



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FOURTH SESSION - THIRD MEETING

FRIDAY, 10 JANUARY 2025



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA
IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - SPECIAL SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Friday, 10 January 2025

Parliament met at 9.04 a.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, it is with a deep, heavy heart that we convene again here today, to pay tribute to our own, our brother and colleague, Hon. Ssegirinya. The Member of Parliament for Kawempe Division North who passed on yesterday.

On behalf of the Parliament of Uganda, and on my behalf, I relay our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, the people of Kawempe North, the Muslim fraternity, the National Unity Platform (NUP) party, and the good people of Uganda.

Hon. Ssegirinya had a loving personality. He was a servant leader loved by many people right from the time he was a councillor in Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA). Hon. Ssegirinya was always referred to as “Mr Update”. Everybody loved Hon. Ssegirinya. His work and generosity enabled him to be elected to Parliament. Despite his short tenure as a legislator in the 11th Parliament, he served the people of Kawempe North with dedication.

His record of advocacy for better living conditions and humanity was very clear. He was very passionate about the healthcare services in Kawempe. I remember one time when he brought a Computed Tomography (CT) scan machine to Kawempe Hospital and ambulances. We are all aware that Hon. Ssegirinya had been unwell for about three years and Parliament has that record.

On a special note, I would like to thank the Parliament for the support they gave Hon. Ssegirinya. The Parliamentary Commission took responsibility for meeting all the costs of his medication in both Kampala and Nairobi. We were hopeful that one day, one time, we would be seated in this House with Hon. Ssegirinya but God’s timing is never ours. He is no more. He is gone to be with Allah.

Today is a sad day for us, as we bid farewell to Hon. Ssegirinya whose remains are about to be brought in. The painful reality has now dawned on us, as his beloved colleagues, that death is so cruel and real. At any one time, any of us will be there. When such a thing is happening, we all ought to be here to give a decent send-off to our colleagues. *(Applause)*

There is no politics in this thing. We should never have politics when we have lost our own, because today it is me and tomorrow, it is somebody else.

Honourable members, we are all imperfect mortal beings whose final destiny is death. I, therefore, urge all of you to love, appreciate

and be there for each other irrespective of your weaknesses and shortcomings. Let us be there. That is what we will be remembered for when we leave this world.

When you look at what is happening today, you know that death is real. Imagine somebody who was moving yesterday, Hon. Baba Diri, just collapsed and died. That is also a colleague who was with us here. Therefore, it is not something we should look at and think is only for a particular person.

As leaders, what lessons do we draw from Hon. Ssegirinya? Let us always put humanity first in whatever we do. Be friendly and be there for everybody. Hon. Ssegirinya was down to earth.

As the Parliament of Uganda, we condole with the family, friends, the people of Kawempe North, the Muslim fraternity, the NUP party, and all Ugandans because he was a national leader. May the Almighty Allah grant Hon. Ssegirinya eternal and perfect peace.

Honourable members, yesterday, I said we should be here by nine o'clock because the late is a Muslim. We agreed we should be here by nine O'clock and I do not know what could have happened but we shall talk about that when we do not have visitors.

Next item.

(Entrance of the late Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya.)

The National Anthem.

The East African Community Anthem.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF
PARLIAMENT TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE
LATE HON. SSEGIRINYA MUHAMMAD,
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, KAWEMPE
DIVISION NORTH

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, because we cannot leave a vacuum in the House and the House is us, we will ask the most senior Muslim, Hon. Katuntu, to move the motion.

9.19

MR ABDU KATUNTU (Independent, Bugweri County, Bugweri): Thank you, Madam Speaker. As you rightly put it, I am moving this motion by virtue of being currently in the chamber as the most senior, and I take it as an honour and a privilege.

This is a motion for a resolution of Parliament to pay tribute to the late Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, Member of Parliament for Kawempe Division North Constituency, Kampala City, for his dedicated service to the Republic of Uganda.

WHEREAS Parliament has, with deep sorrow, learnt of the death of Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, Member of Parliament for Kawempe Division North Constituency, Kampala City, which occurred on 9 January 2025 at Lubaga Hospital in Kampala;

RECOGNISING that the Hon. Ssegirinya Muhammad lived an industrious life and thorough hard work, dedicated and perseverance, rose from humble beginnings to become a Member of Parliament;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that the Hon. Ssegirinya served in various capacities including being;

- a) Member of Parliament representing Kawempe Division North Constituency, Kampala City to the time of his demise*
- b) Lord Councillor representing Kawempe North at City Hall in Kampala Capital City Authority from 2016 to 2021*
- c) International Coordinator of Love Uganda Foundation from 2016 to the time of his demise and;*
- d) Director of Hope Children's Primary School from 2014 to the time of his demise;*

APPRECIATING THAT the Hon. Ssegirinya was deeply passionate about community mobilisation, journalism, food security - especially in his constituency as exemplified through his passionate advocacy for various causes, including – (Interruption)

MR BASALIRWA: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you. I have been consulting with the Leader of the Opposition (LOP) over the issue of the Order Paper.

Madam Speaker, procedurally, motions of this nature are either moved by the Prime Minister and usually seconded by the LOP or vice versa.

I see that the Prime Minister and the entire front bench is not here but the Leader of the Opposition is here. I would like to understand - and I am not so sure who to ask, but I will ask you, as the head of the institution. Is this a message by the Government being sent that they are disinterested in the death of the Hon. Ssegirinya?

The absence of the entire Cabinet, is it a demonstration that they are disinterested in the death, burial, and perhaps sickness and everything connected with the Hon. Ssegirinya?

Do we proceed normally without this House recognising the visible and loud absence of the Executive? Madam Speaker, as the head of the institution, are you privy to any information as to why the Executive is not here and why our colleague should not deserve the presence of the Executive?

Madam Speaker, I think this House should take very strong exception to the absence of the front bench. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, what I request of you is to mourn our brother in peace. I am not able to account for the front bench and for whoever is not here.

Personally, I was here by 7.00 a.m. I have been here, and that shows you that I take the institution and my Members very seriously. I was here very early and that is why – the honourable LOP is going to speak about the motion and, in my discretion, I chose Hon. Katuntu to avoid further shame.

MR KATUNTU: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I did not realise I was getting into this controversy, but that notwithstanding,

I thought nature abhors a vacuum. When there is a vacuum, we have to fill it and proceed. We cannot afford to say, “Well, the Government is not here, so what”? The reason some of us are here is to make sure that if things are not moving correctly, we try to do our best to improvise a way of proceeding. *(Applause)*

After all, Madam Speaker, as you know, I am the chairman of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline. There is no rule that says that motions of this nature are moved by the Government. It is purely a practice and if this practice has a problem, let us fill the vacuum and proceed, and pay tribute to our late colleague. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, if I may proceed:

“APPRECIATING that Hon. Ssegirinya was deeply passionate about community mobilisation, journalism and food security, especially in his constituency as exemplified through his passionate advocates of various causes, including:

- a) Community mobilisation for health services through the construction of Kawempe North Hospital from which his constituents and Ugandans accessed free healthcare services;*
- b) Fundraising for his constituents during the COVID-19 pandemic; and*
- c) Protection and promotion of rights of the less-privileged Ugandans to access free-to-air television channels during the 2015 migration from analogue broadcasting to digital platforms;*

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by this House as follows:

- a) That Parliament collectively conveys its deep condolences to the bereaved family, relatives, friends, and the people of Uganda for the loss of a distinguished citizen of this country;*
- b) Parliament takes cognisance of the dedicated service and contribution that Hon. Ssegirinya has rendered to the people of Uganda in general and in particular,*

the people of Kawempe Division North Constituency.”

Madam Speaker, I beg to move. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? (*Members rose*) It is seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, the Government Chief Whip, the Chief Opposition Whip, Hon. Christine – by the whole House - by Hon. Kateshumbwa, Hon. Sarah, Hon. Donald, Hon. Ibanda, Hon. Macho, the Imam of Parliament, Hon. Abdu, Hon. Karim, Hon. Hassan – I am looking for the Muslims –(*Laughter*)- by Hon. Luttaguzi, Hon. Asuman, Hon. Mpuuga, Hon. Yeri, Hon. Akifeza, Hon. Esenu, Hon. Isaac, Hon. Margaret, Hon. Claire, Hon. Joslyline, Hon. *Obangaina* –(*Laughter*)- Hon. Baka, the honourable member from Buhweju, Hon. Betty, Hon. Judith, Hon. Iddi Isabirye, Hon. Solomon, Hon. Dr Bhoka, Hon. Noeline, Hon. Kibalya, Hon. Moses, Hon. Kinobere, Hon. Eddie Kwizera, Hon. Sam, Hon. Margaret – Workers Representative – Hon. Atkins, Hon. Apea, Hon. Zaake, Hon. Hillary, Hon. Ethel, Hon. Goretti, Hon. Asinasi, Hon. Nsanja, Hon. Fortunate, honourable member from Mityana, Member from Kassandra, Hon. Allan, Hon. Denis and Hon. Aloysius. Have I not mentioned all your names? (*Applause*)

Would you like to speak to your motion?

MR KATUNTU: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The country learnt of the sad and unfortunate news of the passing of Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, Member of Parliament for Kawempe Division North.

Hon. Ssegirinya has been unwell for some time, as you already know, and has been under the care of many hospitals, but breathed his last from Lubaga Hospital at 12.10 p.m. on Thursday, 9 January 2025, that is yesterday.

Hon. Ssegirinya was born on 17 January 1987 in Butale, Kaddugala in Masaka District. He rose to prominence as a politician and a business person.

The late Hon. Ssegirinya started his studies from Kaddugala Primary School and later went

to Kaddugala Secondary School and Pimbas Secondary School in Kyebando for higher education. He holds a certificate in urban food experience from the Netherlands.

At the time of his death, he was pursuing a bachelor's degree in Social Work and Social Administration at the Islamic University in Uganda.

Madam Speaker, Hon. Ssegirinya started his public life and service to his country as a political activist at a very young age. He later became a councillor, representing Kawempe Division at KCCA where he served from 2016 to 2021.

He was elected a Member of Parliament for Kawempe Division North and has been part of the 11th Parliament.

Madam Speaker, Hon. Ssegirinya has been a loving husband, father to eight children, and supported many other children who are not his.

Madam Speaker, Hon. Ssegirinya will be remembered for his tireless dedication to public service. He always stood for his people and endeavoured to work on the issues affecting the people around him. He passionately supported women economic independence through, among other things - (*Applause*) - establishing a SACCO group called the Kyebando Community Development Association, which supported women-owned small and medium enterprises.

He also participated in the promotion of community healthcare by establishing a health facility called Kawempe –

THE SPEAKER: At least you can clap for what he has done, because not all of us do that. (*Applause*)

MR KATUNTU: ... by establishing a health facility called Kawempe North Medical Centre. He was also an international coordinator of the Love Uganda Foundation from 2016 to the time of his demise, and the director of Hope Children Primary School from 2014 to the time of his demise.

I would like to thank the Rt Hon. Speaker for according this great statesman a befitting Sitting in this House, as the law provides, and also His Excellency the President for his support for Hon. Ssegirinya, through the Parliament of Uganda.

The Government of Uganda paid the medical bills of Hon. Ssegirinya during the course of his treatment, particularly when he was hospitalised at Aga Khan Hospital. Maybe it is fair that I mention the figure that rose to the tune of Shs 939,268,000. (*Applause*)

This excludes other costs paid by the Government to the US and Uganda.

The Government wishes to extend its profound sympathies to the family, the people of Kawempe North and the people of Uganda.

Given the nature – that I was trying to fill the vacuum, I will say something outside this official statement. Colleagues, Hon. Ssegirinya is a reflection that in this country, you can rise from obscurity to significance.

If you watched the media yesterday, two hours on television was dedicated to Hon. Ssegirinya. Maybe not many of us would have that sort of airtime. Why? Because of the significance of his contribution to the political process of this country.

Madam Speaker, in this country, everything is possible. You can dream big and achieve big, and indeed, Hon. Ssegirinya did exactly that. (*Applause*) You may not realise but even if you are a professor with five degrees or seven degrees, it is possible you would not have won an election in Kawempe North Division Constituency. Education may not be everything; even if you were as rich as Sudhir, you would not have won an election with Hon. Ssegirinya as a competitor. He beat all odds: humble beginnings, less education, limited finances, but somehow he rose to the top. He dreamed big and he achieved big.

Madam Speaker, there are lessons to learn and you do not have to have read so much. Hon.

Ssegirinya knew the politics of today better than those who are even more educated than him.

Muhammad, rest in peace. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hajji Katuntu. Before I call the LOP to second the motion, I would like to introduce our visitors in the VIP Gallery. In the VIP Gallery this morning, we have a delegation from the NUP leadership comprising of;

1. Mr David Lewis Rubongoya, Secretary General, NUP. You are most welcome. Thank you for coming.
2. Mr Fred Ssentamu Nyanzi, Head of mobilisation.
3. Ms Faridah Nabatanzi, head of mobilisation (Central). You are most welcome. Thank you very much for coming. They are here to watch the proceedings of this special sitting.

Remember, by midday, we should have finished because the body will be going to the mosque.

In the VIP Gallery, we also have members of the family. We have;

1. Ms Justine Nakajjumba, mother. Maama, thank you very much for coming. Sorry for the loss. *Tuula*
2. Mr Joseph Bukonya, the uncle
3. Mr Bosco Kasagga Mawanda, brother
4. Mr Robert Walugembe, brother
5. Ms Maria Nakiweewa, sister
6. Ms Viola Namaganda, sister
7. Ms Oliver Nabayunga, sister
8. Ms Rita Ndiba, sister
9. Ms Ruth Nayiga, sister
10. Ms Shifra Nagirinya, daughter
11. Mr Ivan Bukonya, son
12. Ms Shadia Namaganda, daughter
13. Ms Aliya Nabugala, daughter
14. Ms Shamim Nabu, daughter
15. Ms Aliya Naggirinya, daughter
16. Mr Ibra Ssegirinya, son.

We will continue introducing them as I get updates. Honourable LOP.

9.41

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

(Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Madam Speaker, I rise to second the motion to pay tribute to our colleague, the Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya.

Perhaps before I do that, I also wish to express my disappointment. The Deputy Prime Minister has just walked in. Before that, there was no one on the Front Bench.

Madam Speaker, yesterday, I reached out to you intending to move this motion given that Hon. Ssegirinya was one of us. The guidance I got was that practice normally is, the Prime Minister moves the motion and the LOP seconds, something that I was very comfortable with. In fact, I was glad that the motion would be moved by somebody from the Government side.

It was bothersome that this morning, there was no one from the Government to move the motion. That is very disappointing. I want to appreciate colleagues from the NRM who are here. Hon. Ssegirinya was an opposition Member but you are here, as we normally do.

We have lost several MPs in this 11th Parliament. May God help us, by the way. And we are normally united in those times. Majority of those who have died belong to the NRM, but we are always here, even as the Opposition, in solidarity with colleagues. We quarrel and argue about so many things because we do not agree politically and so on but then we are colleagues. And in death, that is where we are normally united.

Madam Deputy Prime Minister, please convey my utmost disappointment to the Prime Minister and your colleagues.

Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: At least appreciate the fact that the Speaker was here early.

MR SSENYONYI: The Speaker is neutral and does not debate. That is why I have not involved the Speaker in my disappointment. I wanted it to settle where it should.

THE SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, that is a very serious message and I really want you to relay that message because when we are in this House, we are one.

MR SSENYONYI: Madam Speaker, as I said, I am seconding the motion to pay tribute to our fallen comrade, the Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, Member of Parliament for Kawempe North Constituency, who passed on after a very long battle with illness.

On behalf of the Opposition in Parliament, and on my own behalf, I wish to extend commiserations to the family of the Hon. Ssegirinya, the people of Kawempe North Constituency, NUP, the party he belonged to and loved, and indeed, the entire country, on the demise of the Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya.

Death is a painful aspect of life, regardless of the age at which one passes on. However, losing a youthful legislator at 37 years of age who had huge dreams and aspirations is very tragic. Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya grew up in a humble family, as we all know, as he had always talked about, and faced various challenges that shaped his life.

Despite limited resources, he prioritised education and engaged in community activities. Hon. Ssegirinya was still studying at the time of his death. Some of us think that when we get to Parliament, we have arrived. But he said he would keep adding knowledge. That is how hungry he was for knowledge.

His experiences deepened his understanding of issues affecting ordinary Ugandans, fuelling his passion for activism and advocacy for a better country. Hon. Ssegirinya's journey from grassroots involvement to national recognition, showcases his resilience and ability to connect with diverse people, earning him respect in Uganda's political landscape.

Hon. Ssegirinya first gained public attention through his participation in Kampala-based radio talk shows. His frequent spirited calls to these shows earned him recognition as *Ssegirinya, eddoozi lya Kyebando*, translating to Ssegirinya, the voice of Kyebando.

During these radio engagements, he would refer to himself as MP-to-be. Each time he would call, he would say, “Ssegirinya Muhammad, *eddoozi lya Kyebando*, MP-to-be.” This was in the early 2000s, over 15 years, before he would eventually become a legislator. This speaks of the fact that when one is resilient and steadfast, it is possible to achieve one’s aspirations.

In 2016, he was elected as the Lord Councillor for Kawempe North in KCCA. He used this position and platform to advocate for social justice and community development. His vibrant personality and commitment to grassroots issues endeared him to many people.

During the 2021 elections, Hon. Ssegirinya contested for the parliamentary seat of Kawempe North, under NUP, and won overwhelmingly.

He set out to serve his people in various ways, especially health care, filling the gaps that were created by Government, things that we do as Members of Parliament, which should be done by Government: buying ambulances, building health care centres, fundraisings - colleagues normally call us for fundraisings, both on the Opposition and the Government side, for a Government health centre, fundraising for this and that. However, here we are, and Hon. Ssegirinya was filling those gaps as a Member of Parliament.

Unfortunately, not long after he had joined this August House, he was arrested and jailed for a long period of time over the *Bijambiya* Panga attacks on the population of Masaka region, which saw the killing of many Ugandans. To date, Madam Speaker, justice eludes the bereaved families because the question of who killed their loved ones has never been answered.

While in prison, Hon. Ssegirinya got severely sick and his condition kept deteriorating by the day. He was constantly denied bail, as we all saw, even though his condition was worrisome. Even when Government doctors recommended specialised treatment for him that warranted him to be granted bail, the judge still sent him back to prison where he continued to worsen, each passing day. His lawyers made a plea and produced before court, medical records signed by Government doctors, saying this man should be released on bail to get specialised treatment. The judge said, “No, go back to jail.”

After a while, Hon. Ssegirinya was granted bail only for him to be abducted outside Kigo Prison by gun-wielding men in plain clothes, in total violation of our country’s laws. This disregard for the rule of law continues unabated in our country, and as we have witnessed, it affects all of us, including colleagues on the Government side, as you have seen very recently. We must jointly castigate this and call for its end. Many Ugandans have been abducted in a similar manner, and to-date, they are still missing. All this is in a country, which prides itself in following constitutionalism. We should be ashamed of these acts.

Madam Speaker, the denial of bail to Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya feeds into the recent narrative by Gen. Yoweri Museveni, lately. He has called for denial of bail and even police bond, something which is not in tandem with our constitutional order. While bail and police bond may not be mandatory, directing judicial officers and police officers not to give it to those before them is unbecoming, and should be condemned by us all because we are all potential victims.

As we send off Hon. Ssegirinya, may we commit to respect the rule of law, because he suffered due to the disregard for the rule of law. Of late, we have seen threats from our country’s Chief of Defence Forces, Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, threatening our neighbouring countries, including Kenya, South Sudan, DRC, and the threats have extended to his colleagues in the military, and even leaders in this country. He, for example, threatened

to behead and even eliminate the Hon. Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu, a former Member of this House and the leader of NUP. This is abhorring and unacceptable. I hope that we can all condemn this and demand for action.

While the state continues to disregard these issues and trivialise them, the country suffers disregard for the rule of law. All right-thinking Ugandans should strive for constitutionalism and respect for our country's laws, something Hon. Ssegirinya was very passionate about. Let us fight for our laws. Let us fight for the Constitution, before the Constitution is too weak to defend us because that time of reckoning will come, regardless of who you are, when you will need it to fight for you. If you do not fight for it now, it will not be present to fight for you, regardless of who you are, by the way.

Rest in peace. Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, Mr Updates. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much, Hon. Leader of the Opposition. Can I have the Independents second, first? Yes, Father.

9.52

FR CHARLES ONEN (Independent, Laroo-Pece Division, Gulu City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is my distinct honour and pleasure to join you and honourable colleagues, in paying tribute to our friend. Death is an inescapable reality that no one can delegate a person to die on his or her behalf. We cannot postpone our own death. Humanity has never got used to death. No one can mock the demise of another person. In African society, solidarity was highly upheld and I believe even up to this time, solidarity must still be appreciated when we lose a colleague, a friend, even an enemy.

I was reading on social media yesterday, and somebody said that you should never annoy the system. You can annoy a person because a human being has a conscience and once his selfish ego has been satisfied, he can find in his heart, in his mind, a space to forgive. However, a system will never forgive you.

If Ssegirinya happened to annoy the system, I still beg that the system should find space to forgive this man. He has already gone. The one who moved the motion which I am here to second, concluded by saying that may his soul rest in peace.

The Leader of the Opposition also spoke the same words, "may his soul rest in peace." What is this word, "rest in peace?" "Rest in peace", is derived from the Latin words which means, "*requiescat in pace*". It is an idiom which means the person has fought the good war, won the race, and needs to go and rest in peace.

A lot has been spoken about our friend; the good things he did in the mighty constituency of Kawempe, and I believe no other leader after him may actually do exactly or those who will come after him may do what he has done for the people of Kawempe.

Madam Speaker, some two or three years ago, I met a lady at the entrance being supported to walk into the Parliament. Later, somebody pointed to me that that was the mother of Hon. Ssegirinya. I think this woman was coming, not to look for bread, but for her breadwinner, to find justice.

However, justice was not given to her son. Mummy, Allah is the good judge.

In the Holy Bible and also in Quran, especially in the book of Prophet Isaiah 57:2, he has found the place of his rest. And I believe the Hon. Ssegirinya has found a place of his rest. All the achievements he has done, the eulogies being given by his colleagues, with the exception of his enemies, I believe it is a credit on his side and truly he will find rest and find peace.

Madam Speaker, Uganda is bleeding- we need to accept this and I do not know when this country will find the right bandage to bandage the wounds of this country and Ugandans. We are living in wounds. Everyone finds joy in hurting another person. Much as they say politics is a dirty game, we should be the sanitisers of politics. We should find the right detergent to sanitise politics. Otherwise, I want

to pray for the soul, for the peaceful repose of my brother, Hon. Ssegirinya to rest in peace. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much, Fr Onen. Hajat, we are opening the debate. I will give you-

9.57

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): I thank you, Madam Speaker. You will excuse me because I am sick, but I want to apologise on behalf of the Government.

I was called this morning at around 8.00 a.m. and I was told that we were supposed to move the motion at 10.00 a.m. So, because I was sick, I decided to start preparing myself. When it was approaching 9.00 a.m., somebody called me from your office and told me it was 9.00 a.m. So, there was miscommunication on time. I, therefore, apologise on behalf of the Government that it was not intentional.

THE SPEAKER: Hajjat, I do not want to believe that there was a miscommunication because I would take responsibility. The Order Paper is very clear and when I adjourned the House yesterday, I said we were adjourning to 9.00 a.m.

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Speaker, let us take the blame, but I have said that I was sick, I was not here in the House; so, I am apologising. In addition to that, in our religion, we say "*Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un.*"

May the soul of Hon. Ssegirinya rest in peace. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Amen. Honourable members, when paying tribute like this, let us avoid those things. Let us send our friend in peace. Chief Opposition Whip.

10.02

THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe): Madam Speaker, I would like to join colleagues in supporting

the motion to pay glowing tribute to the fallen colleague, the Member of Parliament of Kawempe North, Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya.

Madam Speaker, some genius coined an adage, and I want to say it verbatim; that the greatest loss in life is not death, but that that dies inside us while we are still living. Discuss.

Madam Speaker, when you see the conspicuous absence of the front bench, save for the two honourable ministers, it speaks volumes. It throws eggs on the face of the Government, but also speaks volumes about this particular adage that I have just quoted. Honestly, death is non-partisan. It has no side. And in death is when you would expect us to be united. We expected a concerted effort of the entire House to give a decent send-off of our colleague but it is rather unfortunate, Madam Speaker, that this has happened to this House. Moreover, in the past, it has not been the case.

Madam Speaker, some genius also coined something which looks-

THE SPEAKER: He has a point of order. Hajat.

MR NAMBESHE: They have not granted.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you will allow me to excuse Hajat to go out. Please, she -

MR MACHO: Madam Speaker, I was putting the House to order to allow Madam Prime Minister to go out because she was over coughing. I was worried about the infection. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: No, I realised, that is why I have sent her.

MR NAMBESHE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was alluding to another quotation.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, let us try to speak faster so that a number of people speak; we have only an hour to go.

MR NAMBESHE: Madam Speaker, let me delve into my written eulogy-

THE SPEAKER: I am not the one determining.

MR NAMBESHE: The country mourns a spirited patriot, an incredible politician, an activist, a father, and a selfless leader who dedicated all his life prioritising the interests of the people.

Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, fondly known as “Mr Update” has left an indelible mark on the people of Kawempe North and Uganda at large. His journey from a casual, energetic, social media enthusiast to a Member of Parliament was nothing short of an inspiration.

In the 2021 elections, the Hon. Ssegirinya contested for the Kawempe North Parliamentary seat and won it, defeating seasoned politicians. During the first three months of his tenure, he has taunted many by achieving remarkable milestones, including the construction of a hospital for the underprivileged in his constituency. He also launched the *Segi Box* campaign, a savings initiative targeting low-income earners.

By promoting a culture of saving, the initiative has uplifted thousands of struggling families and has become a cornerstone of his legacy, Madam Speaker.

His passion for social justice, rooted in his upbringing and personal encounters with injustice, saw him protest over unfair taxes and unjust government policies. For instance, in the year 2015, while still a councillor for Kyebando, at KCCA, Hon. Ssegirinya was arrested at Parliamentary Avenue, very close to this building, for protesting over digital migration by carrying a television set on his head to the office of the then Minister of State for ICT, Hon. Nyombi Thembo. His major concern was the Government’s interference with the right to access to information on the TVs free of charge.

Hon. Ssegirinya argued that it is the Government’s role, world over, to give information to people without any cost,

whereas less privileged Ugandans were to be cut off on air for not buying decoders following the digital migration policy. We appreciate him. Madam Speaker, may the soul of our beloved colleague settle in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The minister in charge of youth and children affairs?

10.06

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (YOUTH AND CHILDREN AFFAIRS) (Mr Balaam Barugahara): Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is sad that we lost a friend. Hon. Ssegirinya was my friend and I will remember him for his tireless advocacy for the rights of the marginalised community, especially his people in Kyebando, his fearless and outspoken criticism of social injustice and human rights abuses.

I will also remember him for his passionate representation of the people of Kyebando and Kawempe in Parliament, his commitment to fighting for the welfare and well-being of his constituents, his unwavering dedication to principles of justice, equality, and freedom, his role as a vocal and influential leader in NUP party, his ability to inspire and mobilise young people from Kyebando to take action and also demand for change, which he never achieved, and his courage in the face of refusal to be silenced or intimidated.

As the Government, on behalf of the Government and as someone who believes and supports everyone’s equality, I apologise for all the mismanagement that could have happened during his life while he was on earth. I believe we should do better going forward. We should allow criticism where need be and I pray that his soul rests in peace. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Meddie?

10.08

MR MUHAMMAD NSEREKO (Independent, Kampala Central Division, Kampala): *Awudu billahi minasetwani rajeem, Bismillahi Rahmani Raheem.* In the name of Allah, most

gracious, most merciful. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, most gracious, most merciful. It is He, the Almighty Allah, who has been explicit in *Surat al-Mulk*, the surah that glorifies his might and it says and I will translate:

“Tabarak Alladhi Bihadilhi Mulk wahuwalakuli shay’in Qadir. Al’ladhi halakal maut,wal’hayat, yabaluakum ayuhum aksana Yamala huwa’Aziz jafur”.

That, “Blessed be to the one Almighty Allah. In His hands rests all the authority and He who is most capable and that it is He, Allah, who has created life and death that all humanity shall endure...” and He says, “shall endure, in order to serve as a test to all of us.”

In many different *surahs* or chapters of the Quran, Allah has been explicit as he spoke about the journey that we are all going to take. He says clearly, “Death is inevitable to all that are there.” It is not a law, because for laws, we can sit here and amend any time, but death is a must that no human being shall evade.

Allah says, “We shall test you with fear, hunger, loss of wealth and loss of life.” Therefore, death is a test, for which test shall only be passed by those who leave behind in perseverance and those that retain patience and do good things. Every passing on of a comrade, of an individual, is a testimony to those that stay behind; that what shall be spoken about you. Hon. Ssegirinya, today you are the topic, *Ya Muhammad Rabban*.

When I knew you as a young man, you were called Richard and you stepped forward and told us, “I have seen the light and I would like to join Islam.” He gave the shahada and he said, “Indeed I believe there is one God that is Allah and I bear witness that Prophet Muhammad is his messenger” and he was welcomed with pure hands.

This pure soul lying here today did not turn back but he did one noble thing; he did not break his umbilical cord from his relatives, because keeping blood relations, even when you change religion, is a sign of worship in Islam. Even when you convert and turn your

back against the people that fed you, the people that raised you, it is a sin in Islam. He did not break that tie with his mother, uncles, brothers, and neither did he do so with his children. Therefore, he lived by actions, trying to induce others to join the path that he joined, but he did not coerce them to see the light.

In all he said, as I saw him as a young man, he was a radio caller - you know these call back people on the radio - and he used to say, “Honourable, one time I would like to be a Member of Parliament.” I told him, “Ssegirinya, it takes steps.” He said he would jump all those steps. He first tried in 2011 and I told him he would not go through. You will bear witness when he stood against Hon. Latif Ssebagala. Then he came back and asked me what happened and I told him that he is fit to be a councillor. Then he said in 2016, he would vie to be a councillor and would heed to my advice. Indeed, he heeded to it. He went and contested and tried to seek the FDC Party ticket to no avail. He came back to me and jokingly said, “I have no ticket.” I told him, “It is not the ticket, it is the people; go to the people.”

By then, he wanted to get the symbol of the clock. He went there and it was not available. On the first nomination day, he came back and said, “I do not have the clock.” I told him, “Go and pick whatever symbol is there” and he chose the table. Then he said, “But I am too short, people will think that I am a joker.” I told him, “Use the table to your advantage, fabricate a table, go to every trading centre and stand on the table and tell the people, when things go wrong, I will stand on this table and you will see me as high as possible passing on your message.”

Indeed, finally, when everyone had realised that Hon. Ssegirinya was taking the vote, the FDC candidate moved around with a microphone saying, “I am Ssegirinya Muhammad, please vote for me. I am the one with the symbol of the key.”

Therefore, Hon. Ssegirinya came back to me and said that there was something wrong; this person is saying he is Ssegirinya Muhammad

but vote for the key - You know the symbol of the key. I told him to get a microphone and go back with a table everywhere and tell them, "It is me, Ssegirinya Muhammad, the one on the table." Indeed, he did so and he came out to be victorious as an Independent for the first for the first time. (*Applause*)

Having arrived at KCCA, one of the lightweight stories, he contested to be Speaker of KCCA. He contested with Hon. Kawalya here and Ssegirinya Muhammad got one vote, which was his vote. Then he said, "Eh, this world is really very funny. Even the people that nominated me did not vote for me." But he said, it does not matter. History will record that a courageous gentleman called Ssegirinya once stood to be Speaker of KCCA and had two nominees but only got one vote, which he was sure was his own vote. Therefore, history must register now that there was a courageous man who took a step and never thought that failure was the end of life. Failing at times is one style of training us to be better.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR NSEREKO: Finally, I thank his political party for having come out boldly to grant him the ticket to run as Member of Parliament for Kawempe North. He deserved it fairly. He went through a lot that we all knew.

However, let me talk about the discretion of court in granting bail, Madam Speaker. I pray and I would like to address this to all politicians. Please, let us not interfere with the works of courts of law in using their discretionary principles in adjudication of court matters as regards matters of bail.

Bail is one of the processes where people acquire a free and fair trial and having this temporary freedom probably would have helped this gentleman go and try to seek medical attention. He would not have gotten lost but finally, we have him here. It is us to talk about it here and then I think we can do better.

I know that there are those that commit crimes and courts will pass judgment on that person

that they should not be in society while others are left to be out and carry on their court matters while having access to doing their work or having temporary freedom.

Therefore, finally, from Allah we came and from Allah we shall all return.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR NSEREKO: May Allah receive your soul and forgive you for whatsoever you did wrong, Hon. Segirinya, and grant you, *Jannatul firdaus*. May peace be upon all of you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Allan -

10.17

MR ALLAN SSEWANYANA (NUP, Makindye Division West, Kampala City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank Parliament for according that gentleman right there, this tribute. I stand to second the motion on the Floor of Parliament to pay tribute to Hon. Ssegirinya Muhammad.

Madam Speaker, the gentleman who is standing there -

THE SPEAKER: Lying -

MR SSEWANYANA: Who is lying there, was my friend, at least in his later days of life. We spent almost two years under incarceration. We talked for all those days about so many things. Prior to the incarceration, I had not spent 20 minutes with him, apart from our politics of the Opposition, sharing dreams of leading this country together.

We would talk about it on radios and political rallies but when I sat with him for two years, I realised that people had another picture of Hon. Ssegirinya yet he was a different person. He was seen to be doing things crafted like comedy, but he was very serious in nature, in doing his things. He was a very intelligent man who could tell you things and those things happen. He was a genuine man who had genuine love for every person he said that he loved.

He was an ardent supporter of change for this nation, not because he disliked those who lead this country in person, but their policies, because he grew up as a poor man in a poor family. He hardly spent two or three years with his father because his father died at a young age and he was a soldier of this Government. That impacted his brain so much; being fatherless and his father dying under unclear circumstances. He tried to come to Kampala through so many means, Madam Speaker, to fight for his dreams.

What disturbed him so much was our incarceration; that after standing on the tables, talking so much to see that he scores that goal he wanted so much; to be a Member of Parliament in this country, there came uncertainties and the fate fell on us.

He said, in his own words that, "What would I want after being a Member of Parliament? I am a poor man from a poor family. I am going to earn close to Shs 25 million - because for him he thought it was to be Shs 25 million - I can now touch Shs 5 million at once. Now what would I want next? But because I wanted to serve my people so well, there might be envy somewhere that I predict as a person." He was someone who would joke, Madam Speaker. He would crack jokes and we would laugh - for almost two years.

But again, I also put my voice on those Members of Parliament who have mentioned it clearly and the public at large that the right to a fair hearing entails a right to bail because everyone is innocent until proven guilty.

This man, after only two days, started complaining of his chronic sickness that he had before incarceration. He wanted to seek medical attention in Germany because he had been in Germany for the same. He had prepared for alternative treatment by a specialist coming from India to Germany in some hospital and that chance was not given to him because he was denied bail.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for your support to this gentleman, especially during all those

times we were under incarceration. But, I again cry to this Government that today, Hon. Ssegirinya is lying there. Everyone knows that the Government cannot go away from this because if he had got that medication earlier, even the Government would not have spent Shs 900 million. It would be him to facilitate his own medication and he would be alive today.

However, because of that and the politics that we have in this country, that gentleman is lying there. His children are too young to lose a father who was very courageous, who has gone through hell to have something on the table for his children and the mother.

Madam Speaker, it should come from all voices of courage, whatever party you belong to, to call for better leadership of this country in a united way.

We shared and talked so much and I know that you went to God as an unsatisfied man because it was not your time to go, but because of politics, you have gone. Rest in peace, Hon. Ssegirinya. Fight harder. *(Applause)*

10.24

MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimbiri County, Kisoro): Madam Speaker, thank you very much. Honourable colleagues, what we forget is that in humanity and for every situation that happens, you must learn a lesson that helps you live better. If we know that we should fear God, we should know what God wants, which is not easy. That is why we should always respect one another.

The second thing is life. For people who study about life, everybody has his own life, as long as we know that there is God and there is life. There is also life after death. I believe that Hon. Ssegirinya, who is lying there, feared God.

As Members of Parliament and as Government, we should ask that whatever we do, does it please God? If we do things that do not please God, then we may not have space where we believe that we shall go and life will be better. Thank you very much. May his soul rest in peace.

10.26

MR DICKSONS KATESHUMBWA (NRM, Sheema Municipality, Sheema): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I stand here to support the motion to pay tribute to a colleague who has passed on. I would like to thank you, Madam Speaker, for being our leader because you have been there for Members of Parliament in both hard and good times. *(Applause)* You have not abandoned your Members.

I extend my condolences to the people of Kawempe whom he has been leading, and to the parents and relatives. Death is non-partisan; we have lost a colleague. I thank Members who have come to pay tribute because it is our journey, regardless of our disagreements on this earth.

I did not know Hon. Ssegirinya much. I just met him in Parliament here but if you look at the impact he made on the people of Kawempe and all of us who followed the news yesterday, I think very few of us can summon the kind of attention that he received.

In one way, I thank my friend, the honourable minister, Hon. Balaam, for the statement you have made. You acknowledged that there could have been some learning points for us that we, as the people of Uganda, should pick, so that we can live in harmony amidst our disagreements and be respectful to one another.

I thank him for the work he did and to the people of Kawempe, you will remember him for the good things he has done. Let us continue to be there for each other, as Members of Parliament, because we represent the people of Uganda. May his soul rest in peace.

THE SPEAKER: Hajji Iddi, Baka, then we will have Hon. Mpuuga.

10.28

MR IDDI ISABIRYE (NRM, Bunya County South, Mayuge): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Honourable colleagues, I join the rest in supporting the motion to pay tribute –

THE SPEAKER: Let us have two minutes each.

MR IDDI ISABIRYE: ...to our colleague, Hon. Ssegirinya. On behalf of the people of Bunya County South, Busoga and on my own behalf, I rise to pay tribute to the distinguished servant of the people.

Personally, I did not spend a lot of time here with Hon. Ssegirinya. I surely do not have a lot of history and a story to tell about him but I have, just like any other Ugandan, been following Hon. Ssegirinya as a common man of the people, a servant of the people and a councillor, just like the motion has stated his service to his people.

Madam Speaker, being born is an opportunity, but death is a must. Death is a journey that has to be travelled by everyone. Now that Hon. Ssegirinya has travelled his journey, we are here today paying tribute to what he did for his country. I say this on behalf of my people that may his soul rest in eternal peace. *Inna lillahi wainnailayhi raji'un.*

10.30

MR STEPHEN BAKA (NRM, Bukooli County North, Bugiri): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to join you, the House and the country in paying tribute to a son of Uganda, Hon. Ssegirinya, who passed on.

I never got an opportunity to interact with Hon. Ssegirinya, but I was a keen follower of all his works from around 2016, after he had become a councillor. I particularly remember all the instances where whenever Dr Kiiza Besigye would appear anywhere in the country, Hon. Ssegirinya would be right behind him at any function.

That captured my attention, not because I am a supporter of Besigye but I wondered about a young man who was passionate about supporting his party, to the extent that whether the function was in or outside Buganda, Hon. Ssegirinya would be there.

We will miss a young man who was very vibrant and full of dreams. He had a passion and love for his people that is unmatched. The people of Kawempe have lost an icon. It is so

sad that he passed on very young; he had big dreams.

I thank Hon. Katuntu for putting it very correctly and rightly that in this country if you dream, you can reach it. That is Hon. Ssegirinya who dreamed big and he reached Parliament. It is so sad that we have lost him.

Finally, Madam Speaker, thank you for your dedication to this House and to your Members. We are so grateful that we have you – *(Applause)* - and we thank you for affording an opportunity – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Switch it on.

MR BAKA: I thank you finally for granting an opportunity and for convincing the family because Muslims normally do not allow this. But you convinced the family to allow the country to pay tribute to the honourable member. We are grateful that he has been brought here and granted the tribute that he deserves. Thank you so much. May his soul rest in peace.

THE SPEAKER: One thing is Hon. Ssegirinya was a very good fan of women. Can I, therefore, first hear from the Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA) then I come over? UWOPA -

10.33

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. My condolences to the family, the people of Kawempe, this Parliament, the people of Masaka and Uganda as a whole.

Hon. Ssegirinya has spent a very short time in this House. Yesterday, when I was watching NTV, it was more of a documentary, watching his works and the short time that he was actually in this House. I kept wondering; supposing Hon. Ssegirinya had not been in prison, what kind of person would he have been? What more would we have seen? What could he have done beyond what we have watched in just this short time?

It saddened me that the people who elected him did not see much of what he would have done for them. I applaud and thank him for his dedication and support to the women.

In putting up that health facility at Kawempe, he also ensured that every mother that gave birth at the facility went home with a savings box – “Ssegi Bob” – I believe with some start-up capital; that was support for a woman.

I also thank him -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, clap for Hon. Ssegi on that. *(Applause)* Who among you has done that?

MS OPENDI: Even in putting up that, he encouraged mothers to deliver at the health facility and this was free of charge - that is support to a mother.

I also watched him, on several occasions, taking - *(Interjection)* - can I just conclude? I watched him taking food to the vulnerable and most of them were women. I applaud and thank him for that and I want to really tell this Parliament that we make laws: can these laws be respected? Can these laws be implemented? Why should we see people being tortured when we have the anti-torture Act? It is clear that there is torture and this law must be implemented.

Access to healthcare is a right that should not be denied. Madam Speaker, arresting people - can we plead with the police? People should be arrested, but with dignity. It hurts me to see people being thrown under those chairs on pick-up trucks, irrespective of who they are.

As Philly Bongole Lutaaya said, “Today it is me; tomorrow it is someone else.” Let us stand up and defend the Constitution, but also point out some of these wrong things that are being done. The people who are torturing are not the Government. These are individuals who must be held accountable.

With those few remarks, rest in peace, Hon Ssegirinya.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, all of us belong to the Government so, if you generalise that it is the Government, then it is you, me and everybody. These are individuals. Do you get it?

Let us have Hon. Mpuuga, Hon. Hassan - there is somebody who was very close to Hon. Ssegirinya. Where is Hon. Nsanja?

Do not worry. You are all going to speak. Honourable members, if I was not chairing, maybe I would be the best person to give an account of "Hon. Update".

10.37

MR MATHIAS MPUUGA (NUP, Nyendo-Mukungwe Division, Masaka City): Much obliged, Madam Speaker. I join you and the House -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, listen.

MR MPUUGA: ... in paying tribute to our departed brother and comrade, Hon. Ssegirinya. I extend my sympathies and those of the people of Masaka to the family – children and the mother, in a special way, because she had this special attachment to her son that I witnessed and touched over time.

I thought I would say much here but then, on reflection, I thought it is not necessary anyway. I am going to just make a few remarks in recognition of the legacy of this gentleman lying before us.

We do not choose the time we bow out; it is not in our space. I have been scanning through the commentaries relating to his demise and you can tell that there is not a single phrase, statement or word that would afford him a fitting epitaph. Probably, his life has been a cocktail.

It was a short life. We could not muster exactly where his journey could end but, like I said, we do not choose when we bow out. He never chose this.

I closely followed, on behalf of Parliament then, as the Leader of the Opposition, when he was arrested. I followed him and his brother, Hon. Ssewanyana, through the challenges in prison, falling sick and the troubles we went through to secure clearance from the Medical Board for his treatment away from that in prison and from within the country.

I want to thank you, Madam Speaker, for the effort. At one stage, the Speaker had to do a manhunt for members of the Medical Board to convene and clear the treatment of Hon. Ssegirinya; it was tough - (*Applause*) - and we were losing time and he had to be driven to the tarmac for emergency treatment. Certainly, his illness and eventual demise exposed our systems.

The state system is weak and porous, incapable of a coherent investigation to give a decent man justice and decent prosecution.

The entire exercise in which he was being prosecuted was tainted with a lot of inconsistencies and you could feel a sense of, you know, revenge and retribution with this whole thing – and, for me, that should not be part of our life.

I am glad that the honourable minister for the youth has made a commitment. I want to see you follow through with that commitment that – Madam Speaker, I beg your pardon that I make this statement - the hunting and hounding of the Opposition must cease.

Hon. Ssegirinya had many friends and I want to thank those who stood with him in prison and hospital. Even when he left prison – and some friends were questioning how he was released, yet they knew he was very sick. That, for me, was inhuman.

Secondly, I would like to thank the medical team at Nsambya Hospital – Dr Ssekitoleko and team as well as the team at Rubaga Hospital – Sr Dr Grace Nanyondo and team. They did a great job – and, of course, the team at Aga Khan Hospital.

I visited Hon. Ssegirinya at Aga Khan and I thought we had lost him, but the mother stayed strong – and the young man called Kasagga who was taking care of him very closely. I found them desperate and the doctor asked me: “But, can’t you manage this in Uganda?” I felt a sense of shame on my part.

As I conclude, he has left us and his departure has exposed the pettiness, callousness, emptiness and insensitivity of politics and politicians. We need to learn from both sides of the House.

We need to appreciate that our sense of humanness should never disappear regardless of the disagreements that we find ourselves in. What became of our sense of humanity? What became of our Africanness that suffering and sickness should never be exploited – used for politicking, used to milk politics and political space? While this man was suffering - I am concluding – we were jostling for his position in Kawempe.

What happened to us, as politicians? As he was ill in the hospital – and I made sure that all those who were supposed to know, got to know - they never visited. They were plotting for his position in Kawempe. This is very callous of politicians. It must stop! We do not choose when we go. Our sense of sensitivity should never get away because one of us is suffering. We must feel for each other – and, this, I am saying to both sides of the House.

To Hon. Ssegirinya, you fought your battle. You did your bit with humility and little in terms of exposition and capacity. We shall escort you not as a villain but as a victor in these very small spaces in which we struggle to make a difference. Sleep well, my brother.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Hassan?

10.44

MR HASSAN KIRUMIRA (NUP, Katikamu County South, Luwero): Thank you, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: You will all speak as long as you keep time.

MR KIRUMIRA: For this chance to eulogise the loss of our gallant fighter, Hon. Ssegirinya Muhammad. It is a big loss for Ugandans, family and particularly our party NUP. I condole with our party president, and we appreciate his efforts in guiding and spotting talent of this nature.

It is a sad day, in our politics, in our party, the Government has spoken massively about their absence here. They never liked Hon. Ssegirinya when he was alive and it was going to be surprising if they loved him in his death. Thank you, Government, for being honest. Hon. Ssegirinya passed away fighting for a cause and that cause is still here for us who are still surviving.

He was an activist fighting for the well-being of his people and the people of Kawempe North will be forever happy with the contribution of Hon. Ssegirinya to that part of Uganda and in Uganda in general. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: One thing I should tell you, Members, the country has lost Hon. Ssegirinya. Yes, Hajati?

10.46

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I join colleagues in paying tribute to our colleague and I am surprised that we are not ashamed to come out and brag about being part of the Government, while we know that many times, the Executive has arrested our people unfairly, while we look on helplessly. Even when we do not believe in them, we just look on helplessly.

We know, Members of Parliament many times, give out money to people who approach us. The Government trumps up charges against our colleagues just because someone gave money to someone and then they say he sponsors the killing of people - Shs 50,000. We should be ashamed to own up to such things and say we are part of the Government because I know we, here, do not condone that as Parliament.

I would like to remind colleagues, probably some of you missed this, that the man lying before here, while he lived, one of his highlights - I am being quick because of the time - he led a team of people that were mourning the loss of a child to a father that had deserted a mother with his child and dropped the body to a father and told him, "you deserted the child all his lifetime, now take care of the body." That is the man that is lying here.

He associated with people through thick and thin, whatever the circumstances that there were. This Parliament should disassociate itself from the ills of the Executive. They arrest people that they know are innocent. They only arrested him and incarcerated him just to silence him. They knew he spoke so loudly outside and they knew how dangerous he would have been if he had been left in Parliament. He said we should not say that he is going to rest in peace. He willed we say that he should continue fighting hard. Comrade, fight hard. We shall fight on. We are not going to rest until we secure the victor's crown.

THE SPEAKER: One of the friends of Hon. Ssegirinya, Hon. Nsanja. I know why I am saying a friend.

10.49

MR PATRICK NSANJA (Independent, Ntenjeru County South, Kayunga): Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, yesterday when we received the disheartening news of the passing of one of our colleagues, Hon. Ssegirinya Muhammad, it was unfortunate and sad. Madam Speaker, I take the opportunity to thank you so much, together with the Parliamentary Commission, for organising this special sitting where we are paying tribute to our colleague.

Colleagues, death is a fact of life and when it has come, it has come. We cannot run away from it but I want to take this opportunity – maybe before - because of time to extend our heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the bereaved family, NUP, Kawempe North constituents and also the Parliament of Uganda upon the loss of our brother.

Allow me to share with you two experiences in Hon. Ssegirinya's life. When the honourable right here came to Parliament, he was surrounded by several petitions regarding his academic qualifications and I closely monitored the matter because I was a friend. I want to go on record to thank the Office of the LOP which was occupied by the immediate former Leader of the Opposition, Rt Hon. Mathias Mpuuga, the Office of the Speaker, and the Buganda caucus where I am the General-Secretary. Indeed we did a lot regarding keeping Hon. Ssegirinya as a Member of Parliament here because then he was surrounded by so many petitions, as I said, regarding his academic qualifications.

The experience I want to share with you is that Hon. Ssegirinya - and I want to allude to that fact, he was a bold and courageous person. When he was taken to court regarding academic qualifications, I, for one, even when the matter related to academic qualifications, did not touch his academic documents. He kept giving excuses until a technicality came up. You remember he was served in Kitalya prison and the issue was whether or not service can be done through a prison officer and not to the person.

Together with the lawyers, we confirmed and experienced a fact that is unbelievable because the issue was on academic grounds but we were diverted from that ground to a technicality. That was his boldness because the ground was he lacked papers regarding the requirement for his nomination but I can tell you, honourable Members, that Hon. Ssegirinya was a bold man. I remember thinking he was a comedian until the Secretary-General, Counsel Lewis Rubongoya, confirmed to me that he was just a brilliant man because he also was following up on the matter.

Madam Speaker, we have lost a person who is courageous to that extent. He has kept in Parliament. The substantive matter of the petition was not handled and the matter was decided on a technicality. This is the man lying here. All the grounds, particularly the one of academic - we did not even touch his senior four, senior six, or his academic documents.

He kept telling us, “Hon. Nsanja, the issue is not the academic grounds but the technicality. I was in prison when these guys served me. They served the prisons’ officer and not Ssegirinya. Argue out that, not papers or qualifications. Be serious.”

The other area of experience that I would want to share with you, Madam Speaker, if time allows, is when Hon. Ssegirinya got some health relief from the hospital and was discharged. When he came out, he insisted and he kept telling us that he would stand in 2026. Some of us were worried and probably praying for him to finish the term, because the health challenges were really very big. He kept insisting that he would stand and win.

When we talked to the family members, they also tried to convince him. “Look at your health, not the constituents.” However, Hon. Ssegirinya was very bold to the extent that he was even thinking about the 2026 election. This is the man.

The last appeal I want to make to the family members here - I am always sincere with myself when I decide to – is that the people of Kawempe North have been very patient with Hon. Ssegirinya and indeed, he was very appreciative. They never demanded for his representation here because almost all the time, he was in hospital. They never petitioned for whatever reason.

Usually, in such circumstances, where there is a by-election, you would find the family sitting to try and forge a way such that they get a member, probably, to take on the term and finish it. I humbly appeal to the family that just in case such a thing comes up, let us be holy and give the people of Kawempe North, as well as Ugandans, a chance to decide their fate on the representation. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. God bless you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, we have a condolence message from the Parliamentary Sacco. Enclosed is Shs 1 million. I also have a condolence message from the Deputy Speaker of Parliament.

In the VIP Gallery, we have the former Member of Parliament for Kawempe, Al-Hajji Latif Ssebagala. He was here with us in the 10th Parliament.

Hon. Ssewungu, Hon. Asuman, and the Chairperson, Buganda Parliamentary Caucus.

10.57

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am also in support of the motion. During the time I have been here, at one time, a former Attorney-General was brought to Parliament –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, listen to Hon. Ssewungu.

MR SSEWUNGU: ... was brought for Parliament to pay tribute to him but his body could not access the Chamber. I want to thank you very much for that courage you have put up to have the body of Ssegirinya brought here. *(Applause)*

When the Leader of Government Business is moving motions of this nature, normally, they give the cause of death. They give the medical history. For example, when talking about Hon. Ssegirinya, what happened when he went to prison up to the time he was bailed out?

It is not a surprise - that is why I am thanking you of course. What would the Prime Minister give us here as Leader of Government Business? Her absence here is not a challenge on us. For the Members of Parliament I have been with since we began the 11th Parliament, ever since these two Members were arrested, we have always been together. Honourable members, I want to thank you for that spirit across the board. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker. I do not know how it happened that my former boss, the LOP, Hon. Mathias Mpuuga, my boss now and the Chief Whip, assigned me duties to see how Hon. Ssegirinya’s papers would be processed. I did that work very diligently under your guidance.

I cannot forget thanking a gentleman called Mr Arthur Mugabi. He has always been in the opposition. He was among those people who were helping us to move all documents around. The Clerk to Parliament - I used to call him several times about the challenges and the documents for Hon. Ssegirinya. The mother of Hon. Ssegirinya and the legal team, Hon. Shamim Malende, who is not around - they did a commendable job.

Madam Speaker, I remember when I came to your office at the time of the arrest. I cannot [HON. MEMBER: "Madam Speaker, we are not comfortable."]

THE SPEAKER: You do not switch on the microphone and start talking.

MR SSEWUNGU: I cannot say what exactly happened when I came to you, but at least we did good work. I spent all that time - At least every week, I used to visit these people in prison and it was very painful.

Hon. Ssegirinya was a friend. Hon. Muhammad Nsereko – I do not know where he is - is the one who made us learn about Hon. Ssegirinya in the Ninth Parliament. Whenever we were travelling out for the East African games, Hon. Ssegirinya would move with Hon. Nsereko. That is how, I think, he got interested in joining politics and others – (*Interruption*)

THE SPEAKER: Clerk, whoever is drilling something must stop. The House is sitting.

MR SSEWUNGU: Lastly, Madam Speaker, I want to thank the ministers who have endeavoured to be here. Thank you very much. That is courageous because this kind of – it cuts across. May his soul rest in peace. I cannot go beyond.

11.01

MR ASUMAN BASALIRWA (JEEMA, Bugiri Municipality, Bugiri): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the Muslim Parliamentary Caucus that I chair, I extend our deepest condolences to the family and also stand in support of the motion.

Madam Speaker, I will not claim to know Hon. Ssegirinya so much but what I can confirm is that we have been together for the last 12 years. When Hon. Ssegirinya converted to Islam, he came to my law firm. I am the one who made the Deed Poll that made sure he changes his name from Richard to Muhammad. When he undertook to join political activism, he knew he needed legal rescue and for all the time that he has had troubles with police and the courts, even before he came to Parliament with Hon. Ssewanyana there, they were very good clients in our law firm.

When Hon. Ssegirinya wanted to advance his education, because I had lectured in the Islamic University in the Faculty of Law, it is I who advised him to go and study from Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU). I even helped to secure for him an admission. I am also aware that you have also been contributing to his tuition.

However, how shall we remember Hon. Ssegirinya? There are two things and I am happy that now the minister for national guidance is here. The only contribution we can make for Hon. Ssegirinya is to withdraw all court cases against the remaining accused persons. (*Applause*)

I know that under the law, when an accused person dies, automatically the case will terminate but remember, he had co-accused and one of them is our colleague here. It is very apparent that up to now - and the others. They are, I think, about seven or eight. Therefore, the only way we can give justice to Hon. Ssegirinya is to withdraw, unconditionally, all the charges against the co-accused. As we have said, there is no evidence against that, and I am glad that the honourable minister was here to apologise.

Secondly, it is important for us to appreciate where Hon. Ssegirinya has come from and those who stood with him. When we were in popular resistance against life presidency under the leadership of Hon. Muwanga-Kivumbi. Hon. Ssegirinya was among the people who were amplifying our voices at that time because we

were opposed to the removal of the age limit. While you people here were saying it should go. It was the Hon. Ssegirinyas at the time.

Hon. Ssegirinya has been my area Member of Parliament (MP), because one of my wives and children live in Kawempe, and he has been one of my MPs, going to the same mosque in Kawempe Mbogo. Therefore, as a constituent, we have lost a very meaningful, contributing Member of Parliament.

Madam Speaker, thank you for the support you have given. I am aware of the dynamics that led to bringing Hon. Ssegirinya here. We have had to compromise some of the Islamic principles, but I know you stood with the family and we are very grateful. As we usually say, "*Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un*" (from Allah we came and to him, we return).

There is a history, and that history, briefly; Allah says, "*Give glad tidings to those when they befall such a calamity, remember that from Allah we came and to him we return.*" As chairperson of the Muslim Caucus, I would dedicate to that aspect why it is so. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much. After Hon. Kivumbi, we shall have "*Ssabakuristo*", the representative of the Catholics.

11.06

MR MUHAMMAD MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala): Madam Speaker, thank you for this opportunity. On my behalf and that of the Buganda Parliamentary Caucus, Hon. Ssegirinya, up to last month, with all his difficulties, was subscribing to the organisation.

Madam Speaker, a lot has been said about Hon. Ssegirinya, that I do not need to repeat. However, how did Hon. Ssegirinya become a Member of Parliament and why is he here? We had just started a young party, barely five months, and the party was faced with a difficult choice in Kawempe North. The incumbent MP, my brother, Hon. Latif Ssebagala, was also seeking re-election.

The organising secretary of the party, my brother, Mr Suleiman Kidandala, was also then seeking the party ticket with the humble Hon. Ssegirinya. The party had a choice to make, but in one of the discussions - I hope the party president will excuse me for doing this - (*Interjection*) - Robert Kyagulanyi Sentamu of NUP.

In one of the discussions together with the Secretary-General and the leadership of the party, we asked a fundamental question: What is NUP for; what does it represent and whom does it serve? It boiled down that NUP was for the downtrodden - for the commonest of the people.

We asked, "Who are the people that represent them?" There was no debate; Hon. Ssegirinya represented what the best of our party represented and because of that, a decision was taken to give him the party ticket. From that, he became a Member of Parliament.

We would like to thank the president of NUP and the leadership of NUP for taking a bold decision that finally gave us Hon. Ssegirinya.

I have known him since he was a young man. We trained quite a number of young people. I was asking Hon. Basalirwa whether he attended our training every Saturday by then at the Democratic Party, offices. Many MPs here had gone through that.

That is why NUP has a school to train young people. There was an attempt by the authorities that be to close that school. The only way we can have more of the Hon. Ssegirinyas is to pick them up, train, mentor, and give them to the country called Uganda. We hope to continue doing the same.

Lastly, Madam Speaker, let us be courageous enough. Maybe Hon. Ssegirinya would have lived longer had the authorities and especially-let us be bold, had the President not intimidated the Judiciary. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. He boldly intimidated the Judiciary to the extent that the judicial officials feared to give bail to Hon. Ssegirinya and his likes.

Let us speak true to Gen. Museveni, let us speak true to the power that be, that what is given in the Constitution cannot be taken away by declaration. Uganda cannot return to the days of Idi Amin. There are attempts now to take away bond, bail, for whatever nature, courtesy of the pronouncements of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, and we must say, enough is enough. Hon. Ssegirinya, rest in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I want to - where Hon. Ssegirinya came from before he joined NUP. Counsel Yusuf - I will come to *Ssabakuristo*. Counsel Yusuf - I am going to give you people to speak.

11.10

MR YUSUF NSIBAMBI (FDC, Mawokota County South, Mpigi): Thank you, Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: When I tell you I know Hon. Ssegirinya more than some of you -

MR NSIBAMBI: Madam Speaker, thank you very much for this opportunity. I also condole with the family on behalf of the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) party where I am the whip and where we believe that we nurtured and mentored Hon. Ssegirinya.

Madam Speaker has rightly pointed out; we can claim Hon. Ssegirinya as the Opposition. At FDC, we can firmly say that he passed through our hands. He was part of the young activists who were trained to bring change for the betterment of this Country. Most times, you would see Hon. Ssegirinya behind all pictures where Dr Besigye was leading that crusade.

I can say, as the Deputy President then, and the head of the youth as their patron, that Hon. Ssegirinya was always humble and obedient to all instructions of change. Without any pay, he was volunteering, with young men like Walid. These are people you could call on and say, "Please go do this, do not do this", and they were obedient.

Therefore, for the country and those seeking change, it is a very big loss. However,

Hon. Ssegirinya has not died in vain. All his shortcomings, especially academic, notwithstanding, he was always available for the poor and needy. In fact, when he converted to Islam, I can firmly say to my boss, Hon. Asuman, that he consulted me and another Hajji called Matovu in Wandegeya. He said, "I would like to convert to Islam because this faith is for the poor and needy." I said, "That cannot be the only consideration. You should also think about the hereafter." He said, "No, let me start with that".

Therefore, when he started that school, he also contacted me, through a doctor called Dr Umar, who works at that hospital opposite the Golf Course near Fairway. He then said, "The little money that I have gotten, I would like to put it in this hospital for the poor."

Like the Rt Hon. Speaker pointed out, we failed to address that. We are all seeking votes for self-aggrandisement.

However, you can see a man with a poor background but thinking about the community. *Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un*. On behalf of the FDC, we shall miss him. Nonetheless, we shall carry on with the crusade that he anticipated to see and promise that change will come. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Francis and then Hon. Lucy.

11.14

MR FRANCIS ZAAKE (NUP, Mityana Municipality, Mityana): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The man lying before us here - now the late Hon. Ssegirinya - it is indeed very painful to the country at large that we have lost such a darling of the people.

Hon. Ssegirinya was a very close friend because there are very many things we had in common. He was an activist and I am one as well.

THE SPEAKER: And you are still one. *(Laughter)*

MR ZAAKE: Madam Speaker, it was unfortunate that this morning the Government was still unable to stand with Hon. Ssegirinya because we all believe and know that during his political life, especially as a Member of Parliament, there had been persecution from this Government.

However, I need to beseech and say to the Government that there is still time. You can stand with Hon. Ssegirinya in just two ways. First and foremost, to drop the charges, but most importantly, to bail out all the political prisoners incarcerated in prisons in Uganda. *(Applause)*

For the two years Hon. Ssegirinya and Hon. Sewanyana spent in prison, I put down all my nice suits, just like the one I am wearing today. I decided to wear “free all political prisoners” written on all my clothes.

I call upon the Government to free all political prisoners and bail them out as they are being tried to stop what we call, “the persecution.” That is very simple.

Most importantly, Gen. Museveni can still do something very great for the people of Uganda because of this reason; Ugandans believe Hon. Ssegirinya died because of Mr Museveni intimidating the Judiciary not to give him bail. Everyone believes that. Therefore, let Gen. Museveni give Ugandans the most important gift and not stand in 2026. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, as we pay our tributes, the one thing we should not forget - just like the Leader of the Opposition said, is that Hon. Ssegirinya had a long illness. Let us not forget that. Maybe there was a lapse somewhere, but he had a long illness.

Hon. Lucy, Hon. Kawalya and then I also come to this side – you are going to speak.

11.18

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to pay

tribute to a colleague. My deepest condolences to the family. I would like to speak about two issues:

Firstly, what do I learn from this friend of ours? When God gives you an opportunity, use it to the fullest. You do not need 100 years to make a change and that is exactly what Hon. Muhammad did. *(Applause)*

Secondly, I would like to repeat the words of the Archbishop Emeritus, John Baptist Odama. On 14 December 2024, when he was celebrating his 50th priestly anniversary in Gulu Cathedral, this was his appeal to the Government of Uganda; that in the interest of peace in this country, release political prisoners who have been in prison without proper trial. These were his words. When you go back, you can watch this video. This was an appeal from the man of peace himself.

On that day, he also launched a very important book entitled, “Stop Fighting, Start Talking.” How I wish as a country, we would talk more and stop fighting; we would have less death.

I know my brother had an illness but if he was properly helped, maybe, in time, he would not be where he is.

I personally visited some of the political prisoners in Kitalya and I am telling you, if you are not strong-hearted, you will not stay there for long. None of us wants to be there and I pray that none of us ends up there.

What you do for yourself - actually, we should practice what we call self-love. If you do not want it to be done to you, do not do it to somebody else. As a Catholic, I am proud of my brother. Yes, he converted to Islam but I am reliably informed -

THE SPEAKER: But the whole family is Catholic.

MS LUCY AKELLO: Yes, that is what I was coming to. He accepted that the rest of the family can maintain - and that, for me, is the spirit of ecumenism and harmony in the family.

May God bless you and as a Catholic, I think Archangel Michael has just recruited an army man. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. In the VIP Gallery, we have Hon. Akol Rose Okullu, a Member of the East African Legislative Assembly and she is also my very good voter. Hon. Kawalya?

11.22

MR ABUBAKER KAWALYA (NUP, Rubaga Division North, Kampala): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to pay tribute -

THE SPEAKER: It is still your people who are speaking. Why don't you sit down?

MR KAWALYA: I rise to pay tribute to our fallen comrade whom I got to know in 2007 through activism. We used to share a lot but again, I also got the opportunity to serve with him at City Hall.

When we had just joined in 2016, he was a member of the Committee on Physical Planning, which I was chairing at the time, and it was always fun. We joined KCCA when it had a lot of challenges, most especially when it came to trade order.

There was a time when the then Executive Director of KCCA, Jennifer Musisi, wanted to send off all the boys who were operating on the streets of Kampala, yet the Government had no plan to relocate them. We fought tirelessly with him. For those who remember, that is the period when he turned himself into a market vendor.

He had passion for the common man, no wonder, God had to pay him. I want to thank the Almighty God who turned Hon. Ssegirinya from the lowest of the low. We used to share a lot and we had many issues in common. One of them is that we both lost our dear fathers when we were still very young.

His commitment to fighting for freedom for this country was real. For those who think that Hon. Ssegirinya was a comedian, they

are wrong. He wanted to see a new Uganda. *(Applause)*

My message goes to the Government, because we all know what transpired. Hon. Ssegirinya went to prison many times. He was not charged with theft, he was not charged with defilement, but he was always being charged for fighting for the common man.

I call upon all leaders in this country to put our country first the way Hon. Ssegirinya has always been doing. We are going to miss him, most especially as the people of Kampala.

Lastly, Madam Speaker, when we were contesting for KCCA speakership for the first time, I contested against him. However, he never had any personal vendetta against me. We stayed friends, and I recall that even after the elections, he approached me, conceded and said that he wanted to serve on my council.

We trusted him with being the chairperson of the public health committee. For those who remember him, he spent almost a month running to all places of Kampala, celebrating how he was appointed as the chairperson of the standing committee on public health.

We are going to miss you. May your soul rest in eternal peace. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Let us have Hon. Nambooze, Hon. Kinobere, Hon. Macho, Hon. Ibanda, Hon. "Pro-Poor" and the minister.

11.26

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE (NUP, Mukono Municipality, Mukono): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand to support the motion before this House and I want to appreciate you for appointing this day and time to give Parliament a moment to send off our brother with honour.

Madam Speaker, I stand here as one of the MPs who have been sick most of this term. And, I want to thank you, Madam Speaker, for standing with us and making sure that we get treatment, both locally and internationally. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, some people think that it is fun to travel for treatment, especially people outside there. As much as we sympathise with Ugandans who cannot afford to go for specialised treatment outside the country, I want to tell colleagues that it is very difficult and challenging to be seeking treatment outside one's country.

In certain areas, you are greatly limited by the fact that not in every other locality where you seek treatment from, people understand English and it is not easy to leave one's family and go and camp in a foreign country. People end up mocking and demonising us, including colleagues, Madam Speaker. That is why I want to thank you, specifically for standing with us and – (*Interjection*) - just one moment.

Madam Speaker, having said that, I also want to remind this House that we passed money to construct Lubowa Hospital. We had been told that that work would be completed in two years. It is now several years later, and Lubowa Hospital still remains a dream. There are many other Ugandans who lack specialised treatment but it is very difficult for one to go through the Medical Council to get the money – and even just the element of getting an airline that accepts to transport a sick person from Uganda is very difficult.

I request colleagues not to join the President in his quest to abolish police bonds and court bail. The presumption of innocence should always remain because, Madam Speaker, it is very sad when you have to battle a disease while at the same time battling for your freedom.

A whole medical doctor from the prisons gave Hon. Ssegirinya a recommendation that “If he was not let out of the prison he would suffer consequences that would be fatal”. It is so sad that even at one time, these people were released and then kidnapped back to the prison. I think this is one moment where you people in the Government should stand up and say “sorry”.

I understand the Muslims, when they are going to be buried, they even call those people - (*Member timed out.*)

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kinobere?

11.30

MR HERBERT KINOBERE (NRM, Kibuku County, Kibuku): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the people of Kibuku County, I join my colleagues and the entire country as we pay tribute to our fallen colleague, Hon. Ssegirinya.

Madam Speaker, personally, I knew Hon. Ssegirinya the moment we joined the 11th Parliament. Initially, I followed his political issues, because he was my area MP in Kawempe, much as I do not represent Kawempe.

Madam Speaker, when we came here, Hon. Ssegirinya asked me – in fact, that day I was with Hon. Bashir. He asked: “Hon. Kinobere, I hear you have a hospital. I would like to put up a small hospital for my people.” I was like: isn't this the way of Hon. Ssegirinya - because I have been following you? He said: “No, I want to come and visit your hospital; I want to benchmark.”

I was not hesitant. He visited my hospital. When he came to my hospital, he said: “I want something simple. This is too big for me. I want something where people can come and get free services – where women can come and get antenatal services – because sometimes our Government hospitals are congested.” I told him he could borrow a leaf and adjust accordingly.

I want to thank Hon. Ssegirinya. He went ahead and came up with a very simple facility, just in Kyebando here. He even asked me: “Come and visit my facility.” Indeed, I went and visited that facility. It was a very simple setup, fully licensed and with qualified health workers.

Madam Speaker, people who were going to the facility were not only the Opposition, but it was about service delivery.

Therefore, I pray that whichever technical person was managing that facility, we should not kill it. Let it remain there to serve our people. Sickness has no borders.

Madam Speaker, we continue to pray that his soul rests in eternal peace. Thank you.

11.32

MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia): Madam Speaker and my colleagues –

THE SPEAKER: We are going to reduce one minute.

MR MACHO: I will speak in Busia style. I join my colleagues and the rest of the country to pay tribute to the lost hero. Hon. Ssegirinya was a great friend because he had character of the people of Busia border. *(Laughter)* I would say so because he was a leader who had qualities that voters want.

Madam Speaker, you have given me one minute but in Busia, heroes do not die. Hon. Ssegirinya, Hon. *Update*, I want you to update God about this situation. That Uganda is a country which, in this century, is still talking about denying our people bail and bond.

Hon. Ssegirinya, the second update to God, tell him that this is a country which is still taking civilians to military courts. *(Applause)*

Hon. Ssegirinya, update number three, report to God how you have been belonging to a mingled political party which is not organised *(Laughter)*.

Lastly, I want you to request God to bless the Speaker and the Commissioners for the support they have given you. I also request God to allow the Speaker to be the second National Vice Chairperson for our party because of her good heart.

Lastly, Madam Speaker, words uttered by people when they are alive must be taken seriously, even after death. Hon. Ssegirinya, when he was still alive, there are some people he swore should not be at his grave. Those people are now crying more than the relatives of Ssegirinya. Moreover, before he died, Hon. Ssegirinya told them, “you authored a letter saying I am not sick, do not step on my grave”. *(Interjections)*

THE SPEAKER: Let us have order.

MR MACHO: The words of Ssegirinya must be taken seriously.

THE SPEAKER: Can you all sit down? Yes.

MR MACHO: I seek your protection. When Hon. Ssegirinya was still sick, there are words he spoke, and I want those words to be respected at his grave.

Hon. Ssegirinya listed some people in his party that they should never step on his grave because they authored a letter saying that he is pretending that he is sick. *(Interjections)* These people should not step on Hon. Ssegirinya’s grave because I saw them yesterday crying more. Why are they crying more than the relatives of Ssegirinya? Why are they crying, Madam Speaker?

I, therefore, request the Imams who will lead the prayers to banish – *(Member timed out)*.

11.36

MR IBANDA RWEMULIKYA (Independent, Ntoroko County, Ntoroko): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. On my own behalf and on behalf of the people of Ntoroko and Rwenzori region, I also join colleagues in paying tribute to our fallen comrade, Hon. Ssegirinya.

I would like to thank you in a special way for standing with your Members. You are a very exceptional leader in this country. May God bless you.

THE SPEAKER: Amen.

MR RWEMULIKYA: Two, I joined Parliament in the 10th Parliament. I thank God that now, I am in the 11th Parliament.

When I met Hon. Ssegirinya, the man is humble, respectful – I did not know him because I used to see him on TV, I knew that he is chaotic. But when I met him here, he was humble and respectful. You cannot believe that that was the Ssegirinya we used to see on TV.

It means the man lived a humble life. He had a sense of humour. I call upon all of us, as Members of Parliament, to be humble.

THE SPEAKER: And down to earth.

MR RWEMULIKYA: And down to earth. Secondly, constructing or setting up a health facility. Some colleagues give reasons such as, “I am a first timer in Parliament, I have not yet known what to do...” but Hon. Ssegirinya proved that statement wrong. That within a few months in Parliament, he had to do something that was very impactful to his people.

Lastly, it is about women. In this country, women are really suffering. Many families are now being led by women. Even in my constituency, I focus more on women because women are taking the burden. Therefore, focusing on women, empowering women, is the way to go.

Despite our political differences, we are one family. We are one people. We should never at one time see each other as enemies. For me, in this Parliament, even those in Opposition, we are brothers and sisters. Never at any time should we look at each other as enemies because we are Ugandans. We are leaders. We have one family, Parliament.

I wish my colleague, my comrade – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Actually, because of the way we work in Parliament, yesterday, when you did not see the Leader of the Opposition, I had deployed him the whole day in Lubaga. Somebody will ask, “Why wasn’t the Leader of the Opposition there when they were passing the National Development Plan?” It is because he was deployed. I have heard those sentiments.

11.40

MR BARNABAS TINKASIIMIRE (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. As we send our condolences to the family and the party leaders where Hon. Ssegirinya belonged, we are here

with a heavy heart about the death of our colleague, Hon. Ssegirinya.

Hon. Ssegirinya and I met in Kyebando, where I do some business, and he was consulting. He said, “I love your style of leadership as a Member of Parliament, belonging to a party, and you are able to tell them the truth. I want to join you”.

I told him he was most welcome, but he had to do ABCD. I told him you have to prepare yourself to actually be that Member of Parliament who will not be compromised when you come to Parliament.

We agreed that he could start as a councillor at KCCA, get some money to support himself, such that when he joins Parliament, he is a bit decent, not to rush for this money – you know the money that I am talking about - such that you can survive that blackmail.

I am very happy that what we discussed from my business place in Kyebando is what exactly Hon. Ssegirinya did. He came to Parliament with a vision of looking at the poor people – *(Member timed out.)*

Allow me another minute to eulogise a leader with whom I shared a vision. He belonged to the Opposition but he shared the vision that I hold - of looking at the ordinary person. Indeed, he demonstrated it even when he was in the Opposition.

Madam Speaker, I am saddened that he is dying in the crossfire of intolerant politics. Where he would have received medical attention, he was denied bail, even when he cried that he should be allowed to go for treatment. That is very sad.

Even when we say he has not been killed, in law there is a principle, a thin-thick principle – where you must explain when somebody who is weak disappears in your hands. This is what has happened to Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, and the community has asked us, as the Government, whether we could not have done better?

I know, Madam Speaker, that Parliament did their best, but you did it too late because this man required that treatment at the right time. It was too much for him already, that you were just literally wasting resources because the time had run out.

I pray, going forward, that the Government should be sensitive to the rights of people they have sent on remand. If they seek bail to go for treatment, they must know that bail is part of Article 28 of the Constitution – on fair hearing. If I am in custody of police, or I am on remand in prison, it does not take away my right to defend myself. It is during that bail time that I can prepare my defence.

Now, we have Dr Kiiza Besigye in prison. How many times is this Government going to imprison Dr Kiiza Besigye? Have we not had enough of Dr Kiiza Besigye? If he died in prison, what would we explain to this country? Why can't we produce him in courts where he is supposed to be produced? There are several constitutional rulings, even at the Supreme Court level, requiring that civilians should be tried in civil courts. Why is he still being tried in the military court?

This type of torture – to have the coffins of Ugandans – is not the type of politics that I would want to practice when I am a Member of Parliament of the ruling party. I want to engage and win an election, not by military institutions and coercion.

May you rest in eternal peace, Hon. Ssegirinya.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Aleper?

11.45

MR MOSES ALEPER (NRM, Chekwii County Kadam, Nakapiripirit): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for affording me this opportunity to pay tribute to the late Hon. Ssegirinya.

Many people have spoken about how they came to know him. Personally, the closest I came to know him was through the video excerpts I watched when we were migrating

from analogue broadcasting. That is the time I saw someone passing his message. He did not care if he was not fluent in English. He passed the message, and everyone picked it. That is what we require. Sometimes, we feel like we must package the information we want to pass in a specific way, but what matters is if the other side of the communication platform gets it. That is the closest I got to him.

Everyone has spoken that the time he spent in Parliament was very short, but probably and most likely, he has done a lot more than most of us. You can see the litany of achievements that have been narrated. That is something so commendable that we should appreciate him for.

I say, most importantly, that we are here as representatives of the people. However, the most important thing is that we are humans, and our service delivery is humanity. Hon. Ssegirinya has done this. He has done service to humanity, given the short time. It is not the time that we spend in a place that matters, but it is the best that we can do, which he has done. May his soul rest in peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us have Hon. Ssekikubo, Hon. Huda, the Bunyoro MP, and the Imam. Honourable minister, you will speak last

11.48

MR THEODORE SSEKIKUBO (NRM, Lwemiyaga County, Sembabule): Madam Speaker, I rise to pay my condolences to the family of the late Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, the relatives, friends and colleague Members of Parliament.

Madam Speaker, we stand here under very difficult circumstances, paying tribute to the honourable Member of Parliament who walked to this House and was sworn in, but has not served even one term to its completion. It is sad, and I look at the circumstances that have led to his demise.

Madam Speaker, the late Hon. Ssegirinya is not alone in these circumstances, because all

of us are potential detainees. I know for sure that I was supposed to be arrested on the 13th of December, last year, under trumped-up charges. There are strong people in this country who wrote a report to the President accusing me of murder, land grabbing, and all sorts of things.

The Private Secretary to the President, Susan Kasingye, through whom the President had invited us to attend a meeting at State House, excluded me and allowed my accusers to go before the President. They made their case, and they went through their channels to write reports, saying: "Your Excellency, we are awaiting your orders." Fortunately, the President thought twice, and he sent another set of investigators. I would have been arrested for murder of not one person, but three, and all that.

The point I am raising is that the State is a leviathan, with many actors. The President comes in, being the one on top and who really, in the circumstances, bears responsibility. In most cases, there are those who work behind the scenes, write such reports and frame innocent people, like Hon. Ssegirinya. Why must the arresting officers and the prosecution arrest and then start investigations? Why don't you investigate, have a case, and then you arrest, so that the accused can have his or her day in court? We have failed to do this.

Madam Speaker, the profile of Uganda, as a country, is going down because of such incidents. What is Dr Besigye doing in those military cells? These are the issues. Must we have another person die under these circumstances?

Why are we doing so badly, Madam Speaker? These should be learning experiences. That is why, with a sad heart – I would not be standing here. Probably, I would also be in very similar circumstances.

Madam Speaker, yes, death is a must, but his must have been exacerbated by his long stay on remand. Even the Judiciary abandoned its cardinal mission of being the temple of justice.

We must all check ourselves. Those agencies within the Government that write and give fake reports, and end up embarrassing the President, the Government and all of us - because for the last two years, when they were in detention, why didn't the State adduce evidence and have them produced before courts of law?

I also agree with Hon. Namboozie that tinkering with the Constitution on provisions that are critical to Ugandans; why must you remove bail, yet you know the investigative machinery of the country is still nascent; it is not solid?

Why must you move against the bond in a country where the State institutions and operators are still fragile? So, I think we need to take caution as Members of Parliament. Internationally, we are not doing well. Our rating is going down and now culminating in the abduction of Besigye. He is now being tried in Makindye. We cannot find the way out. Looking at Dr Besigye behind bars with his big eyes, you cannot look at the photos again. It is a disgrace to this country - *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, in the VIP Gallery, we have Hon. Muanja Ssenyonga. You are most welcome. Thank you for coming. We also have a condolence message to the family of the late Ssegirinya from the Parliamentary Pension Scheme. They have enclosed Shs 2 million. We will pass on the document to Hon. Aisha. Hon. Aisha, you will make sure that this money is delivered since you are a member of the pension scheme. And then, we also have a condolence message to the family of Hon. Baba Diri Margaret, also enclosed is Shs 2 million. This money should be routed to the family. I had the Hon. Huda.

11.55

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE (VETERAN AFFAIRS) (Ms Huda Oleru): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I join Members to pay tribute to the late Muhammad. I did not really come so close to the late Muhammad, but I just knew him through social media.

In this House, we are more than 500 people now. However, Hon. Ssegirinya was very active, and almost all the Members of Parliament knew him. We have stayed here for four years, we still do not know ourselves.

Due to his activism, he made sure that everybody knew him, and that was his contribution. Some of us will finish the five years here. Sometimes, we meet on the streets and we do not recognise each other, and just pass by. However, nobody could do that for Hon. Ssegirinya.

Madam Speaker, the faith I subscribe to is “Islam”, and we strongly believe that you only die when it is your day. It also says that when God designed death, he directed Angel Gabriel to be the one to take out the spirit from the people. However, Gabriel feared; he said, “How will I do it”? God said, “I will help you to do it”. That is how he arranged for Hon. Ssegirinya. He arranged that the time would come for him to pass. However, for us to believe that he passed because he overstayed in jail and lack of opportunity for his rights, he planned to make sure that he remained in jail. Then, Gabriel came and took out the spirit. Then people would say that he died because of being in jail.

If you are a believer, you should know that it was his time, and that is why he passed – *(Interjections)*- unless you are not a Muslim. There are Muslims here, and they support what I am saying. But if you are not a Muslim, then please keep quiet. Allow the Muslims to talk. *(Laughter)*

Madam Speaker, for us as Muslims, when somebody passes, there are rituals that we must follow. One of them is the respect that you give to the person who has died. There are prayers that we must do. There is even guidance on how you eulogise the person who has passed. So that when you talk, you get a “swab”, and the person you talk for also gets a “swab”. That is what we are supposed to do for our brother here. He has suffered from the sickness for a long. Now, we must do all these rituals, like the prayers that we must do, and we must continue

to pray that, even if he had some shortcomings, we ask God to forgive him and give him “Janna” because that is where we all are going. My brother, Muhammad, may your soul rest in peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Bunyoro Affairs, Imam - can you sit? He is a Member of Parliament of this House.

11.59

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (BUNYORO AFFAIRS) (Ms Jenipher Namuyangu): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the people of Kibuku, whom I represent in this House, and the people of Bunyoro, where I am deployed as a minister, I bring my condolences, especially to you, Madam Speaker, the House, *Maama* Ssegirinya and the family and the people of Kawempe North.

It is very unfortunate that we are losing a young person -

THE SPEAKER: I pity some people who start behaving funny on a special sitting; I really pity them. Hon. Ssegirinya belonged to this House, not to a party. *(Applause)* When you are in the House- and I am balancing the sides. Yes-

MS NAMUYANGU: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: By the way, I have the power even to adjourn the House. Honourable minister-

MS NAMUYANGU: Madam Speaker, Hon. Ssegirinya is one of the people I admired. He was a very courageous person. One time, I saw him when a young lady lost a baby, and the purported father was refusing to bury that child.

Hon. Ssegirinya carried a dead child in a coffin on his head and looked for that man to bury the child. That kind of courage is rare, but he was also a serious mobiliser. Even in his constituency, he loved his voters.

You remember when he offered that every woman who delivers was entitled to offals but also building a health facility, colleagues, you all remember, or you know. Service delivery in terms of health provision is not cheap.

For one to build a facility, buy drugs.

THE SPEAKER: Let us be brief. We are running out of time.

MS NAMUYANGU: Paying the medical workers is not easy. So, I salute Hon. Ssegirinya. It is a big loss to the country. May God sustain the bereaved family?

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Imam of the mosque. Hon. Mpindi Member from Mityana, Hon. Gorret and then Hon. Ssemakula.

12.01

MR ABDUL MUTUMBA (NRM, Kiboga West County, Kiboga): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thought you are on one side. Yes-

MR MUTUMBA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to add my voice to the rest of the Members and condole with the family and the people of Kawempe North constituency for the demise of our brother, the late Hon. Mohammad Ssegirinya.

As the Imam of the Muslim Parliamentary Caucus, we have lost a committed and dedicated brother whom we thought we would interact with and contribute a lot to the Act. However, we thank Allah for giving him this time on earth and for all that he has managed to do while alive.

Madam Speaker, death is a menu that everybody will taste regardless of status; whether a Member of Parliament or a common man out there, everybody will have to taste that menu and whoever wishes death for others, just know that at any time, it will knock on your door.

Madam Speaker, I had an opportunity, during COVID-19, to visit the two people in Kigo Prison as the Imam, and we had an interaction for about an hour. What surprised me was that even at that time when he was in prison, he revealed to me a detailed plan of his dream that he wanted to implement in his constituency. I was so surprised that someone who was in prison was thinking so much about the people in his constituency. That means he had a lot of passion for the people he was serving. Nevertheless when he was released –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, one minute.

MR MUTUMBA: His health had deteriorated and he would not implement that plan. May the Almighty Allah pardon him for his shortcomings and give him Jannah.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. One minute.

12.03

MR BUMALI MPINDI (Independent, PWD Representative): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Being a resident of Kawempe, I have a lot to talk about, Hon. Ssegirinya, but you have given me one minute, and I want to use it on just two things.

One, Members have submitted that Hon. Ssegirinya has a family, and as you have heard, his family is not doing well. He has left children and we are almost concluding the debate without devising means of helping the children. I want to propose that as we pass the resolution, we include a clause that this Parliament find means of helping the children of Hon. Ssegirinya.

Two, I know that as Members of Parliament, we have a norm of contributing money for Members who have died. I pray that as Members of Parliament, each one of us contributes Shs 500,000 to support the family, especially the children of Hon. Ssegirinya, to take on his mantle. For me, if that is done, I will be a very happy man. I saw –

THE SPEAKER: Can you conclude?

MR MPINDI: Madam Speaker, the Clerk was taking your attention, but my proposal was that we contribute either Shs 500,000 – one Member is telling me Shs 1 million from each Member –

THE SPEAKER: You know when we passed a resolution here to contribute for Hon. Jacob Oulanyah, you are the same people who went to the streets and started bashing the Speaker – my proposal is, let us contribute personally. For me, I will take up one kid and educate one kid in my school. *(Applause)* After this, look for me - Nagirinya – where is Nagirinya? In which class are you? Exactly. I will pay your fees, and I will take you to my school for secondary education. *(Applause)*

MR MPINDI: Madam Speaker, I want to conclude by thanking you for what you have done for Hon. Ssegirinya and what you have done for Members of Parliament without discriminating based on political belief, the size and the constituency – thank you so much and may you reign forever.

THE SPEAKER: Amen. Mityana representative, Gorreth and Semakula.

12.07

MS JOYCE BAGALA (NUP, Woman Representative, Mityana): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to, first of all, appreciate Hon. Ssegirinya's mother and his brother, Kasagga. When someone faces challenges, many times, even your family can abandon you. Hon. Ssegirinya and Hon. Ssewanyana were incarcerated. I went to Masaka, where they were brought to court; I went to Luzira; I went to Kigo; he began to fall sick, and I went to Nsambya Hospital; I went to Nairobi and Lubaga Hospital, and those two were a constant. Thank you so much for being there for Hon. Ssegirinya. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, I met Ssegirinya when I was still a journalist, and this is what I wanted to say about Ssegirinya. Hon. Ssegirinya was very authentic, he was real, and he was genuine and honest even in times of need. When I met him – he used to call in on radio stations as “*Edoboosi lye Kyebando*” and one time when

I was doing a story about those radio phone callers, I spoke to him, Makolo Kavuma and Luba Kyoya. He was demonstrating to me what they used to do to get through – because I was asking them: how come you people are so constant on the radio stations? He showed me about eight phones; he would call at the same time, and whichever went through first, he would speak. That was Ssegirinya.

I remember the time he used to be with Dr Kiiza Besigye. In fact, it is very sad that Col (Rtd) Kiiza Besigye is in prison because Ssegirinya was always with Dr Kiiza Besigye. Then he would come to me - at a certain point, I was an editor of a television station, so he would come to me and beg – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, we have run out of time because the body must go for Jumamah prayers.

12.10

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogola County South, Ssembabule): I thank you, Madam Speaker, and take this opportunity to appreciate you, your office, the office of the Leader of the Opposition and all honourable members of Parliament for standing with Hon. Ssegirinya during this month. Every one of you has appreciated the works of Hon. Ssegirinya, but I want to remind you that, that is the responsibility of the Government.

Madam Speaker, we should put appropriate resources in the area of medicine. He has bought CT scans – that is not our responsibility. This is why we are suffering out there. That is corporate social responsibility that you should do at leisure. So, Government should take on the responsibility of providing basic services to this country. Thank you, Madam Speaker, may his soul rest in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Semakula, and honourable minister.

12.11

MR SEMAKULA LUTTAMAGUZI (DP, Nakaseke South County, Nakaseke): Dear women within Parliament and outside there, we appreciate you –

THE SPEAKER: Ladies.

MR LUTTAMAGUZI: Basing on what the mother of the late Hon. Ssegirinya has done. In the Holy Bible, in Ecclesiastes, it is written that there is time for everything: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to be happy and a time to be sad.

However, my special message goes to the Judiciary. Dear our learned friends, where did your Ubuntu go? In Uganda we know that bail is not a privilege; it is a right. But these days we hear you are working under decrees. Where did your Ubuntu go?

Lastly, Madam Speaker, we appreciate whatever you give to members of Parliament. However, as Parliament, we should work for free medical insurance for every Ugandan regardless of their status. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Flavia, then the honourable minister.

12.12

MS FLAVIA NABAGABE (NUP, Woman Representative, Kassanda): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Sincere condolences to the family of Hon. Ssegirinya. May God rest his soul in peace.

I really want to bring to light two scenarios that particularly caught my attention. The first was when the mother of Hon. Ssegirinya wailed in court after Hon. Ssegirinya exposed his foot that had been tortured and was requesting to be released so that he could go and get medication. His mother wailed loudly in court pleading to the magistrate to release her son so that she could go for - Unfortunately, he was never released.

The second scenario was when the mother wept, crying, coming to Parliament to ask the Speaker and Members of Parliament to intercede so that her son could be released -

Those two scenarios come to light and I ask the people that are watching us right now

eulogise Hon. Ssegirinya what they think about his children and parents. Had they been in the position of those two, what would they have done? Where do they think their kids are going to go? How do they think their kids are going to look at the children of the tortured Ssegirinya's children? Which country are we passing onto our children?

Hon. Ssegirinya, fight hard. May your soul rest in peace. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister? Members, I do not want to be cursed when the body is not prayed for.

12.13

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker and honourable members. I rise to support the motion to pay tribute to our fallen colleague.

On behalf of the people of Kinkizi East, I convey condolences to the mother and the family of Hon. Ssegirinya, to you, the Speaker of Parliament, and all Members of Parliament because this is our colleague, to the Members of NUP Party where he belonged, and the entire Opposition, and the people of Kawempe North, whom he represented in this House.

Madam Speaker, Hon. Ssegirinya made his name through activism, and many of us knew him before coming to Parliament because he was very active in the public space. People would always say, "That man might end up in Parliament", as if he should not be in Parliament, and indeed, he came to the House.

When he came to the House, he was a Member of Parliament who reached out to anybody and everybody, irrespective of where you stood. For instance, he approached me and said, "Hon. Baryomunsi, I know you from the public. I have a wife who hails from your constituency, the village of Kambuga. So, I am your in-law." We began relating as such. Therefore, to us, the people of Kanungu, he was our son-in-law and we have lost our son.

There are many lessons that we draw from the life of Hon. Ssegirinya; that you can rise from a humble background and rise to any position, as long as you know what you want. He rose through political and media activism and became a Member of Parliament.

I also salute him for his spirit of altruism, concern for the others. As we heard from the many eulogies and as we knew him, even when he served as a Member of Parliament for a short time, he was on the ground trying to address the concerns of the people of his constituency and we salute him for that.

Madam Speaker, Hon. Ssegirinya had an incurable medical illness even before he came to Parliament. Indeed, even before I was sworn in, he fell sick, and I think he was even hospitalised. Therefore, he came to the House when he was sick. It was unfortunate that he was imprisoned together with the Hon. Ssegirinya -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ssewanyana.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Rather, Hon. Ssewanyana. I even remember his long time on remand concerned some of us. I think it was with Hon. Basalirwa or Hon. Muhammad Kivumbi, where we discussed it at some point.

I also know that being in prison depressed him so much that at one point he even refused to take medication until when we had to come in and counsel him as medical doctors. We were in touch with him and we really feel sorry that he has died, when he had not accomplished his assignment as a Member of Parliament for the five years.

Madam Speaker, allow me to make comments on some of the issues which have been raised in this debate. Many of them, I think, we have time and space, as Members of Parliament, to debate them; the nature of politics, human rights, all these issues. We have time to discuss them as Members of Parliament, but probably, allow me to speak on two issues; bail and bond.

His Excellency, the President, Yoweri Museveni, has an opinion that maybe, bail should be denied on some offenses. However,

on that opinion, I have heard him say, "I will engage the Chief Justice to see whether maybe there can be practice – (*Interruption*) - Just hold on.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Practice directives, but this has not been translated into law -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, let us listen. An opinion is not law.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Absolutely. This is what I am saying – (*Interruptions*) - You had your time to speak; I am now speaking.

You see, the problem, Madam Speaker, that we have in this country is intolerance. We should be able to listen to each other. My view may not be the same as yours, but you should give me a chance to say what I want to say. (*Applause*)

As we move forward, Madam Speaker, we should, as Members of Parliament and political leaders, promote that culture of tolerance, even when our views are different.

That issue of bail is an opinion that he has been holding, but if it was to be so at the end, it would come here; either through amendment of the Constitution or the laws. I do not think any judicial officer is currently intimidated to fail to make a decision because the law still gives judicial officers discretion to decide on matters of bail when cases are before them.

Therefore, a judicial officer, worth his name, should be able to make a judgment and make a decision, depending on the case before him or her. I am sure the lawyers in this House agree.

The other issue that has been raised is that maybe the Government and the Judiciary should consider dropping charges against Hon. Ssewanyana and the co-accused -

THE SPEAKER: I think that is something that we should discuss later; on the issues of political prisoners.

DR BARYOMUNSI: That is why I am saying that we take note of that request – (*Member timed out.*)

THE SPEAKER: Doctor, conclude. Switch on the microphone.

DR BARYOMUNSI: I will convey this to the Attorney-General to have an engagement with the Judiciary. We have taken note of that concern raised by the Members of Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: I think we should also have a date when we shall discuss the issue of the political prisoners. Let us have a date and discuss it.

DR BARYOMUNSI: We shall even have a debate on whether that terminology is correct; of political prisoners, but that will be for another day.

Lastly, Madam Speaker, like I said, Hon. Ssegirinya had a wife from my constituency. I am not very sure of the children the wife has, but also as a Member of Parliament for Kinkizi East, I take up one of the children for support. *(Applause)* I will support the child their education.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

DR BARYOMUNSI: I thank you very much. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Honourable members, Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, “Mr Update”, has fought a good fight. He has served humanity; he has been there for everybody and he rose from grass to grace. If he told you how he came from Masaka and how he boarded a *matooke* truck, you would not believe it. Hon. Ssegirinya has come from very far, but we must thank God that he at least achieved what he wanted.

His humility speaks volumes. If we could learn something from the late Hon. Ssegirinya, it would make a change in all of us. When you hear that within those few months, he made an impact in Kawempe, this community and this country, then you must learn something.

I want to put the question – *(Hon. Aisha Kabanda rose)* Yes? Honourable members –

and you are a Muslim. You are the same person who is going to blame me for delaying the body here.

12.24

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Madam Speaker, that *swallah* for *Janaza* is performed as long as the body has come any time. So, it is not delayed. May I make the amendment, Madam?

THE SPEAKER: Yes.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I sincerely appreciate your concern that when you persuaded Members to contribute, we spoke in tongues outside. While I appreciate that concern –

THE SPEAKER: Actually, attacking me.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Yes, I appreciate your concern and it is regrettable. Madam Speaker, Hon. Ssegirinya has served here for four years. The difference between him and the Rt Hon. Oulanyah is that he had served here for several years, and therefore, his package was big as a person. As a Rt Hon. Speaker, he also had an entitlement as a fallen Speaker of Parliament.

Hon. Ssegirinya has only been here for four years; he did not even have time to invest for his family. You can imagine the burden that the family is going to have. I have calculated, Madam Speaker, that if each one of us here sacrificed only Shs 300,000, the family would collect Shs 150 million which is good enough for them to be able to invest.

I, therefore, would like to persuade my colleagues that we amend the motion to include that each of the Members of Parliament contributes Shs 300,000 as a package to help the family of Hon. Ssegirinya. I submit. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, is that seconded? No, sit. I want secondment from this side. *(Members rose)* It is seconded by Hon. Baryomunsi, Hon. Bahati, the Imam, Member

from Ibanda, Minister of Bunyoro Affairs, Hon. Huda, Hon. Balaam, Hon. Gabriel, Hon. Okaasai, Hon. Rose – by the whole NRM side.

I adjourn the House to 21 January.

(The House rose at 12.32 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 21 January 2025 at 2.00 p.m.)

Therefore, we are amending the motion, and the Clerk should take note of this. I want to see those from this side also. *(Members rose)* I want to see the Leader of the Opposition and the Chief Opposition Whip. Hon. Odur is not supporting it. You better convince Hon. Odur to support you because I do not want to be taken to court. *(Laughter)*

It is supported by Hon. Hassan, Hon. Kivumbi, Hon. Asuman, Hon. Abdu, Hon. Ssewungu, Hon. Elijah, Hon. Zaake, “Hilderman”, Hon. Ethel, “Madam Teacher” – by the whole Opposition and all the Independents.

MR KATUNTU: Madam Speaker, I concede to the amendment.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I put the question to the amendment.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE SPEAKER: I now put the question that Parliament pays glowing tribute to the late Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, a former Member of Parliament of Kawempe Division North, with an amendment of payment of Shs 300,000 deduction per Member of Parliament, as passed in the resolution here.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted.

The East African Community Anthem.

The National Anthem.

(Exit of the late Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya.)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the Parliamentary Muslim Community would like to say a prayer for one minute outside there. I now adjourn the House, and I will request that only the sectoral committees will be sitting during this period.