, "Institutions should recruit full-time staff to do consultancy."

I do not know how he defines consultancy. Consultancy is not something full-time. I have been in civil society. When you go to institutions, including the road sector, the ministry for works, where there are engineers, they also hire certain consultants for certain services for a short time and they go.

When Hon. Odur proposes that institutions can have full-time people to do consultancy work, I do not know whether he should be guided by what consultancy is all about.

Mr Speaker, another thing I want to raise is about the issue of donations. Members have raised it very well. All of us are witnesses to this. Donations are done by everybody and they go to the Ugandans in our constituencies. Therefore, if somebody says that donations should be abolished, I fail to understand that.

We are under attack on social media. Our rules are very clear here that we do not discuss social media propaganda. It is very unfortunate when we legitimise the social media information we hear and we discuss it here in the House.

I beg this House that we do not cut the tree we are seated under and go by your guidance and that of the presenter of the majority report. He did it well and I think if we had followed that, we would not have gone into all this – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ariko and then Hon. Kabanda.

7.48

MR EDMUND ARIKO (NRM, Soroti East Division, Soroti City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The report of the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs has been more precise, straightforward, and in all its entirety, very easy to understand and comprehend.

I want to trust that the debate that has gone on here will greatly assist both the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs as well as the budget committee to very much wisely and appropriately allocate the resources.

Mr Speaker, I would like to move a motion that, having delved into the debate of this report, that we as a House suspend the process of considering the aspect of the sections of the minority report that deals with the statutory institutions until such a time when we receive the figures of the budget allocations for those institutions, specifically the Judiciary and the

Parliamentary Commission. If we do that, I beg that you put the question so that this House can pronounce itself on the report of the Committee of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs. I beg that you put a question –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, don't you think it would have been better for you to propose amendments to the report? Isn't it a smarter way?

MR ARIKO: Mr Speaker, I, therefore, and I thank you for your guidance. I, therefore, propose that the two reports be considered by the House, but with an amendment on the section of the minority report which seeks for this House to have due recourse to the sections of the statutory Votes, that is the Parliamentary Commission and the Judiciary, that those be stayed until at such a time when we have received the figures for those particular Votes. I beg to propose.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will put a question in the end at once. Now, honourable colleagues, there is something I should clarify. I do not want to cause - our colleagues already got enough problems. I do not want to pile problems on them. I heard that each Commissioner is getting Shs 1.3 billion.

Honourable colleagues, the budget is not for a commissioner; it is for the Commission, which we have as a secretariat within Parliament. That is the money we have, for example, for paying assistants of MPs with disabilities; that is where it comes from. That is where travel is.

Honourable colleagues, commissioners- there is nothing this Commission has introduced that was not in the previous Commission- I just came here. What I can guarantee, honourable colleagues, is that there is no special allowance beyond the regular allowances or special facility beyond what the Commissioners have been getting over the years that is provided for in this budget.

Therefore, I do not want us to go out and paint our colleagues in a bad way. This is a very sensitive period. We tarnish our colleagues,

and I feel bad when I see a colleague when we say to each Commissioner - You get the budget of the whole Commission, and then you say each Commissioner is getting this much. It is very unfortunate. Hon. Mpuuga, do you want to clarify that further?

MR MPUUGA: Well, Mr Speaker, I think you have done justice to it. I was only saying that when I rose on privilege, I thought that some of our Members were taking matters personally. Probably, that is where they get their bread in doing that; it is unfortunate.

If we as a House fail to show courtesy to each other, then we have no business being colleagues in this House. Somebody picks up a microphone, whether he has read whatever rumourmongering on social media, and makes it an issue of this House, and they speak in a loud tone to appear as though they are authentic. It is very unfortunate.

A Member said that he has even a sharing formula, and you are a Member of Parliament worthy of your name; very unfortunate, Mr Speaker.

While we want to hold Parliament accountable, we should never neglect courtesy towards each other, even when we disagree on how Parliament works. It is unfortunate. We restrain ourselves because we must work as Parliament, but when Members choose to be personal, it is not acceptable.

Mr Speaker, we restrain ourselves because we believe that we have a duty towards each other even when we disagree. I can address you disagreeably but honourably, and I can never impute ill motive towards a Member. That I request, Members should try, I cannot order them, but restraint. You cannot get a vote on my back, that you want be voted because you spoke so much about what you cannot clarify.

I chair the Commission Audit Committee. If I rose to say you did this, you did that, people would take flight. But then I understand, as a leader, why Parliament works the way it does and, therefore, self-restraint. You can question,

but you cannot say you have no capacity to understand. If you have no capacity to understand, then you have no business being here. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I clarified that very clearly. The Commission is made up of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, backbenchers, the Leader of the Opposition, the Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister, and all those who are served by the Commission. It has staff, it has obligations, and I want to confirm to Members that what we propose to His Excellency the President is nothing like any special privilege or what is for Members.

Honourable colleagues, I want to - I had allowed Hon. Kabanda.

7.56

MR DAVID KABANDA (NRM, Kasambya County, Mubende): Thank you, Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I join colleagues in thanking the chairperson for this good report.

Mr Speaker, I would like to talk about the issue of donations. The other side that presented the minority report proposed that the donations be scrapped. I do not agree with their position because as Members of Parliament, we also donate. Where do we get the money from? But what we can propose to this Parliament is that maybe Members of Parliament are also allocated money for donations. *(Laughter)* Yes, because when we go to our churches, they expect you to donate the same way the Commissioner or the Minister is donating. By the way, even when you attend a burial and they announce your condolences, that so and so the MP has sent a condolence message of Shs 20,000 or Shs 50,000, they laugh at you as if Parliament gives you money for burial or for donations.

If this Parliament can accept, we do not remove the donations from the President, from the Commissioners, the MPs also get money for donations because you are also donating in the churches, and wherever you go. Like the former Leader of the Opposition (LOP) has suggested, do not be envious of others. You

also propose for yourselves and see how to – *(Laughter)*- Yes, but for you to stand here and say so and so is taking billions, that is not in good faith.

Unless if you have an issue with so and so. However, if we are here to serve the country- we can also donate because if they give you this money, do you take it at your home? You end up donating to the community.

Mr Speaker, I disagree with the position of removing donations. I invite you to my constituency. When you come to my constituency and give me Shs 5 million, I will start complaining. When the Speaker gives me Shs 2 million, I will start complaining. Where do I expect you to get the money from? We should add more money so that you keep sending it to our constituencies. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister? Let me listen to the minister, then I allow the chairperson and the mover of the minority report, then see what to do.

7.59

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS (Mr Norbert Mao): Mr Speaker, all our responses and answers are on record with the committee. There is no issue we did not deal with.

Secondly, you stated clearly the constitutional provision relating to the budget. In effect, the President is the Minister of Finance; he only delegates the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to act on his behalf.

Thirdly, when we come here as ministers, it is fair to presume that we have exhaustively discussed these budgets in Cabinet and take the positions in Cabinet to the committees, which then embed them in the reports.

I wish to report, Mr Speaker, that when I appeared before the committee, I got feedback from the Members. It is through these interactions that as a minister, it is my duty to go back to the President. If he sees me appearing in Cabinet sweating and wounded

from attacks from Members, I then tell him we are not doing well; there are issues that have been raised.

During yesterday's Cabinet meeting, I put to him the question of cattle compensation because the committee told me frankly that we are a big joke when it comes to cattle compensation. They blasted me. They said the people are getting the equivalent of a thigh of a cow; that we are giving meat, not cows.

So, I went back to the President and said, "Mr President, I put the proposal to the committee that we need this, particularly for the most affected areas, namely Teso, Lango and Acholi." This is not to say the other areas do not deserve compensation. They deserve it but this situation is like a hospital.

In a hospital, we have intensive care, the high dependency unit, the general ward and outpatients. *(Laughter)* You even find some of the people among outpatients smoking in the compound. *(Laughter)* They ask what time the doctor is coming, yet in the intensive care, patients are dying. They are all patients, but the degree of affliction differs.

I would like to state clearly that in the Cabinet, all the other areas were mentioned - the places that deserve attention. Mr Speaker, I wish to report that based on the motion I moved in Cabinet, the President has agreed that the budget will be Shs 150 billion, and it will be shared equally in the three subregions to deal with the intensive care. It does not mean there are no other patients because there are –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I do not have much time. Please conclude.

MR MAO: I believe, Mr Speaker, that this being about the budget and priorities, it is our duty to keep persuading the President to change his mind.

I would like to thank the chairperson and members of the committee that you have been very persuasive, including those who,

for instance, author minority reports like Hon. Odur. He is extremely persuasive. Some of his concerns, of course, are based on genetics – *(Laughter)*- and I doubt whether the –

We wish to salute the spirit in which we engage with the committee. Lango, Acholi and Teso will each get Shs 50 billion because the real Minister of Finance, who is the President, has accepted your recommendation, which we discussed. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I am giving two minutes each. Hon. Jonathan, I am sure two minutes will be enough.

MR ODUR: Thank you. Mr Speaker, I would like to put it on record that the issues that emerged in my report were all picked out of deliberations on the ministerial policy statements.

On the issue of donation, I did not mean prohibiting anyone from donating out of their private pockets. I wanted to deal with the institutional nature of donations. If I compute the figures for the entire budget, which I am going to do – I had done only for the 11 entities – it is alarming.

This morning, I heard Members asking for money for the cancer PET machine and this and that. We allow entities to keep budgeting and focus on the top people, yet even at the lower offices now, there are donation budgets. I invite your attention to scrutinise this. That is the spirit in which I raised that.

On the issue of compensation, the ministry had proposed to us compensation of Lango, Acholi and Teso. The committee could not open up and go to other areas. Otherwise, as a nationalist and member of the Congress, UPC, we would love to be everywhere. *(Laughter)* I propose that we should have compensation everywhere, if it is possible.

I must also add that there were court cases in Lango, Teso and Acholi. Most of the compensation arose out of court cases that were decided and these were three or four different

court cases. However, the minister has already assured us on how the other compensations will be handled.

Somebody mentioned about consultancies. Let me explain this briefly. In Mulago, you have a consultant neurosurgeon or a consultant for the heart, etc. If you see the amount of money allocated for consultancies - and you said that you worked in the NGO. I did for 15 years as a top executive at the NGO; I understand what consultancies are all about.

What I am saying is, if you aggregate all the monies for consultants, even for supervisory works in construction – *(Member timed out.)*

Lastly, Mr Speaker, I would like to plead that if it pleases the Commission, organise a closed-door meeting with Members on the budget and we speak heart-to-heart. I do not want to answer, but do that; I challenge the Commission. Organise a closed-door meeting in the conference hall on the budget, we look through it and then make a decision, as Members of this House. Thank you very much.

MR TEIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank Members for holding on up to this time to complete this report.

Hon. Yusuf Mutembuli raised the issue of the magistrates' courts at constituency level. For the record, it has not been implemented and that is part of the money we are proposing in this budget to be added to enable them have courts at that level. It also calls for construction of court premises in those areas which we have not provided money for.

Mr Speaker, thank you for the invitation to inspect the parliamentary chambers. It is an issue that has brought concern. We did not want to report the Lubowa way, but I am glad this invitation has been extended. It actually came last week when we met with the Commission. Alongside other members, we will organise a day and join you, then we inspect the parliamentary premises to establish the physical progress.

We are also alive to the explanation that has been given and the new interventions that you have made, especially payment of contractors from the source, a method which was adopted by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to complete their premises. We believe that we are on the right track; we should have our premises concluded.

Mr Speaker, on the issue of compensation, the Teso area had court cases but Acholi and Lango were an out-of-court settlement and a commitment by the President –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, let us leave it at that; the minister has clarified it well. You got more money for the item.

MR TEIRA: Okay. I would like to thank the honourable minister for the additional effort to raise it to Shs 150 billion. That will enable each of the three subregions to have Shs 50 billion, which will give us a proper foundation.

The original arrangement was that the money be scattered in three financial years in equal shares and it was slightly shy of Shs 150 billion. I would like to thank you, for the increment.

Honourable colleagues, the Parliamentary Commission budget is ours. Whatever the details are in there, I have always implored you to have this discussion in-house to avoid unnecessary “hullabaloo,” especially though misinformation.

Once we have that, we can come out in the open. It is very important to have it in the public, so everyone knows what is there, but only after it has been harmonised as a statutory budget. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the Parliamentary Commission budget is audited by the Auditor-General. The report and budget are available to you, so we are just waiting for the President to conclude.

I did not want us to impute bad motive on commissioners, because whereas we can explain here, someone can say they have discovered.

Commissioners last time received Shs 500; this time they are getting Shs 1.3 billion and we are in a very sensitive period.

I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs and the ministerial policy statements and budget estimates for the Financial Year 2025/2026 be adopted with the proposed amendment.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The recommendations are referred to the Budget Committee for harmonisation, reconciliation and ensuring that indeed all issues that have come up are well captured and consolidated by the Budget Committee. Honourable colleagues, the House is adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 8.10 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 16 April 2025, at 2.00 p.m.)