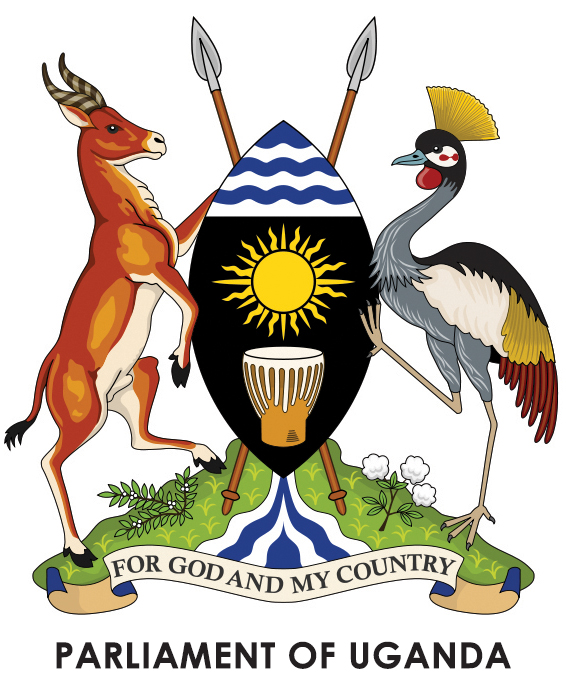
****

**Wednesday, 6 July 2022**

*Parliament met at 1.59 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

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

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I am not removing the mask because I do not respect the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). But my presumption is that I am the only one not putting on a mask. I am told some of you do not hear what I say when I put on a mask.

Honourable members, I welcome you to today’s sitting and I thank you for your dedication to serving the country. During yesterday’s sitting, a matter arose about the conversion of the Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation from a sectoral committee to a standing committee, and its implication on the designation of Members of Parliament that were in that committee.

For a better perspective, on 27April 2022, the House amended the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda, among which was the Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation to be transformed from a sectoral to a standing committee.

This followed a passage of a resolution on 8 September 2021, reallocating the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation to the Office of the President. The reallocation of this ministry implied that there was a change of the oversight role of the Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation to the Committee on Presidential Affairs.

The amendment of these rules then that was brought to this House required publication in the *Gazette* for the amendment to have the law, pursuant to Section 16 of the Interpretation Act which states: “*Every statutory instrument shall be published in the Gazette and shall be given a judicial notice*.”

The amendment was published in the *Gazette* on 4July 2022, as such, the amendments now have the force of the law. It is, therefore, my humble request that the Committee on Science, Technology Innovation is now turned into a standing committee.

The duty bearers, that is, the UPDF, the Independents and all other recognised whips should immediately designate Members to that committee so that they can start their work.

In doing so, they should be cognisant of rule 157(3) which provides that: “*Except as provided by these Rules in respect to the Business Committee, Appointments Committee, and the Budget Committee, a Member shall not belong to more than two committees.”* So, designate and be mindful of rule 157(3).

In the meantime, the Clerk should circulate the text of the amended rules for easy application by Members. Remember, we have made a number of amendments, but we are still using the old rules.

In the long run, we shall reprint the amended rules of the 11th Parliament, especially after the amendments that came up; even today, we have other amendments.

Following the conclusion of the designation of these sectoral committees during yesterday’s sitting, I urge the chairpersons and vice-chairpersons to actively start working in their committees. I am aware that most of the committees have pending businesses. Please, finish the business and bring it to the House so that we see how we can finalise the pending business. Otherwise, that will determine our performance.

Honourable members, as you are aware, we have a biometric clock at the entrance. Ensure that you clock in when coming in so that we know the time you entered the Chambers. And clock out when you are going - [Members: *“The clock out does to work”]* - they are working; because you have not tried.

We are going to monitor attendance. This business of absenteeism - you come all the way from Bukedea to represent your people, yet you are not seen in the House. This must stop. Let us work for our people. *(Applause)*

When performance is being rated, you start complaining that you were not given time to speak, yet you are not in the House. How do I pick a person who is not in the House? You find people like Hon. Ssewungu who are here all the time, getting a high rating, even if they just say, “Madam Speaker.” *(Laughter)*

In addition, I urge you to always keep time. As legislators, we bear the public a duty of responsibility and timekeeping is one of them. I have always said one thing - wherever my late honourable brother is, I will never disappoint him on time keeping. *(Applause)* Hon. Jacob told me the first attribute one must have is timekeeping, and I will never disappoint him on that.

Honourable members, I want to thank you very much for coming to the House. Can we have fruitful deliberations regarding what is on the Order Paper! Thank you.

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a procedural matter regarding an issue that you, Madam Speaker, has been raising for a very long time.

Madam Speaker, yesterday, when you were communicating, you said that today, Members will come with matters of national importance. However, the Front Bench, as usual, has only two or three ministers available in the House.

Madam Speaker, shouldn’t we move a resolution in this Parliament to enable us have a number of ministers at least represented, even if they are a quarter of the number of ministers we have and they come here on time?

Madam Speaker, it is known that we sit on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and there are no other days when we sit in this Parliament; and there is no Cabinet meeting on these days. Can’t we have even a quarter of the ministers sacrificing their time to come and listen to the challenges and problems that Members are facing?

I have matters of national importance. I am looking at the sector; no one is there. The Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when I present those matters of national importance, will respond by saying she will direct the minister. Madam Speaker, we want ministers in the House for us get immediate answers. I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

2.10

**THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama):** Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable member for coming up with that complaint and like we are saying –

**THE SPEAKER:** It is not a complaint; it is a concern.

**MS NAKADAMA:** The concern. Many of the –*(Interruption)*

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Madam Speaker, yesterday, you gave us a very elaborate ruling on a different matter. Today, you have called the Prime Minister. This Parliament approved the Prime Minister - this Prime Minister is approved by the whole Parliament; she was not approved like any other ministers but by the whole Parliament seated.

The person that this Parliament approved was the Woman MP for Kakumiro –*(Laughter)*– Rt Hon. Nabbanja. We have never approved any other person to be a Prime Minister. *(Laughter)* Is the colleague holding the Floor in order to pose as a Prime Minister, when you have called the Prime Minister to come and answer?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, the issue that has been raised by Hon. Silwany is very pertinent. She has been delegated to sit in for the Prime Minister. They communicated to me; I got the communication. Can we have an answer to that effect? *(Applause)* We agreed we should have 30 people – *(Applause)* – at least 30 per cent of the ministers in this House.

**MS NAKADAMA:** Madam Speaker, like I was saying, I have talked to a number of ministers to inform them that Parliament is sitting but I am going to make a follow up on why most of the ministers are not here. In fact, some excuses were that they are still in the field about the Parish Development Model (PDM), but I am going to make a follow up to see that they are here tomorrow or even today. Thank you so much, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Point of procedure.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for praising me. *(Laughter)* Actually, the fact is I never knew that I was the best; I just heard it in the news, but it was about the number of times I have talked in the House. You can only achieve this if you keep here up to the end of the House, which I sometimes do.

Madam Speaker, I got a booster and I am very okay –

**THE SPEAKER:** Put on your mask –*(Laughter)*

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Most obliged. Through you, Madam Speaker, to the Prime Minister - actually, in this Parliament, we have a number of ministers who have no constituencies and we would assume that these ones maybe have less work to do. We have a lot of challenges. For example, when it comes to talking about matters dealing with the Office of the President, it should be the Minister for Presidency to respond to all such issues but we end up curtained and our Speaker also has to come in, but these are issues supposed to be brought by the Minister for the Presidency.

So, the procedural matter I am raising is – there are a lot of issues we have heard of recent. You have heard the disparities in salaries. Wouldn’t it be procedurally okay that you give a ruling; we, backbenchers, you give us ministers with their vehicles and lead cars and we enjoy them as they continue walking to Parliament.

Otherwise, this is a norm that has grown; ministers do not take this Parliament seriously. That is why we have a Prime Minister, whom I love so much but she says, “I told them but I can’t see them” meaning there is no respect. These are the challenges we are facing with all the strikes we are getting because the ministers are failing to carry out due diligence at their work stations. They are only waiting for directives.

So, the procedural matter, Madam Speaker, is: why don’t you direct as our Speaker that “you ministers, now give all your vehicles and lead cars to Ssewungu and the backbenchers; they enjoy them” – *(Laughter)* – because for us, we keep time. Honourable members, how do you see that? *(Laughter)* That is the culture in Uganda. A teacher is paid above the headmaster. Now, the purpose of giving ministers all those facilities is to help them to be here.

Madam Speaker, it is only yourself, your Deputy Speaker, the Vice-President, the President and the Chief Justice who must have the right of way. However, all these ministers have lead cars; there is nowhere to pass. We kneel before them but and now see what is happening.

So, why don’t you rule, Madam Speaker - for me, I want to get the Prime Minister’s vehicles and the security; I use them in Kalungu, then give my friend from – there, he takes others; as backbenchers, we enjoy them because we are the ones keeping time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Hon. Nakadama, we want the ministers in this House. We got an assurance from the President that in every sitting, we shall have 30 per cent of the ministers present. Maybe, you need to give us a justification as to why we should have 83 ministers. Do we need that justification? Are they supposed to be here to represent the Executive?

Honourable members, that is an abuse from the Executive to the Legislature. Let us learn to respect each other. *(Applause)* Every time, we see only Hon. Bahati, Hon. Bahati, Hon. Bahati – *(Applause)* – and Hon. Hamson Obua there. *(Applause)*

**MS OGWAL:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the guidance but I would like to stick to specific rules. Rule 114 – of course we can start from Rule 112, which refers to any of us. However, let me specifically remind the Rt Hon. Prime Minister and her team that there is one specific rule that was designed to manage absenteeism on the Frontbench.

Rule 114(1) reads thus: “*For any ministry, the minister or at least the minister of state shall attend sittings of the House and where none of them is able to attend, the minister shall request another minister to represent that ministry’s interest in the House and notify the Speaker accordingly*.”

Madam Speaker, all these 82 ministers that we approved ought to be here and anybody who cannot be here must follow the rule. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members and Prime Minister, you have heard the rule. The only ministry that gave me notification was the one for education: period – and your boss. *(Laughter)* I only got notifications from the Minister of Education and Sports and the Prime Minister.

Therefore, if Members are not here, we shall apply the rule. Members, you have all the powers and these ministers must know that they have to work for this country. They are not just here to do anything. Yes.

**MR KIBALYA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. What pains us most is that the President will bring a list of Ex-officio Members who do not even have constituencies to attend to. They are paid for attending Parliament only – because we do not know the other work they do. However, you find that even Ex-officio Members have no time for Parliament, yet it would be enough time for them to learn what goes on in Parliament and maybe next time they are not ex-officio.

However, we find it very disturbing that Ex-officio Members are not present. A ministry that has four ministers, none of them is present! Now we have two. I was asking Hon. Silwany about the honourable minister because I was also seeing him and *-(Interjection)-* It is me. I asked Hon. Silwany and he told me and it was okay. There is no problem with it.

Kindly, Madam Speaker, through your Office, could you direct - much as the Executive is answerable to the President, this is your House. You are the last person here. They can behave the way they want from the other side but here, they must behave according to what you wish. Could you use your Office and direct the ministers to change their behaviour and act otherwise?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, let us put this to an end. After the House, I am going to write to the President, asking him to ask his members to attend the House.

**MR JONATHAN ODUR:** Madam Speaker, additionally, when you write to the President – he communicated to us when he was selecting these ministers that these were fishermen. I think it is time this Parliament informed him that the fishermen are incompetent and have failed to deliver on this Floor so that we can perform our work. We have very competent people here.

**THE SPEAKER:** The Members of Parliament are not fishermen and fisherwomen.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Madam Speaker, thank you very much. From what you have said, I think this Parliament is moved to begin taking action. However, there are ministers that have never stepped here. So, when you are giving out a punishment or sanction, for example, what sanction do you give to the Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet Kataaha? *(Laughter)*

The Minister for East African Community Affairs was not here even when it was time to present the budget and neither was the deputy.

**THE SPEAKER:** The Minister for East African Community Affairs has presented two reports in this House. She has been in this House. The Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni (the First Lady), has been - where is my iPad? She has been on Zoom. *(Laughter)* We amended our Rules of Procedure - honourable members, we amended our Rules of Procedure: you can attend online.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** So, Madam Speaker, maybe even the other ministers are on Zoom because my fear -

**THE SPEAKER:** No, I know those who are on Zoom and those who are not. Matters of national importance – can I have Hon. Kiwanuka?

**MR MAGOLO:** Madam Speaker, on the 24th of May, there was a publication in *New Vision* about the performance of Members of Parliament of the 11th Parliament. That publication endangered many people and I believe the information -

**THE SPEAKER:** Were you in the House yesterday?

**MR MAGOLO:** Yes, I was, Madam Speaker. What I am raising is that, yes, work is done in the committees of Parliament and most of the work which is done in committees of Parliament is not captured where the people got that information from. Many Members of Parliament are raising issues there and they are -

**THE SPEAKER:** Faith, you are taking us back. I made a disclaimer yesterday that, that information did not come from my Office. It did not come from Parliament. The roles of a Member of Parliament are four. You cannot determine somebody’s performance based on how many times he stands in the House. There is appropriation and there is also committee oversight. So all we need to do is to look at it in a holistic way, not in a selective way.

I am aware that some of these people go bribing these people to publish their names. *(Laughter)* Therefore, that is not an issue.

2.27

**MR ABDALLAH KIWANUKA (NUP, Mukono County North, Mukono):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My matter of national importance hinges on the widespread insecurity in the country. It is very unfortunate I cannot see the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Minister for Security and the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs: they are all absent.

However, people are being attacked on the streets. People are being attacked from homes. Their animals are being stolen.

Now they have resumed attacking supermarkets -

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Kiwanuka, yesterday we said that we want evidence-based debate. Give me information and say, “On such and such a day, there was an attack in Mukono and so and so were attacked and on such and such a day, this and this happened” so that we are able to easily follow it up. It should not be a mere hearsay statement. Yes, we all hear that, but we want evidence.

**MR ABDALLAH KIWANUKA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. On Friday, last week -

**THE SPEAKER:** Go, bring and lay it on the Table so that we can use it for a follow-up.

**MR ABDALLAH KIWANUKA:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

2.29

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The matter I am raising regards the UPDF recruitment that we all know has been taking place in our districts.

On 24 June 2022, the UPDF carried out a recruitment exercise in Tororo District. Tororo was allocated 120 slots. To our surprise, very many of the young people were not taken. The local leaders who were present - the RDC and district officials - requested to verify the purported lists of the people from Tororo but they were not allowed. The lists have since been taken to the centre purporting that 120 people had been recruited from Tororo whereas this is not true.

I called the Minister of Defence, Hon. Ssempijja and he did indicate that he had received the complaint and that somebody would call me that same Friday. I have not received any call from the minister.

Our prayer is that these lists are verified because the reason for allocating numbers to the districts is to ensure that the army has a national character. *(Applause)*

However, when we have people brought in from other areas and fill up the positions purporting to be people from Tororo, we are not going to have a national character – *(Interruption)* – can I take the information, Madam Speaker.

**Mr omara:** Thank you, honourable member, for giving me the Floor. Madam Speaker, we have the same problem in Lango Subregion. In Lira, when they came to do the recruitment, only 38 per cent of the people were taken. They said the rest have HIV/AIDS - *(Laughter) -* we wanted to verify whether this is true. I am wondering, has the scourge of HIV/AIDS taken our country by storm?

We want transparency from UPDF and what they are doing. Our young people want to join the army and the Constitution directs that in public affairs, all these recruitments must represent the national character of the country. I submit.

**Mr olanya:** I would like to give Hon. Sarah further information that in the recruitment that took place in my district, Amuru, people were carried from somewhere else and got recruited from Amuru. Our people were not taken. We need to investigate the recruitment of UPDF. There is bias and people are not fair in this country.

**Ms opendi:** Madam Speaker, as I did indicate, the Uganda People’s Defence Forces should have a national character. Therefore, all tribes should be included.

My prayer is that this entire process be halted. We want those lists sent back to the districts and we verify them as leaders, then the recruitment exercise can go on. Short of that, we are going to have particular people in the UPDF and those from Tororo and other districts will not be represented. *(Applause)*

**The Speaker:** Honourable members, this is a very sensitive matter and affects all the districts. If we are talking about the national character, we must respect our Constitution. Can the minister ensure that these lists are verified by the local leaders before they do anything?

If you look at my own district; you cannot tell me that you failed to get somebody coming from Bukedea; that is not acceptable. These people are brought from somewhere to do interviews in our areas.

The same thing is happening with UWA –*(Applause)*– the same thing happens with UPDF; it also happens in prisons. Prime Minister, can we have these verified by the local leadership, whether these people come from these areas.

2.34

**The third deputy prime minister and minister without portfolio (Ms Lukia Nakadama):** Madam Speaker, this is a concern to everybody here and all constituencies. Before I call upon the Minister for Defence to make clarification here, I want to inform Members that these people who have come from other places have got a stamp of our LC1s; so we need to talk to them. As Members of Parliament, let us educate our people because it is a concern to everybody. Even my district is affected.

**The Speaker:** There is a point of order here.

**Ms opendi:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have just raised this matter and I am surprised that the Third Deputy Prime Minister is saying that those who have been recruited have stamps from the LC1s. How did you know that the people from Tororo have these stamps? Have you looked at those lists?

All of us are complaining including the Minister of State for Defence who was with us in Tororo, when I raised this matter. He even said that his nephew was slapped when he tried to use his name.

Madam Speaker, I would like to request the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to ask the Minister of Defence to come here and halt this entire exercise and send back the lists to the districts so that our leaders can verify them. Do not start saying, “They have stamps from LCs.” Suppose they are forged? How did you know? We know how our people look like.

**Ms Lematia:** Madam Speaker, it does not only affect the armed forces. Recruitment today has gone very wrong. Like in nursing, recently they recruited students. If you go to Arua School of Nursing, you will find 300 people who are coming from somewhere else. Those children are being punished. They cannot speak to the patients in Lugbara; what is that? *(Laughter)*

**Mr odur:** Madam Speaker, you had just guided us that when we make submissions here, we must have the evidence placed on record. My honourable colleague has just submitted that about 300 people came from somewhere. Can we be informed in this House where those people came from so that we can deal with it?

**The Speaker:** Honourable members, we talked about evidence-based debate. Tomorrow, I am laying on the Table a list of people from Bukedea then you need to confirm whether they come from there. Therefore, we need evidence. Hon. Sarah will bring a list of her people from Tororo and Kasese. *(Laughter)*

Prime Minister, before we resolve this issue, you need to communicate to the minister to first have the lists verified and ensure that we are recruiting the right people.

**Mr ssemujju:** Madam Speaker, if the Prime Minister can allow –

**Ms nakadama:** Madam Speaker, I am not refuting because it is affecting even my district, but I was trying

to inform -

**THE SPEAKER:** I am giving you instructions on what to give.

**MS NAKADAMA:** Much obliged, Madam Speaker. I am going to do that. But like you said, we need evidence. I am also saying – *[Mr Ssemujju rose\_]*

**THE SPEAKER:** There is a point of procedure.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** There is a point of procedure, and you know the rules because you are not a new Member of Parliament.

Madam Speaker, in this Parliament, we have 10 Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) Representatives. One of them is the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF). The second one is the Deputy CDF and other colleagues in different uniforms. Can we be told why these people are here? If they cannot answer –*(Laughter)*- they are the ones recruiting.

Madam Speaker, the CDF, Deputy CDF and the other Members are here. So, why do they come to Parliament?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, let us get clarification from the political head; the minister. I do not communicate with Members of Parliament; these are my Members. I want a response from the political head, and we need that information tomorrow.

**MS SAUDA KAUMA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. To add to what my colleague, Hon. Sarah, said - what she missed is that the UPDF should be clear in their advertisements.

They were throwing out people of 30 years and below, yet in the advertisement, they said they want 18 to 30 years. So, whenever advertising, they should be specific. Our children come ready to serve instead they are rudely thrown out while hitting them.

My prayer is that the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, and the Minister of Internal Affairs should be specific. Also, children who have confirmation letters should be allowed because they are already in National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) system, but they just throw them out. Yet, their IDs are in the process and the problem is with NIRA which delays to produce them. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, what these children have gone through is very nasty. I received a call last night – one girl was thrown out of a vehicle from Kakiri and she did not have anywhere to go. I do not even know how they got my number. Imagine what happened to such a kid. If one is to get a job, must they go through that suffering? And must you say, “Who brought you here? Who is your godparent?”

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, do I need to have a godparent to get a job? I mean, you took me to a school under the Universal Primary Education (UPE), I qualified, so my godparent is UPE (*Laughter*). You need to have these things sorted out. Otherwise, it is nasty. In Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), it is the same thing; Uganda Prisons Service, the same thing; the Police, it is also the same thing. Where are we going?

Honourable members, we are spending a lot of time on matters of national importance. I have already given guidance.

**MS CECILIA OGWAL:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. As a matter of procedure, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the resolution which was passed by Parliament concerning traders who conducted business in South Sudan and paid selectively.

Parliament discussed the matter in detail and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was requested to link up with the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and come up with a sovereign agreement in order to give opportunity for the other smaller traders to be paid.

Madam Speaker, there are people who are trying to be smart by saying that the verification must start afresh, yet many traders have already been paid millions of dollars. We are saying these other smaller traders, who did not have an opportunity to be paid because they did not have any godfather – and very many of them come from Acholi, a few of them from Lango, and others.

Parliament took a decision that the people who were approved and verified by March 2018, confirmed by a letter from the Clerk on 3 April, conveying that information – these people were identified and Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) confirmed their verification.

Madam Speaker, we want to know why these people are not paid. Their properties are being sold every other day. Many of them come from our constituencies and they are crying - and even accuse others. They say these big companies like Aponye Uganda Ltd from Rukiga are being paid. Where do you expect the Acholi, Lango and Bukedea traders to go *- (Laughter)-*

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Cecilia Ogwal, I would rather we do not tribalise this thing – a trader is a trader, wherever he or she comes from*. (Applause)*

We asked the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to bring an addendum to this House and he promised to bring it at the end of June. Could we have the addendum from South Sudan to that effect?

2.46

**THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama):** Madam Speaker, I am going to call the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to come and give us the progress report about that. He was supposed to be here at the end of June, but we were still in recess. I am going to call him so that he can bring it.

**THE SPEAKER:** Can we have the progress report tomorrow?

**MS NAKADAMA:** He is going to bring it tomorrow. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. I had an interaction with the Speaker of Parliament of South Sudan and I asked the Speaker that we needed an addendum to that effect. The Speaker requested us to write to her and we have written. The only thing left is a follow up by the minister.

We sent the resolution of Parliament to the Parliament of the Republic of South Sudan. What is delaying the payment is basically the addendum. The Government of Uganda is willing to pay the traders so let us have the addendum in place.

2.48

**MR ALOYSIUS MUKASA (NUP, Rubaga Division South, Kampala):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of public urgency in regard to the global outbreak of *Monkeypox*; an infectious and potentially fatal disease, which has so far been reported in more than 51 countries across the globe, including the United States, several European countries and 12 African countries including Ghana, Morocco and South Africa.

The latest report from World Health Organisation shows a sharp increase in infection rates globally, with a risk of the infection becoming -

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Aloysius, we are talking about “national importance” not international - *(Laughter)* Is it affecting any community in Uganda?

**MR MUKASA:** Madam Speaker, it is a very big scare to our nation –

**THE SPEAKER:** It is not a scare; we are ready for it.

**MR ALOYSIUS MUKASA:** But, of course, I am ready –

**THE SPEAKER:** Let us discuss what is happening. What is the matter of national importance now? Where are the floods? Next item.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER ON ENHANCEMENT OF PAY FOR PUBLIC OFFICERS AND ONGOING INDUSTRIAL ACTION BY UGANDA NATIONAL TEACHERS’ ASSOCIATION (UNATU)

**THE SPEAKER:** Members, you need this statement more than anything.

2.50

**MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso):** Madam Speaker, you had said yesterday that the designation to committees was very urgent. You actually promised that today, we should raise these matters of national importance that were very urgent yesterday.

The matter that I brought to the attention of your Office this morning is a matter of both security and Uganda's foreign policy.

**THE SPEAKER:** What was the matter?

**MR SSEMUJJU:** I brought it to your Office.

**THE SPEAKER:** Which one was that?

**MR SSEMUJJU:** It was a matter on security and foreign policy.

**THE SPEAKER:** What is it?

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Let me say it. The Parliament of the Democratic Republic of Congo took a decision to cancel the deployment of Ugandan Forces in Congo. The complaint was that one of the senior UPDF officers had said he supports M23 rebels. There was actually a protest that followed against Uganda and Rwanda. The same UPDF officer – that I will name later - said he supports Tigray rebels in Ethiopia, something that has caused us problems.

Madam Speaker, that is the matter I brought to your Office seeking Government to explain whether this particular UPDF officer, Lt Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, operates another army that supports rebel groups in the neighboring countries, something that is going to cause us a problem as a country; both security and foreign policy problems. I registered that matter in your Office this morning, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssemujju, that is a very good issue. You have raised a very important issue. Where can we get that information from? I am actually hearing this for the first time. Where can we get this information from to help us refer to it?

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Madam Speaker, I am giving you the information.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssemujju, you are one of the respected legislators in this House. I want to have something like, “In the *Hansard* of DRC, this was a resolution....” When we pass a resolution in this House, we extract it and say, “This is the resolution of the Parliament of Uganda.” Give me evidence that this is what happened in the DRC Parliament, which says that this is the statement that was given and we take action as Parliament. Nobody is above the law.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I watched an *Al Jazeera* broadcast - but if you want more evidence –

**THE SPEAKER:** Give me the evidence and we will act.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** If you want more evidence, I will bring it tomorrow, including a report in the media in Ethiopia about this particular UPDF officer supporting Tigray rebels. I am going to bring that evidence tomorrow.

**THE SPEAKER:** Give me the evidence to the effect –

**MS PATIENCE NKUNDA:**I rise on a matter of national importance.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable, we have moved to the next item; you will raise the matter tomorrow.

**MR SSENYONYI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a procedural matter. Thank you for allowing me time to raise it. I do not intend, in any way, to dispute or disagree with your ruling but I wonder whether it would not be procedurally right for you to ask the Minister of Health - because the issue that has been raised by my colleague, Hon. Talton Aloysius Mukasa -*Monkeypox* is a potentially debilitating disease. I think it will be good for the country to get some kind of assurance from the Ministry of Health.

You know, COVID-19 began in China and elsewhere, and we did not think it would come here but it eventually did. My colleague’s concern is that it just might. We do not want it to come here, but it just might yet it is potentially debilitating.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, wouldn’t it be procedurally right for you to ask the Ministry of Health to assure the country on this matter?

**THE SPEAKER:** It is not procedurally right to challenge the ruling of a Speaker. That is one. Two, we have two reports on health. That is where you should raise that issue. It is on the Order Paper and it is the next item. The minister is going to give us a report on what is happening and the actions that – that is what you need to raise in the next item.

**MR SSENYONYI:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker,

**MR KATUSABE:** Madam Speaker, you had cleared my procedural issue. Excuse me, Sir! The Speaker had already cleared me and just because I am a gentleman, I had to leave room for the Speaker’s guidance.

**THE SPEAKER:** You speak.

**MR KATUSABE:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Yesterday, around 11.37 a.m. I was in your Office and I placed a matter of national importance in the relevant office. I am seeking your guidance whether I should wait for tomorrow or my matter was skipped because it was absorbed by the relevant officer in your office.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, I have scheduled you for tomorrow.

**MR KATUSABE:** Much obliged.

**THE SPEAKER:** You know, when Hon. Sarah Opendi raised a matter of national importance, I thought she was raising for both of you. *(Laughter)* It is for tomorrow.

**MR KATUSABE:** I will wait for tomorrow and I appreciate it.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, the plight of teachers and their recent industrial action remains an urgent issue and a matter of concern in Uganda, which requires a sustainable solution.

Yesterday, we received a report that the teachers had agreed to call off their industrial action and return to the classrooms pending Government action to address their grievances.

Still, yesterday, we also received a report from the ministers of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and Public Service, which we feel should be presented to the House, for you to know what is happening. Education is not only a universal equaliser, but also the most valuable avenue for skilling and retooling the population.

Therefore, to our electorates, we owe it the responsibility to ensure that they perform, are motivated and satisfied with whatever they are doing.

When you have a population of teachers that is unhappy, they cannot grow better leaders like you. You are better leaders because of the kindness of the teachers you have had.

Therefore, we will receive the statement from the minister and I hope it will contribute to getting a sustainable lasting resolution for the sector.

However, our teachers also need to know that, yes, we value them so much but we also have other sectors and we must also look at our resource envelope. So, we must have a win-win situation. Honourable minister?

2.59

**THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE (Mr Wilson Muruli Mukasa):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker -*(Interruption)*

**MR OPIO:** Madam Speaker, I rise under rule 45(4), which provides that where there is a question to the ministers, they are supposed to respond within two weeks.

Madam Speaker, about four weeks ago, I wrote to the Minister of Public Service on similar matters, regarding the impending strike by the Uganda local government workers and the non-deployment of the staff of MoSTI (Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation).

Wouldn’t it be procedurally right that the Minister of Public Service also gives a statement on those two matters either now or at an appropriate time?

**THE SPEAKER:** You wrote to the minister as you – did you bring it to the House?

**MR OPIO:** Madam Speaker, I made a written submission to the minister based on rule 45, which provides that he should provide a response.

**THE SPEAKER:** Rule 45 is for questions for oral answers and there is a procedure. Honourable, can we have the minister present the report? We want to debate that report and dispose it of.

**MR OPIO:** Most obliged.

**MR MURULI:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. This is a statement on pay enhancement for public officers and the now-not-ongoing industrial strike that had been called by the teachers under their union, UNATU, which fortunately came to an end.

Madam Speaker, just by way of background to the pay enhancement of public officers, we shall recall that the Government has since the 1990s undertaken a number of reforms aimed at improving efficiency and effectiveness of the Public Service and, ultimately, improved service delivery to the citizens of Uganda. These reforms include the Public Service pay reforms.

As part of the Public Service Reform Programme, the ministry embarked on salary reforms that aimed at improving the welfare of public officers. The achievements of these reforms have been registered in a number of areas, notably; relatively improved pay levels in the public service, payment of salary by the 28th of the month, computerisation of the salary processing and payment, to mention but a few.

Indeed, there has been notable increase in the pay of public officers over the years. For instance, the salary of a Grade III teacher has over the years increased from Shs 240,640 per month in Financial Year 2009/2010 to Shs 568,166 per month in Financial Year 2021/2022.

The Ministry of Public Service, under Section 7 of the Public Service Act, is mandated to receive and consider, on behalf of Government, proposals for remuneration and benefits to persons whose emoluments are payable from the Consolidated Fund or out of monies provided by Parliament.

In line with the above mandate and following proposals submitted by the Minister of Public Service, Cabinet in 2017 approved the pay policy for the Public Service to be implemented in a phased manner, starting in Financial Year 2018/2019.

The approved pay policy proposals, however, presented significant financial implications in short, medium and long term. Cabinet, as a result of the huge financial requirements, directed a phased implementation of the pay policy. Accordingly, Shs 525.1 billion was provided for pay enhancement of public officers under phase one in Financial Year 2018/2019 as follows:

1. Medical workers
2. Scientists other than medical workers
3. Legal professionals and prosecutors
4. Post-primary teachers, tutors, instructors, head teachers, deputy head teachers, principals and deputy principals
5. Chairpersons of the District Service Commissions
6. Local government political leaders
7. Uganda Police and Prison staff in salary scales U6, U7 and U8
8. UPDF militants from the ranks of Private to Sergeant
9. Teaching and non-teaching staff in public universities

In Financial Year 2019/2020, funds were provided in the budget for pay enhancement under phase two, covering the following categories:

1. District Health Officers and Assistant District Health Officers
2. Specialist medical offices/dental surgeons, pharmacists in salary scare U2
3. Consultants/senior consultants/directors of hospitals
4. Health professionals at the level of assistant commissioner, commissioners, directors, Director General of Health Services
5. Legal professionals in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.
6. Justices, judges and judicial officers.
7. In the education sector, Shs 135 billion was provided for enhancement of teaching staff in the sector other than in the public universities and Shs 15 billion for teaching and non-teaching staff in public universities.

Due to the global economic slowdown occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic it was not possible for Government to provide adequate funds for salary enhancement in Financial Year 2020/2021, in accordance with the approved pay enhancement roadmap. Government was, however, able to identify 50 billion for enhancement of pay for the Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, teaching staff from salary scales M3 to M7 in the universities and non-teaching staff (scientists) in salary scales M3 to M7 for the public universities.

In Financial Year 2021/22, it was not possible to provide funds for salary enhancement in accordance with the approved pay enhancement roadmap, again, due to the global economic slowdown caused by the COVID-19.

Now, in Financial Year 2022/2023, Cabinet considered prioritising the enhancement of pay for scientists, including science teachers. The scientists are critical and, indeed, very crucial and are needed immediately in supporting a number of crucial sectors such as agriculture –[Ms Cecilia Ogwal: “Order.”] *(Laughter)*

**THE SPEAKER**: Honourable, let him finish –[Ms Cecilia Ogwal: “No, order.”] *(Laughter)* I am the Speaker. *Imat,* can you sit? Let him finish reading the report.

**MS CECILIA OGWAL:** No, order.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am the Speaker. Hon. Ogwal, can you sit? Let him finish reading the report. I know you are not a science person, you pursued Music Dance and Drama (MDD). Let him finish and then you will respond. *(Laughter)*

**MR MURULI MUKASA:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Crucial sectors in the development of the economy such as agriculture industry, information, communication technology and national guidance and infrastructure development and so on that that will give us moneyin many forms, including taxes that will enable us to cover more priorities, including paying all our public servants better.

Now, it is clear knowledge that the Uganda National Teachers’ Union (UNATU) started industrial action on 15 June 2022, alleging that the Government was implementing discriminatory salary enhancement as opposed to honouring the commitments made in a collective bargaining agreement, which was signed with the Public Service Labour Unions on 22 June 2018.

It should be noted from the onset that the industrial action of UNATU was in contravention of Section 7(2) and 8(3) of the Public Service (Negotiating, Consultative and Disputes Settlement Machinery) Act, 2008.

UNATU did not give a 90 days’ notice as required under that section of the Act.

Notwithstanding, however, the above, His Excellency, the President invited the leadership of UNATU to a meeting at State House on the 18 of June 2022, and at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds on 4 July 2022, to discuss this matter of the industrial action.

The meetings were attended by the Honourable First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, the Minister of Public Service, the Attorney-General, the Minister of State for Education and Sports, permanent secretaries of Public Service and education and sports, members of the executive committee of UNATU and other government officials.

His Excellency, the President, emphasised the Government’s commitment to enhance the salaries for all public officers, but in a phased manner; this time, beginning with scientists. And he called upon the leadership of UNATU, to call off the strike.

The Government, through the Office of the Vice-President, the Office of the Prime Minister and the ministries of Public Service, Education and Sports, again continued engagements with the leadership of UNATU together with other key stakeholders in order to resolve the issue of salary enhancement for the teachers championed by UNATU.

The Government indeed has taken serious consideration of the concerns raised by UNATU. The concerns have been discussed by the Executive and the Government is committed to implementing the approved payment plan within the medium-term, concerning all teachers, including primary school teachers, and indeed, over the medium-term, the employees of the entire Public Service, who have not had any enhancement.

Madam Speaker, the Government continues to be committed to salary enhancement in a phased approach, in accordance with the pay policy principles and the targets, which were approved by Cabinet in 2017.

The Government intends to enhance the pay of all its employees in the medium-term. As the resources become available through the further expansion of the economic sectors, that have recovered, like agriculture, industry services, etcetera.

I wish in conclusion, to commend the leadership of UNATU and the teacher’s fraternity, for accepting to call off the industrial action and urging teachers to go back to class.

They indeed called off the action. As we talk now, very many teachers have gone back to class. This is a step in the right direction and the Government of Uganda reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that the proposed payment plan and targets are realised in the short, medium and long-term.

I beg to present, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, Hon. Minister, for your statement. I note that while you have provided us with an elaborate background on this matter, the background is really elaborate, but the planned actions by Government is quite brief: it is lacking something that should be done.

You cited engagement between the Office of the Vice-President, the Prime Minister, Ministry of Public Service and UNATU, this has been going on annually for the last many years, and yet the industrial action has continued and no improvement has been done in their working conditions.

And if you are talking about working conditions, start with the Uganda Police Force that keeps us. When you look at page 5, you said that the Government is implementing an approved phased pay plan for the teachers in the entire public service in accordance to the 2017 policy principle and targets approved by the Cabinet. If indeed it was effective, we would not be facing this industrial action, honourable minister.

If you had implemented that in a phased way, we would not be witnessing this and that is an embarrassment to us. Of course, you cannot give what you do not have. If you do not have, you rather say you do not have, but you cannot keep promising what you cannot fulfil. And these people understand. If we do not have, we do not have.

More importantly, there is a need to harmonise the remuneration scale throughout the Public Service. This will cause equity and equality. We all do the same work but create some kind of equity. There are no people who are more important than others. We really need to look at this in-depth: let us look at various sectors and see how we can harmonise the station and this is a precondition for motivation of these workers.

That is why Hon. Cecilia Ogwal was shooting up. Hon. Cecilia, I am going to allow you to speak. Any such harmonisation and revision of the remuneration of the public servants should be taken in consideration for the sake of equity in the whole country so that other people are not demotivated.

We are cognisant of the fact that we have been having COVID-19 and we have had challenges, but we need to make sure that everybody is happy and there is equity.

You will find the public there complaining; why are the Members of Parliament paid very highly? Are we scientists?

*[Honourable members: “We are more than* *scientists”] -* And yet we get very little money.

I am going to allow the shadow minister to give us the shadow statement and then we debate them at once. Hon. Cecilia Ogwal, you will seek the clarification after we have heard from the shadow minister.

3.19

**THE SHADOW MINISTER OF EDUCATION (Ms Brenda Nabukenya):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand to make a statement in response to the statement presented by the Minister of Public Service on the enhancement of pay for public officers and the industrial action by UNATU.

On 24 August 2021, the Government announced that the Cabinet had passed a resolution to increase salaries of scientists including STEM teachers (those who hold Bachelor of Science with Education, Bachelor of Science and Post Graduate Diploma in Education). The average monthly salary per teacher would in effect rise to between Shs 3 million and Shs 4 million.

The Government claimed that the proposed salary enhancement was in line with the National Development Plan III 2020-2025 and the NRM Manifesto of 2020-2026, whose successful implementation hinged on science and innovation.

In his speech on the National Teacher’s Day in 2021, the President emphasised the advancement of science and technology, quoting that it was the driver of society from the days of early man to this point. It was from this, that he emphasised that science teachers’ salaries would be increased first, as per the NRM ideology, and that no organ or body would stop it from happening.

Current status

Effective this new Financial Year 2022/2023, science teachers will earn as follows:

1. Graduates – Shs 4,000,000
2. Diploma holders – Shs 3,000,000.

This will present an increment of 300 per cent, compared to the Financial Year 2021/2022 salaries.

The supervisors of these science teachers remain head teachers, many of whom studied humanities and will be earning significantly less than the teachers they supervise.

The move to treat workers of the same level such as teachers of senior five classes differently is a total contravention of Articles 21 and 42 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, which provides for equity amongst Ugandans who are providing similar services.

The minister’s statement is full of Government’s wishes to transform the country from science against humanities. This is being made without evidence from anywhere in the world.

More negotiations were held between UNATU and Government. During 2022/2023 Budget Speech, Government confirmed its plans to prioritise enhancement to a selected category of teachers, considered scientists. This enhancement was to apply to teachers considered scientists in secondary schools since the categorisation does not apply in primary schools.

On 7 December 2021, when schools were still under lockdown, the Leader of the Opposition made a statement on the Floor of Parliament, in which he warned against the Government's decision to discriminately enhance the salary of teachers. He cautioned that the planned proposal would cause a rift between science teachers on one part and teachers of humanities on the other.

Madam Speaker, there is a dilemma. There are many public servants who are not members of any worker’s union. There is a table which I am not going to go through in the uploaded statement. These are equally affected in the same way as teachers.

In summary, as the Opposition, we recommend that:

1. The establishment of the Salaries Review Commission be fast-tracked. *(Applause)* The purpose of this commission is to streamline earnings for all public officers.
2. We support the establishment of a temporary and special allowance to increase workers' pay in order to have full control of future pension obligations. We note that until a Bill to establish the public service pension fund is processed, it is reasonable to increase workers' pay through enhanced allowances.
3. Government should respect the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) that was signed with the different worker’s bodies in 2018, and commit resources to fulfilling the promises made thereunder. It is attached. I will lay it on the Table.
4. The minister should immediately provide to Parliament a report on the total number of arts and science teachers as well as the total amount of salary enhancement shortfall.
5. Government should immediately present an amendment Bill to the Appropriation Act for Parliament to provide additional financing for purposes of enhancing wages for all teachers including arts teachers.
6. The minister should Table, for consideration, a full salary enhancement plan with specific timelines for Parliament to consider.
7. Government should equitably allocate the monies budgeted for science teachers – just in case the resource envelope is not enough – to benefit arts teachers as well. After all, science teachers have since 2012 been getting 30 per cent over and above their counterparts.
8. Government should identify all the other brilliant innovators who do not fall in the category of “Scientists” and have them rewarded for the contribution they make to this country.

There is a Rewards and Sanctions Committee under the Ministry of Public Service Standing Orders, but this committee is not functioning. Teachers are not motivated. If we were seeing rewards and motivation, we would see a difference. Maybe we wouldn’t be where we are if ministries respected and implemented the agreements they have been entering with the union. But because they do not, that is why we are here.

We support the policy of identifying talents and individuals with special abilities to innovate. Such persons may not necessarily be formally trained as scientists but could be from any discipline, including humanities. I beg to submit.

I lay on the Table the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Uganda and public service labour unions, including the Uganda Medical Workers’ Union –

**THE SPEAKER:** When was it signed?

**MS NABUKENYA:** This was signed in 2018 between the ministries, provided for by the Minister of Public Service –

**THE SPEAKER**: Is it 2017/2018?

**MS NABUKENYA:** Yes. And it was supposed to be implemented in phases, but the ministry walked away from this agreement. That is why we are having industrial actions by the different service unions.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, Hon. Nabukenya, for the elaborate report and actions that should be taken. I now open the Floor for debate. I will start with a point of order from Hon. Cecilia Ogwal. We have 30 minutes to debate this.

**MS CECILIA OGWAL:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am seeking clarification. The minister has made some fundamental statements that I am not very comfortable with. He said that the process of salary enhancement started with the science teachers, because he considered science very important.

My only curiosity and concern is: where do we get this fundamental statement that science as a subject or as a field is more important than the rest? I just want to know, so that I learn. Because over the years, as I grew up, I never saw the demarcation between sciences and arts.

In fact, I always envied those students who are genius in history because I couldn't manage history, you have to remember and that was my disability.

So, somebody must tell me how sciences eventually have been distinguished as being most important. I want to know so that we move either with the global trend or our national trend and if it is a national trend, on what basis do we say that science is most important?

The second point, the minister said that the union did not comply with the 90 days’ notice. But I think my nephew, the minister, probably is growing older than me, because memory sometimes defeats us, the elderly. The minister ought to remember that this industrial action started in 2019 and it was only suspended in order to allow pacification, discussions and negotiations.

Even this one, which has been going on until the President intervened has not ended; it was only suspended pending several things to happen. But for me, as a leader, I wonder how we can sit in this House, presided over by a lady - we show concern about national issues generally, particularly about areas where people need to focus more.

How can we sit here and say, let the arts teachers earn less yet you have not even defined to me what subject one must teach in a class in order to qualify to be an arts teacher or science teacher – with my age, you have to be careful where to stop me from.

Finally, the minister did not come up with an action plan; it is not clear. I would want the minister to end by giving us the precise action plan and this industrial action will come to an end. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** That is what I said in my communication. The action plans are not outlined and if they did not comply with the 90 days’ requirement, the question would be: “As Government, did we comply with the negotiation agreement since 2017/ 2018?”

3.31

**MR STEPHEN KANGWAGYE (Independent, Bukanga County, Isingiro):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. On my behalf and on behalf of people of Bukanga, I want to take this opportunity to thank the teachers who sat with the President and indeed agreed to go back to teach our children. They have portrayed the real spirit of patriotism and nationalism. Indeed, they love their country and Ugandans.

Madam Speaker, I would like to state that I am somehow tortured to learn that we can make some differences and discriminate some people. Because if you say that indeed you love teachers, who should be a good teacher, and who should not be? Who should not be a useful teacher?

We are going to increase the salaries of science teachers that shows that the other ones are not important. If arts subjects are not important, why shouldn't we say that as a country, we no longer benefit from it; we should scrap it off. But if it is very important and indeed we need it - if there is any opportunity, any chance to increase the salary of teachers, let them also benefit like others.

Madam teacher - *(Laughter)* - I am not a teacher by profession but I love teachers. I am what I am because of teachers.

**THE SPEAKER:** He is right. I am “Madam Teacher” because I am a university don; not just a teacher.

**MR KANGWAGYE:** Thank you for protecting me.

**THE SPEAKER:** And I teach accounting but I am equally very important.

**MR KANGWAGYE:** In conclusion, indeed scientists are needed and are very important but if there is any opportunity, let all those teachers be brought on board and benefit like others. Because in Ankole we have a saying that if you beat children, beat them all in order to bring harmony and peace to the home. If you are to give them what you have, let them all share equally. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER**: Two minutes member.

3.35

**MS BRENDA NAMUKUTA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kaliro**)**:** I would like to thank the honourable minister for the presentation made but allow me point it out that this is a public outcry. I believe we have all witnessed it in our constituencies. Everywhere we go and every time we give speeches, people keep whispering to us to say something about the teachers and it is left blank.

This is a public cry because tripling the salary of a colleague where they are sharing a blackboard, same compound and teaching the same students, is really unfair. And this should be a lesson to the country; let us advocate for equality.

As teachers cry, all public servants are crying too. When the budget was passed and we went back to the constituencies for the parish model programme - Madam Speaker, funds have been embezzled because of the low pay given to the public servants. So, as we advocate for the teachers, all civil servants are crying. Thank you so much.

3.37

**MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want first of all to thank our gallant sons and daughters, the teachers, for having accepted to suspend the industrial action. It is not that the industrial action has come to an end, if he said it has come to an end, it is like he is not aware of the predicament taking place.

For one full month, our candidate classes were not being taught even those teachers who handle sciences were not doing a lot of work. The whole system became paralysed.

One other thing, I request the Executive to reduce on being arrogant. Don't give orders. When you give orders and tell these teachers that their names are going to be deleted from the payroll, it is as if you are not in this Uganda; it is as if you are not on this planet. Remember, these teachers also have expenses that they are supposed to meet.

Besides, even the soldiers – the privates – are crying. They are getting less pay and the conditions that they are going through are very –*(Interjection)*– you can say “order” but let them start behaving the way teachers are behaving and you will know where we are going. You will not like it.

This is because if a soldier at the rank of a private is getting less than Shs 500,000 – and they are even crying. They are lamenting, saying: “MPs, please, help us and also talk on our behalf.” It is as if they do not have their representatives in this House.

Madam Speaker, it is true we need to know where to direct the few resources that we have here. Instead of saying, “Let us increase for scientists,” – but these scientists; what kind of innovation are they are coming out with? Are they inventing something new or they are recycling this kind of – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I know this is a very sensitive matter and I want to agree with Hon. Okot; we do not need to be arrogant. We need to talk to these people with humility. These people are here working; we cannot afford telling the teachers: “If you want to resign, resign”. No! That is a *kiteso* way of handling things. *(Applause)*

When you look at the iPads you are using, they were created by a person who is not a scientist. The person did calligraphy in a certain small university and created an iPad. So, will you call that one a scientist? When we are looking at this, innovation is always not limited to scientists; anybody can innovate anything. *(Applause)*

Can we reduce the time of our debates? There is a procedural matter.

**MR ODUR:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I want us to have the record straight. I am more concerned about the position of Parliament in this debate.

The education committee processed and brought a report to this House. The Committee on Budget processed and brought a report to this House and we adopted – unanimously - that the pay rise should be equal across the board. That was the position of Parliament. *(Applause)*

On 22 June 2022, on NBS TV, I watched Madam Prime Minister – the Leader of Government Business – saying Parliament was the one that passed that biased, discriminatory payment. This record should be put straight because, as a result, the teachers started calling us – and I am sure they have reached many Members of Parliament – blaming us that we are not sensitive to their concern.

Wouldn’t it be procedurally right that the Executive first comes and apologises to Parliament and sets the record straight that, indeed, Parliament is not the one? We provided the money and only heard, for the first time, during the Budget Speech that the salary was going to be paid differently. *(Applause)*

What we provided for was for all teachers to be uniformly paid.

**THE SPEAKER:** There is a procedural matter. Prime Minister, this House –*(Member rose\_)* - Are you a Prime Minister? *(Laughter)*

Prime Minister, the resolutions of this House are binding. If it is really true – we may need to confirm from you that you said that it is the House that made such a resolution – that would amount to blackmail of the august House. *(Applause)*

3.43

**THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama):** Madam Speaker, I need to confirm from the TV programme that, really, it was said so. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** You need to confirm and come and clarify to the House. If it is true that that statement was said, it must be retracted. This is a very sober House; we cannot make such mistakes.

**MR SEKYANZI:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. First of all, I would like to correct that information because I was with her on Bukedde TV. She said; “Teachers have taken industrial action after Parliament has passed the budget,” but not what he has said. So, I wanted to correct that one.

Furthermore –*(Interruption)*

**THE SPEAKER:** There is a point of order.

**MR ZIJJAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. As we were undergoing training – and I remember when the late Rt Hon. Speaker (may his soul rest in eternal peace) was giving us some helpful remarks, he said that we should sharpen our arguments, rather than sharpening our voices.

I am requesting, Madam Speaker, for you to rule on whether it is in order for Members of Parliament to pick up microphones and begin shouting over the roof. It becomes very uncomfortable. So, I wonder whether the honourable member is in order. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable – who is “her”? Who did you mean by saying “her”?

**MR SEKYANZI:** Madam Speaker, I said that during that day, I was with the Prime Minister and she said –

**THE SPEAKER:** Have you become part of the Executive that you are now responding on behalf of the Executive? *(Laughter)*

**MR SEKYANZI:** No. I wanted to give information.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay, sit down.

3.47

**MS IRENE LINDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Fort Portal City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Much as I want to appreciate Government’s commitment to enhancing teachers’ salaries, it was not proper for the minister to demotivate arts teachers by saying that it is only the science teachers who are crucial and they contribute to the taxes of this country. We are all aware that even the arts industry has contributed a lot to the development of this country.

For instance, currently, we are facing a problem of mindset change among our communities in the country and we know it is only the social scientists who can come in to help the country. *(Applause)* So, Madam Speaker,my prayer is that as Government – as Executive – let us ensure that there is equality among all Government workers. I pray, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Christine? Members, I am coming this side; don’t worry.

3.48

**MS CHRISTINE AKELLO (NRM, Erute County North, Lira):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was a teacher; I taught for 10 years. I am now a retired teacher. So, I am going to give you the actual – what happens within the teaching service.

When I was still a teacher, that thing used to happen. I can say history is repeating itself. We have not yet got a permanent solution.

What happens in schools is that the worst performing subject is science. Why? I am going to talk, especially on behalf of the northerners – the rural schools, not urban schools because I was teaching in a rural school. The problem is not about teachers teaching science.

His Excellency is looking at technology, but for us to achieve the technology bit of it, we need to look at the laboratory. We do not have science laboratories in schools.

And most of these teachers are half-baked; they even do not know the content of the subjects they teach. That is why science subjects are the worst done at school.

And during that time, we had what we called PTA, the best-done subject, would be awarded; like if you got a credit, you would be given some money. However, the people that got the least awards were science teachers; the arts teacher were doing better.

Therefore, we need to motivate all the teachers. And for us to achieve the technology, we need to look at the laboratories; let us get *- (Member timed out.)*

3.49

**MR IDDI ISABIRYE (NRM, Bunya County South, Mayuge):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Minister of Public Service for the report. In the minister's report, he assured the House and Government that teachers are back to school. However, there is a scenario of teachers going back to school, but not in classrooms. There must be continuous engagement with these teachers; we should not get excited that teachers are back to school because they might be there but psychologically tortured because their issues were not addressed.

However, we would like to thank Government for these continuous engagements. And we must think about the enhancement of all civil servants’ salaries, because if you look at, for example, the teachers, most of their ATM cards are with the moneylenders. You find a teacher getting a loan for 10 years, but if you look at their payslips, they are getting zero; how can they get motivated to go to school and teach?

Therefore, I still want to call upon Government to fulfil their pledges. Because if this is our commitment, that they start with the leadership of the teachers, let them fulfil their pledges such that we have a country that caters for everyone. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Xavier? Hon. Xavier was my lecturer.

3.51

**MR XAVIER KYOOMA (NRM, Ibanda County North, Ibanda):** Thank you, Madam Speaker for the opportunity. I thank the Minister of Public Service for the report. Honourable minister, in your own report, you have informed us that as Government, you have undertaken a number of reforms aimed at improving efficiency and effectiveness; those should be actually underlined in the Public Service.

And I would like to believe that arts teachers are also part of the Public Service. While the reform is okay, what you are implementing is not okay. You have told us that as an achievement of those reforms, there have been relatively improved pay levels in the Public Service. Would you correct your report and say, “There have been relatively improved selective pay levels in Public Service,” because what we are seeing is actually selective?

Honourable minister, in your free time, try to look at the example of giving us that in 2009/2010, a Grade Three teacher was earning around Shs 240,000; currently that teacher is earning around Shs 500,0000 *–(Member timed out.)*

3.53

**MS LAURA KANUSHU (NRM, PWD Representative):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the minister for his presentation. However, I think that the problem that we have in this country is that we are reactionary. Now we are talking about teachers; we are debating about them -

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, listen to the submission on the reactionary actions that we take.

**MS KANUSHU:** Yes, because the teachers were striking and we are discussing them. However, this is a time bomb that we are sitting on. Before we know it, the public servants will be doing the same.

**THE SPEAKER:** The police.

**MS KANUSHU:** I would like to, therefore, ask the Minister - he did mention that they have a payment plan in a phased manner. I want to ask that we have that as Parliament; we look at it and follow up on that plan. Otherwise, we are going to spend the whole year debating about public servants who are going on strike.

Yes, now it is the teachers; tomorrow, it is going to be another group and is going to be a continuous problem. Can we see how Government is planning to motivate all public servants?

Lastly, Madam Speaker, I have said this before, and I am saying it again; all teachers must be paid equally. However, there is one special category of teachers who must be paid extra and those are special needs teachers. These are teachers who teach our special needs students - the blind, the deaf, and those with intellectual and learning disabilities; they spend more hours and the curriculum is different, and therefore they must be paid higher than the rest of the teachers. And I did not hear that in the minister’s report. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.55

**MS ANNET KATUSIIME (NRM, Woman Representative, Bushenyi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to add my voice and thank all the teachers who have been able to call off the industrial action and gone back to teach. I also want to thank Government for coming up with the resolution that the teachers’ salaries should be increased. Personally, I am a teacher, and I taught for 20 years and I am an arts teacher.

I would like to agree with Government that we need scientists in this country. But we also need arts teachers as well because arts teachers are also professionals; they are highly educated, they are competent and highly skilled. Therefore, if we are to cause socio-economic transformation, we need holistic, equal treatment in this country. I submit, Madam Speaker.

3.56

**MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The provision in the Order Paper has qualified this as an urgent matter.

First, I would like to request the minister to give us an explanation on what he means when he says “medium-term”. I think he should give us a specific period of time.

Madam Speaker as we speak now, there are divisions in staffrooms. In secondary schools, the science teachers are alone and the arts teachers are alone and there is a lot of discrimination. The staff are going to be divided by what we have done as Government.

Madam Speaker, when the parents of one school were invited, the “A” level students, one student- I have evidence to that effect- raised up their hand and asked, “Madam, what is the use of teaching us arts yet Government does not see the value of the arts subjects?”

As we speak now, students are not going to concentrate on reading arts subjects because they have already seen that even Government is not valuing them. This is very dangerous.

Since their curriculum has both arts and science subjects, let all teachers be given equal pay, then Government can encourage science teachers indirectly by giving them some small allowance provided the salaries are the same.

Finally, I want to say, “Thank you, teachers.” Now that teachers have respected the voice of the President, and gone back to the classroom, Madam Speaker, why can’t we look for something and have a supplementary budget presented to this Parliament, and we approve it to enhance the salaries of the arts teachers?

Teachers are pretending –*(Member timed out.)*– Madam Speaker, let me share this with honourable members. Teachers may go back to the classroom but not do any work, and wait for salary. There will be no real teaching. Let us act as Government to rescue Uganda.

3.59

**MR SIMON WOKORACH (NRM, Aswa County, Gulu):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity. I want to agree with you, Madam Speaker, when the minister was making his submission here –

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, do not repeat what has been said.

**MR WOKORACH:** I am not repeating. Madam Speaker, you talked about the action plan. The clarification I want to seek from the minister who presented is about the lost time. When teachers laid down their tools, a lot was disrupted. What are the strategic plans Government is laying to recover the lost period?

When Government schools were on strike, the private sector was carrying on. By the way, this is the term when schools are supposed to sit for mock exams. The same paper that pupils from private schools are going to sit for, is what pupils in Government schools will also sit for. When you come to Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), it is the same paper. What are we going to do, as Government to ensure that these people compete and score the same marks? I submit.

4.00

**MS AGNES KUNIHIRA (NRM, Workers):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank Members for this serious debate. My colleagues and I were part of the negotiating team. The minister has continuously mentioned the same word “mid-term” but without any plan or sharing the information.

This is a constitutional matter; it is very clear in Article 40(b). You cannot pay people doing the same work different salaries. Therefore, I pray that Parliament takes a serious decision. Government cannot violate the rights of its workers but expect the private sector to come out and do otherwise.

Madam Speaker, science begins at primary school level yet they have not considered primary school teachers who are teaching science. Primary school teachers earn Shs 560,000, without tax, and they are taxed Pay As You Earn (PAYE). Their net pay is around Shs 400,000.

Madam Speaker, you know the cost of living. Renting a house, in the worst area is around Shs 200,000. Maize flour is now Shs 3,500 per kilogramme. Really, how do we expect teachers who go in the morning and leave at 6.00 p.m. to survive? Has the ministry taken a serious interest to know how these people survive? They survive locally. They are living miserably and cannot even educate their children in the best schools, yet they are educating other people’s children.

Parliament should not leave this issue to be handled by Government alone. We should come in and defend the rights of workers in this country. *(Applause)* Thank you.

4.02

**MR WILSON KAJWENGYE (NRM, Nyabushozi County, Kiruhura):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. First, I agree that the teachers are with us in the same struggle to transform society. When I say “teachers”, I mean both science and arts teachers. We cannot transform this society if we have disgruntled teams.

There are better ways to incentivise science teachers without demoralising the arts ones. I think this should be the issue. We can give equal pay but incentivise science teachers, and still transform this society.

Secondly, during recess when I was in my constituency, I asked teachers why they were on strike. This is what they told me - They are not on strike because science teachers have been given more pay but because there is a breach of an agreement. I was not privy to this. I am happy that the honourable minister has put it forward. It is incumbent upon Government, as the party on the negotiating table to respect the agreement it signed. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, I am a proponent of science education as a core to transforming society. Right now, Ugandan children below 15 are holding our flag in Dakar, Senegal. They have become No.4 on the Pan-African Continental Robotics. They were sponsored privately. I pray that when they return, we pay tribute to them. These are our children that are holding the Ugandan flag at the continental level.

I beg to say that if we have money, it should be money for all workers. If we do not have the money, then we do not have it. However, there is a way we can incentivise science teachers for purposes of transforming our economy.

As I conclude, I beg that when the Ugandan children in Dakar return, we pay tribute to them, while they are in the gallery. I submit.

4.03

**MS AGNES ACIBU (NRM, Woman Representative, Nebbi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. First of all, I stand in the shoes of the teachers and feel how tight they are. As we talk about the plight of science teachers, there is something worrying me.

Now, we are happy that the teachers have gone back to school, but as they enter class, we are not aware of the content they are handling. Most of these learners, especially in secondary schools can assess the performance of the teachers. As I sit here, I am worried. Therefore, if we do not handle this issue carefully, we are going to hear a number of strikes in the country. The little we have is going to be completely destroyed.

I want to say that we are the voice of the voiceless. People out there have trust in us. Therefore, we must come up with something, which is very objective. We should console everybody. If we do not have the money, let us say we do not have it. If there is; the little we have, let us share it with everybody. Remember, it is not only the teachers. Tomorrow, there will be another group. Thank you.

4.05

**MR BASHIR LUBEGA (NRM, Mubende Municipality, Mubende):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I seek your indulgence; I am very allergic to a mask, but I have it. I also want to thank the minister for his submission.

I want to bring to the table two concepts that seem to be confusing to some of our teams in Government. There is the issue of efficiency and effectiveness. One of them means, “Doing the right thing,” and the other, “Doing the thing right.” At times, those words are used interchangeably.

I agree that Government is doing the right thing by enhancing the payment –*(Interruption)*

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Madam Speaker, the procedural issue I am raising is: I have seen colleagues say that they have acquired certain diseases. The reason we put on masks is not only to protect ourselves but also to protect those near us. Can we gazette a corner in Parliament for those who are allergic and have diseases and we sit them somewhere? *(Laughter)*

Or like you have said, Madam Speaker, we have a minister who is permanently on Zoom, we can ask those who have allergies to attend Parliament on Zoom instead of spreading *–* [HON. KIBALYA: “Procedure.”] I thought you have been here for some time.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Maurice Kibalya, he rose on a procedural matter.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Madam Speaker, they can also register with your office for you to allow them attend plenary via Zoom. Otherwise, what message do we give to the country that there are exceptions and so, one comes here with their COVID-19, but say that they are allergic and they pick a microphone?

**THE SPEAKER:** Minister of Health, can you advise us?

4.09

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Ruth Aceng):** Madam Speaker, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity. Right now, the number of COVID-19 cases in the country is going up and so is the positivity rate. We also advised Members - and I believe all Members are eligible - to get their booster doses so that they can be protected.

However, the best protection is to observe the standard operating procedures, which is to keep your mask on, at all times, especially when you are in a closed environment like this one. If you are outside and you are alone - when I say outside, I mean outside the closed environment and you are alone, and not near anybody within two metres, you can remove your mask. Therefore, it is imperative that when we are in this august House, we should keep our masks on.

Madam Speaker, you have shown a very good example of keeping yours on at all times. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Hon. Bashir, can you put on a mask and finish your submission? If you do not have a mask you can -

**MR BASHIR LUBEGA:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I agree that the pay rise alone cannot be a panacea to the science promotional agenda of this country.

When you move around to the very many public schools in the country – Madam Speaker, I am a professional educationist and an educational entrepreneur – you will realise that many public schools around the country lack science laboratories. For example, they have no reagents. There is no electricity, but the way the minister is presenting it, it is as if when they increase the pay, it will be sufficient and a panacea to everything.

Lastly, Madam Speaker, I would like to submit that our deeds, as Government and our seniors, must reflect our creed. We must walk the talk. We must say so if we mean it. If we say science is more important than any other thing in this country, then you should also optimise the usage of the few science brains we have in Cabinet and deploy them appropriately in the Cabinet itself. For example, as an indicator and as an example, Madam Speaker, you find *–(Member timed out.)*

4.14

**MS HARRIET BUSINGE (NRM, Woman Representative, Hoima):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to add my voice to thank the minister - and my most respected minister - the Hon. Muruli-Mukasa, for the report.

Unfortunately, when I saw the Order Paper stating that the minister was coming to give a report, in my mind I thought, “We are sorted, as Members of Parliament, because finally, we are going to have an answer to give to the electorate, especially the teachers.”

To my surprise, he did not come out clearly to say when we are getting the money to pay the teachers. There is no mincing words; the teachers want the money.

What the honourable minister was praising UNATU for is not reality; the teachers are terming it as “inverted coercion”. They did not willingly choose to go back to the classrooms. They have been forced to go back there. So, I want to interest my honourable minister to take stock of what is happening in schools; there is no teaching. I followed this up in Hoima District yesterday and today. The teachers are seated; they are not teaching. They are saying UNATU got money and that when they came to Kololo, they were given bags of money; the classroom teachers are disowning the position of the UNATU leadership. Therefore, honourable minister, I pray that, as Government, we look at concretising the issues.

Madam Speaker, the industrial action is not happening for the first time. It was in this House, in the Ninth Parliament when Rt Hon. Amama Mbabazi was the Prime Minister and the Vice-President was the Minister of Education and Sports then - the methodology they were using to handle the teachers *– (Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, when you look at Article 40 of the Constitution of Uganda, on the economic rights, it says:

*“1. Parliament shall enact laws:*

1. *to provide for the right of people to work under satisfactory, safe and healthy conditions;*
2. *to ensure equal payment for equal work without discrimination; and*
3. *to ensure that every worker is accorded rest and reasonable working hours and periods of holidays without pay, as well as remuneration for public holidays.”*

Let us have respect for our Constitution.

4.17

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you for this opportunity. I have about three questions for the minister. My first question is: Do we actually have science in this country? This is because in the primary schools, where we start learning science, I see the science teachers teaching about insects – I am now taking you to the real primary school scenario; you draw an insect and name the body parts.

In social studies, they teach about maps. What is the difference? What we are teaching is basically the same theory. When you say that you should uniquely pay teachers of science subjects more than that teachers of arts, when we do not have science laboratories and equipment, I mean it comes to the same thing.

The second issue relates to what Hon. Cecilia Ogwal raised. Did we do research to find out why we do not have development in our science sector? Is it due to the teachers’ low pay? Do we have information to back that up? Or was it just a position that we came up with - that let us increase the salary? What I am discovering in schools is that it is not the problem of having inadequate teaching; it is actually lack of equipment, lack of adequate books, and the lack of laboratory equipment that is making and pulling sciences down -*(Interruption)*

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Order, Madam Speaker.

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

**MS PACUTO:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I want to make reference to Article 40, which you have just read to us. I want to pay attention to Article 40(b) which says that Parliament shall enact laws to ensure equal payment for equal work without discrimination.

Madam Speaker, the minister presented to us here and said that because of resource constraints, Government is not able to pay the arts teachers what they are demanding for right now but that in the medium-term the Government will do that.

I am wondering whether we are proceeding rightly without knowing from the minister whether at that appropriate time, when resources are available, they will offer equal pay plus arrears that would have accrued to the arts teachers.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** The minister will respond to that. Minister, take note of that and I want you to read Article 40(b) together with clause 2 which says that; *“Every person in Uganda has a right to practise his or her profession and to carry out lawful occupation, trade or business.”* So, we all have a right to do what we think we are capable of doing, but we must have equal pay.

**MR SILWANY:** My last clarification, Madam Speaker, was on the timeline. I wanted the minister to clarify on when Government is going to take action because the promise seems indefinite.

4.20

**MR TOM BRIGHT (NRM, Kyaka Central County, Kyegegwa):** Madam Speaker, however much we are protecting teachers, we are not protecting our children.

When I was in school, I remember one could not get any combination without good results in English Language. You would have to pass some arts subjects so that you could get a very good science course or combination. To use the example of PEM, there is no way you would get PEM without economics, yet economics is not part of science.

I believe that five years from now, our country will lack people studying science unless the Ministry of Education and Sports streamlines the issue of science subjects to be different from arts subjects. I beg to submit.

4.22

**MS PROSSY AKAMPURIRA (NRM, Woman Representative, Rubanda):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to put it on record that I am a science teacher; a teacher of Chemistry and Maths.

I remember – I think it was in the last Parliament, around 2018, when this issue of teachers came up. We stood here and gave explanations on why we could not consider science teachers alone and leave out arts teachers. Today, it has come true that science teachers have been considered and their salaries increased. I do not know whether, like Hon. Tom has said, the Government is aware of the danger of what it has brought.

As I speak now, come next year when we shall be having Senior Six students sitting for their exams, we are going to realise that most students are not going to perform well to qualify for science courses at university.

For you to do mechanical engineering, you must do Physics Economics and Mathematics (PEM), which has Economics. You must have BAG where BAG has Geography. You must have MEG which has economics and entrepreneurship – and very many other courses where arts are really considered and help very much.

There are even courses which up to now I think are supposed to be science courses. In Makerere, today, when you are given an education course of Mathematics and Economics, you are taken as an arts teacher. Therefore, Government needs to be aware of the danger that it is *- (Member timed out.)*

4.24

**MR HILLARY KIYAGA (NUP, Mawokota County North, Mpigi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. As we interrogate the spirit under which Government is moving, we need to get back to who we are. Uganda is naturally an artistic nation. Much as we want innovations, arts have taken this country to the level where it is now. It is unfortunate that before we appreciate it, we want to go to the science advancement, which is not bad. However, we must appreciate that arts have taken Uganda to where it is now.

Madam Speaker, where is the spirit coming from and why now? If we cannot afford having a holistic approach towards this move, why are we taking a discriminative approach? Why are we discriminating against other people? Why are we creating this challenge? As we speak now, as an artist, I see this as an attack against arts in general.

When we go to schools – where we come from, we used to have things like national festivals; they are no longer there - *(Member timed out.)*

4.26

**MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I consider myself a scientist. I want to report that I have learnt of a school where a staffroom is divided into two by a papyrus mat; a section for arts teachers and another section for science teachers. That is the environment we have created, which is very disappointing.

Having said that, I want to learn from the minister; what was the objective of this creation and what is the expected outcome? If it is to create employment, is it a solution to unemployment? If it is to make people innovative, how have they treated people that have been innovative before?

Madam Speaker, I know for a fact that Prof. Ogwang innovated a drug that would cure malaria. What did Government do? They awarded him a certificate and stopped there. They have not helped him to create a factory to produce his medicine. By now, he would be employing many people and he would have inspired many people and, probably, many people would have been more innovative than it is now. Instead, they gave him only a certificate.

So, I want to learn from the minister; what are we curing, actually, by creating a discriminative pay policy? If it is employment, are we solving an unemployment problem? Is it innovation or just to divide - we know, that for fact, they wanted to divide UNATU as an organisation. Is it to divide the workers’ union as they have done? What is the objective?

Finally, Madam Speaker, we have said here that mindset is a problem. Even as NRM came, they said that they are tired of job seekers. Is this solving? Thank you.

4.28

**MR JIMMY AKENA (UPC, Lira East Davison, Lira City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I come from the school of thought that the greatest asset that Uganda has is its people. And for the people to continue, it is our children who must carry our dreams forward.

Clearly, not all of us are going to be scientists. I believe that the education system should be there to enhance the gifts, which our children have. We need to develop their talents and get their knowledge to a level, where they can be competitive in any corner of this world.

There are some of our students who are great athletes and we need to develop those skills. If we expect everybody to be a scientist, we are actually not helping ourselves and we are just creating a disaster. In addition to that, although Government is talking about the development of scientists, I have not seen a Manpower Development Policy from Government, or what requirements do they foresee Uganda needs, that we are working towards developing.

In reality, Madam Speaker, our children spend more time with the teachers than ourselves - nine months in a year, they are with teachers and throughout the day they are with the teachers.

However, we cannot put our children in a toxic environment, where we have divided the teachers and these teachers are the ones who are going to create in our children hope for the future.

I am requesting Government to sit back and review what they are doing and look at the consequences of what is happening. Today, the students have to be competitive. COVID-19 has shown us that with IT, they are going to be in direct competition with other children who are going to be developing all the gifts available to them. If *– (Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER**: Hon. Aol?

4.30

**MS BETTY AOL (FDC, Woman Representative, Gulu City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am a teacher and I want to go down now to a school. Take, for example, Gulu Senior Secondary School; I am a science teacher but forever I said it is not good to divide teachers. Let teachers be treated according to their grades. We used to have grades, and I think we should continue with the grades: certificates, diplomas, university degrees, and so on.

Now, if you go to Gulu Senior Secondary School, you will find that the arts teachers could be over 100 and the science teachers are about 20. You are motivating the 20 teachers and leaving out over 100 teachers. Are we not killing the education system? Education is the cornerstone of our development. If we want our country to progress, even to this money economy that we talk of very much, we need education. Why are we killing education? We are killing education by bringing in a lot of disharmony in the education sector.

Let us motivate all the teachers. When teachers were actually graded, there was a lot of money; now that you are segregating science and arts – I am not so eloquent in English, but I also love the English people: when they speak, I feel very great. In school you start with *– (Member timed out.)*

4.32

**MR STEPHEN SSERUBULA (NUP, Lugazi Municipality, Buikwe):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am a teacher by profession.

Teaching is a passionate job. As a teacher, teachers have been doing this work out of love. That is why you find that teachers are teaching even beyond their load because of their passion to make students pass.

What else can, for example, make us pass a supplementary budget than the future of our children? Outside there, people are saying that MPs are not minding about the future of their children because their children are studying at international schools and even abroad.

Madam Speaker, it is my humble appeal to the Members of Parliament who are here, that we can pass a supplementary budget to bail out our children, not to crucify and curse us in future for having damaged their future. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, let us first not talk about a supplementary budget before we adopt the resolutions. We have not even started using the money for the Financial Year 2022/2023. The money has not been released. Let us not go into supplementary this early. Let us first have the resolutions agreed upon.

Hon. Lucy Akello and Hon. Esther Afoyochan? Is there a motion?

4.34

**MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to start from the point of your guidance, where you said that we come up with a resolution as a House.

My suggestion is, since we have not yet started implementing these, let us put on hold this decision either by Government or what until all these things have been resolved.

Secondly, we are talking about arts and sciences. Hon. Laura Kanushu talked about the special categories of teachers. I want to add the kindergarten teachers; without those teachers who taught you how to count one, two, or even to identify A, B and C, were you going to become a scientist or an artist? These are people who have been completely forgotten.

Let us not look at this debate as a very simple thing. It is bringing a very big problem. I was recently invited to one of the schools to talk to the Senior Five students. Ten per cent of the students in Senior Five were offering arts subjects and 90 per cent were doing sciences.

The 10 per cent who were doing the arts subjects, felt like they were total failures, simply because our Head of State has come out clearly to demonise arts. The students say it is useless *– (Member timed out.)*

4.35

**MS ESTHER AFOYOCHAN (NRM, Woman Representative, Zombo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to stand and categorically say that –

**MR SSEMUJJU**: Madam Speaker, sorry, I did not want to disrupt the Commissioner. In our rules, the ruling party sits on the right-hand side of the Speaker. They have spoken on this matter for almost over an hour. Now, you came to the left-hand side of the Speaker for us to speak, it is also NRM speaking.

**THE SPEAKER:** It is okay; she is an Independent. You will speak after her.

**MS AFOYOCHAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to state that in this matter of salary enhancement, I think Government is setting a very bad precedent. I want to ask the minister; are you ready to enhance everybody’s salary by 300 per cent, including Members of Parliament? This is a very bad precedent that I do not think that Government is able to sustain.

Are we willing to leave everything else and only pay wages in this country? It is my opinion that we reconsider this, before it is implemented. Thank you.

4.37

**MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will be very brief. *(Interjections)* When President Idi Amin captured power, the country was working on decrees; he announced a land decree. One time, he announced another decree that resulted into the expulsion of Asians.

The problem that this Parliament is not dealing with is the problem of “*Aminism”*, - of running the state by directives. On page 38 of the report of the Committee on Education and Sports, this particular proposal came as a way of a directive; that the President has directed…; the President has now signed the National Coffee Bill…; the President has ordered Lubowa… and; the President has now done this.

This Parliament must deal with “*Aminism”*. You cannot run the country by – I am referring to Idi Amin – sleeping and the following day, you announce a policy without research. That is why I wanted to put the Commissioner, Hon. Silwany to order. How can a senior NRM leader, not know that you are dealing with a directive and not a policy? Someone slept somewhere and said, “Now, I direct.”

I pity and sympathise with the senior people, like Hon. Muruli Mukasa. Today, they make you work like a lorry; they load you with charcoal. The following day, they load you with – *(Member timed out.)*

4.39

**MS FLORENCE KABUGHO (FDC, Woman Representative, Kasese):** Thank you, Madam Speaker for giving me this opportunity to talk about the teachers.

It is my prayer that before Government draws a thick line between science teachers and arts teachers, it should first look at the issue of equipping science laboratories and technical institutions. It is a pity that a country like Uganda which produces engineers every year still imports toothpicks from China. The beautiful roads you see around are built by companies from China.

We have to look at the scales for these people. Giving more salaries to science teachers will not solve the problem. The arts and science teachers all go to the same markets. They go to the same hospitals. They take their children to the same schools. So, they should be given equal salaries. Thank you.

4.41

**MR DAVID ZIJJAN (Independent, Butembe County, Jinja):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is not rocket science to appreciate the power dynamics of a meeting between a military General and leaders of teachers. What we need to pay attention to is the setting of the meeting at Kololo, in which, these leaders are said to have agreed to cease their industrial action and go back to school.

The teachers generally have turned against the position that their leaders took. If you investigate further, you might realise that these teachers were coerced, intimidated, and made to accept the directive, as Hon. Ssemujju has been saying.

In contract law, we have a concept called *consensus ad idem* – there has to be a meeting of the minds, where the minds disagree to agree on something. I am inclined to think that the environment under which teachers agreed to cease industrial action was not an environment of equality in terms of the power of negotiation. The President must have intimidated them. He is a five-star military General, and these are teachers. We should investigate those dynamics and see whether they agreed –

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Zijjan, I am not sure that they were intimidated. That is hearsay. Can you withdraw that intimidation part?

**MR ZIJJAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I withdraw the bit that I think that the military General was intimidated and I hold that we investigate as to whether he intimidated them or not –

**THE SPEAKER:** There was no intimidation.

4.43

**MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am on the Committee on Education and Sports, and my wife is a teacher. When I called her this morning to ask if she was in the classroom, she told me; “If your interest is for us to be in the classroom, we will go to the classroom, but shall we be teaching?” I leave it at that.

I have been cautioning teachers in the greater Nebbi because they have a forum where I am. I have been telling science teachers particularly to be careful. They should not celebrate because I know that there is a different aim to this; it is not only about innovation. The other one is that UNATU is growing into a very strong organisation and I want to believe that some of our people are not comfortable with strong organisations; so they want to break them. That is the question I have been asking teachers.

In the Committee on Education and Sports, at one point, when we were discussing this, I asked clearly what language is used for teaching science. If it is not English, then what language will these famous scientists use to teach? You do not want to reward a teacher of English language because that is arts, and yet you are using that language to teach your science. I think we need to be cautious about that.

My suggestion is that we go back and allow the Ministry of Public Service to do its work – *(Member timed out.)*

4.45

**MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today, the President’s vision is on science and all ministers are madly in love with science. When he wakes up tomorrow with another vision, singing praises of arts, all ministers will shift to singing arts. Do our ministers ever advise the President that some visions endanger this country?

Three weeks down the road, our children (the learners) have not been studying. Private schools have been teaching their learners, but Government schools have been on strike.

Madam Speaker, Government must honour the agreement they made with UNATU such that all public servants, especially teachers - both science and arts - are equally paid. Thank you.

4.46

**MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am part of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government of this Parliament and these are some of the issues we have been continuously handling. You are aware that some time back, we had to handle the medical workers and allied health workers.

On top of that, as we are processing the budget, many other unions and associations could show that salary enhancement is due.

The local governments have equally been so disgruntled whereupon the Chief Administrative Officers have got to supervise the district health officers and the engineers who earn much more. That implies that we have a bigger problem.

Cabinet has given us a solution to the planning matters in the country and it has no given model and research. Whereas we are considering the evidence-based approach, no theory has been referred to as supporting the notion that what we are handling, as a country, is what is going to lead us to the best.

As an individual, I am of the science background but there is no way I can ever accept and support this inequality today. Being that we are legislators and parents in the whole country, among our children are the arts teachers, the science teachers, the engineers and the lawyers, among others.

Let's find that parental language to our workforce and encourage it further *- (Member timed out.)*

4.48

**DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka City):** Madam Speaker, I am a scientist by training and by choice. When I went to school, I never expected a day in life -

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, if you are not going to speak on this matter, there is still a very important matter on health. Not everybody will contribute but the next one will get people who have not talked.

**DR BWANIKA:** When I went to school, I never expected a time where I use my profession as an advantage over others. It is wrong in this country to discriminate teachers based on whether they are scientists or artists. That strategy is wrong. For those people who are in education and Government, I want to recommend to you two countries that have used their education as a driver for the economy and have succeeded; one of the countries is The Bahamas and the other one is Finland. Go and benchmark what they did. Last week I visited a university in Italy; they offer a degree in the coffee economics and science yet it is a country that imports our coffee. For us who grow coffee, we do not have that degree.

Government should come up with a paper on how we are going to develop technology and innovation, so that we do not do things by chance. What we are doing now is very detrimental to the teachers. You cannot disorganise education the way we are doing.

Let us come back here with a paper - well researched and studied, so that we can know how we are going to promote innovation and technology. It is not true that science is the domain for innovation. Innovation - *(Member timed out.)*

4.51

**MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The last time I watched Hon. Muruli Mukasa and his colleague, Hon. Dr Baryomunsi on television they were throwing threats at arts teachers rather than calling them for an honest discussion.

These public workers are fighting for their economic rights under Article 40. These threatening messages should stop immediately and the demand for salary increment, cuts across both the public and private sectors; considering the costs and standards of living today.

It is a national problem which Government must address, not forgetting the issue of the minimum wage as this is the only meaningful solution to avoid industrial action. Thank you.

4.52

**MR PAULSON LUTTAMAGUZI (DP, Nakaseke South County, Nakaseke):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. In my village, there is a saying that while one can take the horse to the well, one cannot force that horse to drink water. Teachers have been forced back to the classroom but it should be on record that they are not teaching; they are just there to pass time.

I understand that Government can have a solution because all aspects, all teachers should be treated equally, regardless of whether they are science or arts teachers; they are all equally important.

Some countries have introduced special professional allowances, which are pegged to those who are exceptions in certain professions.

As I conclude, we should find a way of talking to these teachers. Otherwise, while they have gone back to the classroom, they are not teaching.

4.54

**MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu):** Madam Speaker, with your indulgence if I am given an extra minute, it will be useful to this House. I want to correct records; it was in 2011, not 2009 when we were in the Ninth Parliament under the Committee on Social Services because teachers were on strike. That time they met the Prime Minister in his office; they selected only six Members of Parliament from the committee to which I was party.

We agreed with the Prime Minister then that teachers’ salaries be paid in a phased manner, where we gave them 15 percent, then 60 per cent and then 15 per cent until they got their 100 per cent, realising the 500 the minister is saying.

Secondly, let nobody mislead this Parliament that teachers are teaching because they were sent back under duress but we do not have to go deep into what happened.

Kampala District alone has 25 Government secondary schools and 630 private secondary schools. If you want to promote science, that means you must cater for all the schools in the country because you are promoting science.

You cannot have any logic by saying that if you cater for Government schools alone, science will be improved at the cost of private schools because Government is mandated to educate all the children.

There is a wrong perception created by Government that science teachers are at the level of doctors, which is wrong. Doctors spend six years in the university. In education, the one I did, we had 16 course units - *(Member timed out.)*

4.56

**MR KARIM MASABA (Independent, Industrial Division, Mbale City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will join my colleagues in appreciating and thanking the teachers who have decided to go back to teach our learners despite the fact that their demands have not yet been met.

Personally, I am against the Government decision and position of enhancing salaries of only the science teachers. I believe they should do it collectively. All teachers need a pay rise.

According to the proposal, they had suggested to increase that of scientists by about 300 per cent. I believe we could go to 200 per cent, but it should cut across for all the teachers - and maybe 300 per cent in the next financial year for all the teachers, instead of increasing for only scientists now and for the arts teachers later.

So, I believe we need to have more of a step – say, we are going to increase this year by 200 per cent; next year, it will increase by, again, 50 per cent and the other year by 50 per cent. That is my suggestion -*(Interjection)-*

Lastly, before I give way for information, it is good –

**THE SPEAKER:** You are not giving way for information. Leader of Opposition, can you speak?

**MR MASABA:** Lastly, before I sit down, it is good the honourable minister is sitting next to the senior minister, who is the Minister of Health. I believe they are earning the same salary because they are all ministers. For him, he is a minister in the field of arts; he is not getting less than Hon. Dr Ruth Aceng, who is a minister in the sector of sciences.

So, I believe that we need to have a uniform salary because in Cabinet, there is no discrimination. In Parliament, we have no discrimination. Why does the minister want discrimination in schools? Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

4.58

**THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to address myself to the minister’s statement and say it was well stated to include the ongoing industrial action.

Honourable minister, your statement is lacking also on the aspects of science. It should have carried with it some statistics. This House ought to know the total number of teachers – both science and arts teachers – you are earmarking for salary enhancement and, also, the amount of money required for enhancement of salaries of arts teachers. Is it also – because the formula for that of science teachers is now known - over 300 per cent.

This statement is, therefore, very hollow when it comes to that information pertaining the formula you are going to use to enhance the salaries of arts teachers.

Honourable minister, I expected your statement to make a commitment on whether, as Government, you are still interested in harmonising salaries of public officers by constituting a Salaries and Remuneration Review Commission. Your statement remains very shy on mentioning that.

Also, when it comes to timelines and the commitment on implementation of the agreement, you have not, in your statement, indicated when you are going to implement the Collective Bargaining Agreement that was signed way back in 2018 –*(Interruption)*– Information granted.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, can you respond to the questions raised?

**MR NAMBESHE:** Madam Speaker, before he comes, my shadow minister for public service –

**THE SPEAKER:** You have never been a Speaker in the House; you do not give orders.

**MR NAMBESHE:** No, I am requesting. I am just seeking your indulgence to allow the line shadow minister for public service to make a response to his -

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, give us a response.

**MR MURULI MUKASA:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Indeed, I would like to appreciate the concern for the arts teachers and the advice that has been given in this debate, regarding enhancement.

Madam Speaker, let me say from the outset that Government is committed to the enhancement. Now that we are getting slightly out of the COVID-19 pandemic, the report of the Minister of Health notwithstanding, I think the enhancement is now going to go back to its course.

It is true we signed the Comprehensive Bargaining Agreement way back. Part of that agreement was actually fulfilled and it should have gone on course, if these interventions had not taken place. However, we are still committed and, indeed, the way forward now is to have further negotiations with the labour unions so that we can have a review of that agreement and then set it squarely on course.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker –*(Interjections)*– because it would appear, by the microphone being switched off, that, actually, we do not have time. So, let me conclude. The ideas which have been given to us here are indeed very important and they will be used in the further negotiations with the labour unions and making sure that, actually, the enhancement is on course *–(Members rose\_)*

**THE SPEAKER:** I am about to send you people to the National Theatre. *(Laughter)* Can you people sit down?

**MR MURULI MUKASA:** Madam Speaker, in conclusion, regarding the strike by UNATU, I would like to make it clear that there was no intimidation and the leaders of UNATU, actually, having talked and listened to all the stakeholders at that meeting, agreed to put off the strike. Indeed, the Members of Parliament representing workers were also part of that meeting. So, really, it is not in order –*(Interruption)*– it is not in order –

**THE SPEAKER:** *Omusomesa –* I know you are a teacher. You sit down.

**MR MURULI MUKASA:** It is not in order to impute wrong motives of coercion, when actually some of the Members were not there. I was in that meeting. Whatever transpired, I know and it is on record. After all the statements had been made, the leaders of the union remained at Kololo with the MPs representing workers and they talked over the matter. Out of their own volition, they said they should call off the strike.

However, we are going to continue with negotiations to make sure that the proper timeline of enhancement is provided –*(Interjections)*– what do you mean “when is this going to happen” –*(Interjection)*– No, no, no –*(Laughter)*– I am not the Speaker and we would like to wind up.

The negotiations are going to continue. However, beginning next financial year, we shall continue with the enhancement and, indeed, certain sectors of the Public Service, including the teachers whose salaries have not been enhanced this time, will be enhanced.

The question of science or its importance and the critical nature of science, I think, given the short time that we have, cannot be exhausted. We really need a whole paper about this; to really appreciate the importance of science. When we look at the development of societies, science is at the base and then these other sectors of knowledge in the superstructure. Therefore, science, much as scientists may not be very many, is very critical and crucial.

Madam Speaker, countries that have adopted science to a critical mass have developed faster than countries that have taken the arts line. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank honourable members.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, given the magnitude of the issues that have been raised on this matter and the responses of the minister - the minister has responded and as I said before, it was not to our expectations - we need to have - Considering the fact that the report of the Committee on Education and Sports was also distorted, which report was adopted by this House, I now want a normal motion to be presented to this House tomorrow on the resolutions that the House passed from the report of the Committee on Education and Sports on the action plans. That is what we should resolve.

I am selecting five honourable members to draft the motion; the Chairman of the Committee on Education and Sports, the Chairman of the Committee on Public Service, hon. Jonathan Odur, the hon. shadow minister and hon. Kunihira, the workers’ representative - Tomorrow, I need your motion in this House and we will go by those resolutions.

If you have issues that you want to raise that are pertinent to this issue, take them to the committee of five so that we do not have to debate again - We only adopted the resolutions.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH TO SELECTED HEALTH FACILITIES IN BUSOGA, ELGON, BUKEDI, ANKOLE AND BUGANDA SUBREGIONS TO ASSESS THE STATE OF HEALTH CARE SERVICE DELIVERY.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, you know that matters of health are paramount and affect almost everybody. We had our Committee on Health go to those sub regions during their oversight duty and the report is ready for presentation. We will evaluate the action points and see if we can improve the quality of health in this country.

I am also happy that the minister is around. Honourable minister, there was a question that I dodged because we did not have an answer; the issue of monkey pox. How prepared are we to handle monkey pox? Yes, honourable Chairman.

5.11

**THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON HEALTH (Dr Charles Ayume):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Between 30 May 2022 and 3 June 2022, the parliamentary committee, as part of its oversight function, visited five sub regions in this country, which included Bukedi, Buganda, Busoga, Elgon, and Ankole sub regions. We visited 21 districts and 33 health centres, which included three general hospitals, 15 health centres IV and the rest of our health centres III.

Madam Speaker, the committee prepared the report and I beg to lay the report of the Committee on Health to selected health facilities in Busoga, Elgon, Bukedi, Ankole and Buganda sub regions to assess the state of health service delivery together with its appendages; the data collection tools. I beg to lay.

**THE SPEAKER:** Please lay them. The report was uploaded, kindly check on your iPads.

**DR AYUME:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. In the interest of time, I beg that we go to the observations and findings but for the purposes of Members to look at health facilities that may be of interest to them, I beg we go to page 15 which has the geographical scope of the health centres that were visited. That is on page 15.

Madam Speaker, I do not have to read all the 33 health facilities. As you guided, the report was uploaded so, we shall move straight to page 16 which has the findings, observations and recommendations.

Madam Speaker, bullet six highlights the performance of key health indicators at the health facilities. As I had guided earlier, we developed a tool which looked at some of the indicators like theatre functionality. It looks at the outpatients, ambulances and so many other indicators which we shall go through.

When we go to table three, Madam Speaker, we teased out maternal death, stillbirths and early neonatal deaths and the last column is the period. That is on page 16, colleagues. When you look at that table, regarding maternal death, Tororo hospital topped it with six. This is an indicator that as a country, we are trying to fight. Budaka Health Centre IV, three deaths and Muyembe Health Centre IV, three deaths and so forth.

Stillbirth, we can see there were 20 in Tororo Hospital, Budaka Health Centre IV had 20 and Muyembe Health Centre IV had 20 and so forth. Now stillbirth means that by the time a mother gives birth, the baby is dead. It could be macerated or it could be fresh. Macerated means most likely the baby died before the mother came to the hospital and that can be determined from the colour complexion of the newly born dead baby. If fresh, the colour is usually pink and that can be attributed to factors that happened during delivery.

Early neonatal death column is also quite important because a neonate is a baby that is less than four weeks old, that is 28 days so we would want to know, why are these children dying? They are born alive but then die after.

Madam Speaker, the annual sector performance report indicates that we have 92 maternal deaths per 100,000 births. That is the deaths that occur in the health facilities. Of course, there are community deaths and those are a bit hard but we all know that the maternal mortality ratio is 336 deaths per 100,000 births.

I would like to draw your attention to table four, which is on page 18. It shows the key child delivery indicators by the health facility. If you look at the various columns, again Tororo General Hospital led all the health facilities with 2,000 deliveries and 500 caesarean sections.

Madam Speaker, let us try and narrow down our observation to Budaka Health Centre IV, which had 1,250 deliveries and 225 C-sections and Rwekubo Centre IV, which is in Isingiro District at 891 deliveries and 454 caesarean sections. The period of data collection is in the last column.

Incidentally, during my previous assignment six years ago, Budaka was registering zero caesarean sections. They had a medical officer who only worked every Tuesday. The district council was comfortable with that until we arrested him. I am very happy to see that they have 225 C-sections.

Rwekubo, 10 years ago, was a health centre IV whose theatre was a home for goats. I am very happy to say that it has now transformed and we are seeing life being born out of a theatre with 450 caesarean sections. The rest is self-explanatory, according to the table.

On page 20, the committee recommends:

1. Investing in health centres IV will help in strengthening the referral pathway as shown by the good functionality of some health centres IV.
2. The Government, through the Ministry of Health, should compile a report on the functionality of theatres in all health centres IV countrywide so as to develop an inventory of equipment, staff and supplies, among others.
3. Since haemorrhage is one of the leading causes of maternal death, the budget of Uganda Blood Transfusion services should be increased to facilitate the collection of more units of blood. What we need as a country is 450,000 litres of blood per year. We are slightly below this target so it is important that we appropriate more.
4. Government should increase the budget for the National Ambulance System Service so that ambulances are available at the regional call and dispatch centres to meet the increasing demand by health facilities.

Madam Speaker, we move to bullet 6.2, which is staffing levels in health facilities, on page 21. The table speaks for itself and that is table five.

Let us move to table six, which shows the staffing levels of key medical personnel at the health facilities. I must say that as has been shown in table five, there is a lot of disparity between staffing levels across all local governments. The catchword here is: “Local governments.” There are reasons that are peculiar to some of these. Despite the fact that Central Government appropriates money every financial year, this is returned to the Treasury. Some of it includes failure to promote attraction and retention factors like accommodation and remuneration.

In table six, on page 22, we teased out three important personnel:

1. Medical officer;
2. Mid-wife;
3. An anaesthetic officer. These are the ones who put us to sleep in theatre.

That table clearly shows the disparity across all health centres IV. For those facilities that have these cadres in place, they have high output. As I have shown you, Rwekubo Health Centre IV has six medical officers, 18 mid-wives and three anaesthetic officers while if you looked at Nagongera Health Centre IV, they have zero anaesthetic officers. It speaks to why the time we went to visit, they had only done six caesarean sections. Whenever they want to do it, they have to hire an anaesthetic officer from Tororo town at a cost.

Madam Speaker, I beg that we move to page 25 in the interest of time; committee observations.

A lot of money for wages is returned to the Consolidated Fund because District Service Commissions have failed to recruit staff.

Some positions fail to attract applicants due to low remuneration for the health workers and lack of other facilities like accommodation.

There was rampant absenteeism of health workers due to a *laissez-faire* attitude towards work. The monitoring of these health facilities by the Ministry of Health and DHOs is not adequate. The District Health Officer of Bugiri, for example, snubbed calls by the district officials and the parliamentary committee at the time of the visit. They told us that this is the norm.

Health centres found in districts that had health projects or were refugee-hosting, for example, Rwekubo in Isingiro District, had additional staff like doctors and midwives. This translated into higher output compared to other health centres IV.

The committee recommends that:

1. Government, through the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should effect salary enhancements, attraction and retention.
2. Attraction and retention factors of staff recruitment have to be addressed to fill these vacant positions.
3. The Ministry of Public Service and the Ministry of Health should finalise the long-awaited new staff structure. I am very happy that the two ministers are here because whenever we meet, it is the rhetoric of “there is a staff structure coming up.” We want to see this in place so that we can mitigate some of these issues.
4. District service commissions should expeditiously fill vacant positions and confirm staff who have been in an acting capacity.

Madam Speaker, we see this all over the country. Sometimes, clinical officers go back to do medicine for five years, come back and are still paid as clinical officers. We have seen that in the North, in our previous oversight. This was common in Bulambuli in Muyembe Health Centre IV where we have a doctor who has qualified – took study leave and came back but she is still being paid as a clinical officer.

The committee observations

Lack of on-site accommodation for staff negatively impacts on their performance since a lot of time and funds are spent on commuting to and from the health facility.

Recommendations

1. The Government should continue with its efforts of building the stock of houses for health workers’ accommodation at the health facilities.
2. There should be the renovation of accommodation facilities, which are very old so as to enable health personnel to reside at work.

On page 28, that is 6.4, we are looking at the availability of pharmaceutical and medical supplies, which in a layman’s language we call medicine. We took stock of certain types of drugs that we think are essential for the functionality of health centres III and IV. Table seven clearly shows that.

There was a general observation across health facilities visited that anti-malarial drugs – malaria is a number one cause of morbidity and mortality in this country. It was quite sad that there was under delivery of anti-malarial drugs in cycle six. That was the last cycle in June and most health workers were grappling.

National Medical Stores only delivered Coartem 6, which is for children. Most people were told to go and buy thus increasing their out-of-pocket expenditure and of course, poor prognosis and mortality for those who did not have the money.

Committee observations

Rehabilitation at a number of health centres has led to increased patient load yet the budget for medicines has remained static despite increasing prices for medicines due to the depreciation of the shilling against the US dollar.

Stock outs of crucial medicines like anti-malarial – Madam Speaker, I have already spoken about that.

Our recommendation, therefore, is that the budget for NMS should be increased in the medium term to cater for the increasing demand for pharmaceuticals and medicine consumables.

The Ministry of Health and NMS should adopt a bottoms-up approach and get specific requirements for health facilities, which should be proportional to the population and disease burden in the area.

I also want to say that the committee observed that there was a high prevalence of sickle cell disease in the Bukedi Sub region. I want to salute the team at Budaka Health Centre IV for starting a sickle cell clinic; they did not wait but started it on their own. I think these are people who should get medals and be rewarded on some of these big days. There is a scientific reason to the high prevalence.

The state of maternity services

Committee observations

The distance from lower health facilities to higher levels is long and that renders referrals risky for mothers in labour. This is made worse by the lack of ambulances and ill equipped ambulances with no resuscitation equipment, which some of us here buy. They are more of transportation vehicles.

The committee, therefore, recommends that factors that address access to and quality of maternity services should be addressed. This includes midwives, medicines, consumables, infrastructure and equipment.

Hard-to-reach-and-live areas should be prioritised when planning for service deliveries. These are areas like Bulambuli, Manafwa and the island districts of Buvuma, Namayingo and Kalangala.

The state of laboratories

I would like to draw your attention to table eight, which shows us the functionality of laboratories in the health services. This is a very important component because it helps us to diagnose and effectively treat what has been diagnosed.

When we move to page 38, the committee reiterates its earlier recommendation on the need to increase the budget for NMS.

The committee further recommends that the regional maintenance workshops should service the safety cabinets on time so that the laboratories that have these cabinets can function optimally.

Hospital administrators should provide periodic reports to the DHO about the state of equipment in their laboratories.

There is need to ensure that the CBC and chemistry machines, which are very important diagnostic and treatment monitoring tests, should be installed at health centre IVs to reduce referrals. Sometimes, people are referred because they cannot access these very important tests. So, the ministry should prioritise these at health centres IV.

Availability of imaging services

We all know that imaging services are very important in the diagnosis of disease. The committee made an observation to the effect that ultrasound machines, which are one of the most basic imaging services, are lacking in health centres IV but some have taken it upon themselves, through well-wishers, to buy them. For example, one of my colleagues, Dr Kamara has done a good job in his constituency.

Also in Nangongera Health Centre IV, Rotary International bought an ultrasound machine. However, it is not free. They charge Shs 10,000 to 15,000 for maintenance and to pay the sonographer who comes on specific days.

The committee recommends that due to the emerging clinical and public health issues and increase in the population in rural areas, health centres III should have fetal dopplers and ultrasound scans while health centres IV should have fetal dopplers, ultrasound scans and X-ray machines.

Madam Speaker, I would like you to put this into context. An ultrasound machine may cost anywhere between Shs 5 million to Shs 10 million. If we multiplied it times 200 health centres IV, it would cost Shs 1 billion. I want you to underline Shs 1 billion. Those are two V8 Land cruisers. So, if any of our Cabinet officials is devoid of two V8 Land cruisers, we would have all the 200 health centres IV with ultrasound machines. Therefore, let us try and put these things into context.

The committee further recommends that the prerequisite staff should also be included in the human resource structure and recruited.

In the spirit of task shifting, modular courses for sonography can also be made readily available. In some of these areas, we have seen nurses and doctors being trained to operate these machines as we wait for public service to put sonographers on the structure.

“As we wait” - underline that - ultra sound services at a health facility should be free and if it is under private wing services, like in a hospital, it should be declared as non-tax revenue.

Ultra sound and basic services should cascade to health centres IV as a matter of policy.

General observation and equipment

The state of equipment is a very big issue yet we need equipment to functionalise these facilities. We are also saying that there are challenges of power, lack of spare parts, missing parts - Sometimes, there are manuals in foreign languages and these affect the turnaround time of faulty equipment.

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Health should take an interest in cases where equipment breaks down and no report is filed. The ministry should engage managers of the different facilities where these cases have arisen and ask them to show cause as to why no steps have been taken.

Health facilities should regularly establish an inventory of equipment, clearly stating the functional and non-functional equipment and the necessary action. This should be disseminated to the DHO, regional workshops and MOH.

On page 41, at the top, it is indicated that the budget for regional maintenance workshops all over the country was Shs 2.7 billion. Our pleas to increase this to Shs 15 billion fell on deaf ears and we were given Shs 2.7 billion. That means whenever equipment breaks down - In the case of Tororo Hospital, we have a brand new X-ray machine, which has been down for the last two years due to power outages, which blew up a very important component. It was fixed but they are afraid to put it back on again because of the power outages. Therefore, some of the issues of the health sector, as you can see, are not housed in the health sector. This is an energy problem.

The Ministry of Health should recruit more biomedical engineers since new medical equipment is becoming more sophisticated. The technicians are usually used to removing the spare parts and replacing them but now it is more of dot com.

The Ministry of Health should explore the option of having service contracts with suppliers or different procurement options like equipment placement where an X-ray is put and it is not owned by Government. What the ministry does is to pay a monthly fee or what we call reagent markup where somebody puts his machine there and makes a markup on cost.

In these cases, the equipment is owned but maintained by the supplier at a fee. So, we are saying that have a supplier like Philips or Siemens put their machine there and enter into a service contract where they have to come within a stipulated time to service and maintain this equipment.

Some of you may go to health facilities and the weighing scales give you wrong results because they have not been calibrated in a long time. You may go for a glucose test - I am just trying to put this into perspective – and the machine gives you faulty parameters and then we overload you with dexterous.

Disposal of assets should be handled routinely as per the PPDA guidelines. There is a lot of equipment lying in these health facilities that need to be disposed of.

Availability and adequacy of utilities

Utilities in health facilities are still a challenge in terms of electricity and water. Some of the health facilities are off the grid and those that are on grid are grappling with high bills. Some need three-phase power in order to operate. Busolwe Hospital is being revamped but for the new structure that will be put in place, we will need three-phase power and again, that is housed in Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development.

We also recommend that cheaper options such as solar energy and water harvesting systems should be explored. However, I also want to salute the Ministry of Health that for the new facilities they are constructing, they are sinking motorised boreholes and this is somehow saving the issue.

Progress of ongoing constructions in Gombe and Busolwe Hospitals

Madam Speaker, I think my colleagues can read that. These are ongoing works with a few twitches but the committee was fairly satisfied. We have communicated to the Ministry of Health infrastructure department to put good where we found issues.

The ambulance system

On page 46, we have the table which shows health centres IV with ambulances. The table is self-explanatory. For the record, we have three types of ambulances: “A”, “B” and “C”. The one the Ministry of Health is procuring – the Land Cruiser type which has resuscitation equipment – is the ideal type. What most of us gave, as Members of Parliament, is merely a transporter. Page 47 shows the types of ambulances.

Madam Speaker, the rest are appendages to show the ambulances that we have. On page 48, that is a tricycle. Page 50 shows the hardbody pick-up. There are others on pages 51 and so forth. That is the evolution of our ambulance services.

Madam Speaker, on page 54 – in conclusion – all health facilities visited have performed beyond their optimal levels. It shows the presence of Government, despite the challenges faced.

In order to improve health care service delivery, all stakeholders must be involved. Stakeholders at the local community, district authorities, national and global levels, should include political as well as technical and professional stakeholders.

With more vigilance, more funding and more accountability and partnerships, health sector challenges can be addressed. If the above recommendations are adopted, the health facilities will further enhance their performance and the number of referrals to higher health facilities like general hospitals and national hospitals will reduce. This will enable the national hospitals to concentrate on their specialised mandates.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move that this report be adopted by the House.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you so much, Mr Chairman, for a very good report. This report is more of information. I remember the minister presented a comprehensive report to this House and this is part of what they have found out.

There is a motion that is following this report. Once we adopt this report, we will go to the motion. Minister, do you have any anything to say on the report?

5.43

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Ruth Aceng):** Right Honourable Speaker, allow me to thank the chairman and the committee members for the report.

As you have clearly indicated, this report confirms what I presented a few months ago regarding the state of the health sector. Perhaps, I will only comment on where progress has been made.

One, we have to take note that the report is mainly about the local governments. It would have been prudent for the Minister for Local Government to be here because the Ministry of Health cannot attend to some of those issues without the Ministry of Local Government. However, I will comment on a few.

We now have adequate anaesthetists in the country, thanks to the loan that was provided by this august House. We have trained anaesthetists and they need to be recruited. That requires the Ministry of Local Government.

Wage has been enhanced and it is also part of what is required for attraction and retention. The restructuring is almost complete. What we are left with is restructuring of the specialist services and that is where discussion with the Ministry of Public Service is currently ongoing.

On the challenge with anti-malarials – I think I need to comment on this and it is a true finding by the committee. Madam Speaker, right now we are having an upsurge in five or six regions in the country: Karamoja, Acholi, Lango, Busoga and Bukedea with the heaviest burden being in Karamoja, Busoga and Bukedea.

Some people may be experiencing what we call Blackwater Fever, which is killing a lot of children. Because of that, Madam Speaker, we channelled most of the anti-malarials to those areas because we had come to the end of the financial year and we had to cater for those areas.

Right now, a lot of procurement is ongoing to cover the other areas but also enhance these areas as we look for better ways of handling that upsurge of malaria.

Madam Speaker, we have adequate biomedical engineers now in the country. They are already in the new structure and will be recruited.

On the whole, I want to agree that the report confirms what I presented here. We agree that the resolutions should be adopted and this august House should look for money to support the health sector. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. I am happy that the minister has agreed with the findings and the recommendations. The Clerk is going to extract the resolutions of the committee in this report and forward them to the minister for action.

We would want the minister to come and report back to this House on the action taken, issue by issue and hospital by hospital. *(Applause)* Do you have an amendment?

5.47

**MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I earlier informed this House that Prof. Ogwang discovered an anti-malaria drug using our local herbs. Now that we have malaria as a problem, may we amend our resolutions to say that the ministry promotes Prof. Ogwang’s anti-malaria medicine to be used in the affected areas?

**THE SPEAKER:** Is it seconded? By the way, the Government is supporting Prof. Ogwang in whatever he is doing. That is one thing we should know. Any amendment to the recommendations? Yes, Tororo, Hoima.

5.48

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I want to thank the committee for the report and to thank the chair for their flexibility because when they were in Tororo, I asked them to also visit the general hospital. You can see the report that has been presented. Before I give my amendment to the prayer, Madam Speaker, Tororo had the highest deliveries of 2000 babies. That was what was recorded. However, I just want to inform this House that most of these were by child mothers. We had one of the highest numbers of teenage pregnancies and this is what I just wanted to state.

Also, to indicate that, that X-ray machine – the generator board blew and it took the ministry close to two years to have that generator board imported and fixed. Now, everything has been fixed and what is lacking is only a UPS equipment to stabilise the power.

I would like to ask the honourable minister if this can be delivered so that we have X-ray services provided to our population.

The amendment that I wanted to make, Madam Speaker, regards the Result Based Financing (RBF). This was a programme that also helped in improving maternal health in most of these hospitals. So, we urge the ministry to –

**THE SPEAKER:** Minister, are you listening?

**MS OPENDI:** Madam Speaker, there was this RBF Programme and there were a number of beneficiary districts. Specifically, I am aware that there has been a delay in remitting some of this money to these hospitals and that has, in a way, affected maternal health, which had greatly improved in these districts. This is because mothers are picked and brought to the hospitals for attention and that helps in reducing maternal deaths.

The other issue that I wanted to mention, since this report is specific to health centres IV is improving on the referral system. The minister is aware of the ambulance services; the policy that has been pending –

**THE SPEAKER:** That is going to be in the next item.

**MS OPENDI:** Oh okay. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** It is a motion on the next one.

**MS OPENDI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Let me end with the issue of blood shortage. There has been rampant blood shortage and a number of children have lost their lives. You can imagine a general hospital lacking blood and referring a child to Mbale Regional Referral Hospital just because of lack of blood. When we visited Mbale Regional Hospital, it was also referring children to other facilities; a regional referral hospital referring children backwards just because of lack of blood.

**THE SPEAKER:** What is your amendment?

**MS OPENDI:** There is no factory for blood, Madam Speaker. We must ensure that we fund.

**THE SPEAKER:** So, we need a blood bank, which is functional.

**MS OPENDI:** Yes, we need to increase funding to the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services so that they can reach out and collect more blood that can be available to the lower health facilities. That is the amendment.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes, Hon. Acan?

5.52

**MS JOYCE ACAN (NRM, PWD Representative):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson for a good report presented on the Floor of Parliament.

Most hospitals do not have adjustable beds for delivery for mothers who are disabled. Madam Speaker, Members may think that these adjustable beds might be needed only for mothers with disabilities, but I have also learnt that many women, when they are at the critical stage of delivery, fail to climb the high beds. So, these adjustable beds need to be purchased in most of the health clinics. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. People with disability have problems when giving birth in those hospitals. An amendment?

5.53

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM,** **Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Madam Speaker, I thank you and I want to thank hon. Aisha Kabanda because we were with her on the same committee when we were working on the investigation on hon. Musenero and the science innovators. I think that is where she picked this and I also picked the same.

In this country, we have scientists who have come up with innovations, including that of making vaccines. We have factories in Ntinda, Matugga and several others that are coming up, including that of Prof. Ogwang.

Therefore, we should pass the principle, as Parliament, and not make it for a specific individual. The principle should be that as the Parliament of Uganda, we recommend and support all the innovations and the scientists who are coming up with new innovations to provide medicine and vaccines in the country.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes.

5.55

**MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi):** Madam Speaker, my suggestion was that we allow those who have shown us research, first of all, to progress by supporting them financially. You have seen situations where we have supported scientists and they have disappointed this House.

Therefore, not all scientists are equal. Let us isolate them one by one and when you introduce research and we see that you are doing well, we support you. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Asinansi? *[Hon. Olanya: “Thank you, Madam Speaker.”]* Are you hon. Asinansi? *(Laughter)*

5.55

**MS ASINANSI NYAKATO (FDC, Woman Representative, Hoima City):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I am also adding an amendment. Last year when we were debating the status of the health system in this country, we did resolve that all health centres III be upgraded to health centres IV but they also be equipped with human resources, medicine and the basic requirements, which are needed by the doctors to use.

We also resolved that there should be the procurement of CT scans in all district hospitals and I think we did not consider it when we were passing the budget for the next financial year.

Finally, we agreed that we pass 15 per cent of the budget as it was signed by this Government in the UN Declaration for the health sector every financial year.

Madam Speaker, those are my proposals and I beg that they are added to the amendments.

5.57

**MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity. We should not lose a very important point and that is supporting local innovation.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Atkins, we have accepted that amendment. Let us not repeat an amendment that has been accepted.

**MR KATUSABE:** Madam Speaker, I am not repeating at all. I am only reinforcing the point of Prof. Ogwang and how this innovation and the partnership came about.

There is a professor called Pamela Withers. She is an American scientist and is considered the best scientist in the whole world as far as biotechnology is concerned. I would like to emphasise the point that the research, innovation and output from Prof. Ogwang is internationally recognised. I would like to draw our attention to Prof. Ogwang’s publications, published in high-impact journals with believable and credible editorial boards.

At my invitation, Prof. Pamela Withers, the best scientist looking at malaria in the context of biotechnology, has been to this country three times. I think it would be a pity for us, as a country, not to support Prof. Ogwang when looking at his international colleagues that are highly rated. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you are going round and round the same issue. The amendment that we have agreed on is that we need to support the local innovators; scientists and the likes of Prof. Ogwang. That is what we have agreed.

We are also agreeing that since we have so many health centres IV, we need to equip them to be more active. Is that an amendment, honourable chair?

**MR KATUSABE:** The last unique amendment relates to putting a direct correlation between the population and health facilities. I come from Kasese District which has a population of 1.5 million. We have a district hospital called Bwera Hospital, serving 1.5 million people with no CT scan and no Eco-sound system.

I propose an amendment that districts with large populations should also be supported rather than just looking at Kasese people having to travel all the way to Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital or Buhinga as a regional hospital or Mulago National Referral Hospital. We should also relate our health service facilities together with the population for example Kasese District and other districts with higher populations. I think that is very important.

Also, there is a component missing in the minister’s – Thank you, chair, for that powerful presentation. I am now looking at the component of training, which relates to cardiologists vis-a-vis the population. I am made to understand that we have about 15 cardiologists. You can imagine 15 cardiologists serving 45 million people.

I propose that we put a component of training so that we scale up – *(Member timed out.)*

6.02

**MR IDDI ISABIRYE (NRM, Bunya County South, Mayuge):** Madam Speaker, having heard and received the report from the Committee on Health with the amendments that have been proposed by honourable Members of Parliament, I move a motion that the report be adopted.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is it seconded? It is seconded. I put the question that the report of the Committee on Health to selected health facilities in Busoga, Elgon, Bukedi, Ankole & Buganda sub-regions to assess the state of health service delivery be adopted with amendments.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

*Report adopted* *with amendments.*

**THE SPEAKER:** We will extract the resolutions and we want a Treasury Memorandum. Honourable minister, we will extract the resolutions of this House and we will want actions that you have taken. This leads us to the next motion.

Dr Batwa, did you attend the training? You do not switch on the microphone and start shouting “procedure”. This is not a fighting place. What is your procedural matter?

**DR BATWA:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I am the shadow Minister of Health. Earlier on, I had witnessed a precedent where when an issue is on the Floor of Parliament, the shadow minister is given an opportunity to come up with an alternative. On this particular issue, I had a very important amendment to make.

First and foremost, I am from a region that the Ministry of Health clearly indicated is the most burdened with malaria and I had personally moved to these healthcare facilities and established the problems.

The way the report is addressing the problem, by way of a solution - I felt that I should actually put in my view. When we talk of blood –

**THE SPEAKER:** Dr Batwa, first take your seat. The report was circulated. Did you write a dissenting opinion or an alternative position to that effect? Did you give it to our office? What hon. Nabukenya did was very smart. It is not a matter of using a lot of energy. *(Laughter)*

**DR BATWA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am on the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. On the Committee on Health, I am an ex-offico. Sincerely, in my capacity as per the Rules of Procedure, I cannot come up with a minority report. However –

**THE SPEAKER:** You are not coming up with a minority report. You are coming up with an alternative statement; what should be done, what you think is proper and should be done, where you think there are loopholes and what can be done. It is a report that you are presenting to this House.

Can you sit? We have an item on a motion for a resolution of Parliament urging Government to prioritise investment on health. We have that motion - are you getting me?

**MR BATUWA:** Madam Speaker -

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Batuwa, this is not anybody's home. Have respect for people. Decorum is very important. Do not look for the other part of the Speaker. Please, let us go to the next item.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO PRIORITISE INVESTMENT IN HEALTH CENTRES IV

6.07

**DR CHARLES AYUME (NRM, Koboko Municipality, Koboko):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. This motion for a resolution of Parliament urging Government to prioritise investment in health centres IV is moved under rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The motion reads, *“WHEREAS under the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy 21 on medical services requires the State to take all practical measures to ensure the provision of basic medical services to the population;*

*AND WHEREAS the Government of Uganda has put in place interventions to improve health care service delivery, specifically provision of a minimum health care package and implementation of the health sector strategic and investment plan that is guided by both national and global priorities and standards, including the National Development Plan, SDGs and World Health Organisation indicators;*

*AWARE THAT Government has, through various projects, made investments in the health sector in order to improve access and equity in delivering health services with all seven levels of health service delivery from health centres I to specialised hospitals;*

*THUS, under the World Bank supported Uganda Health Systems Strengthening Project eight general hospitals, one regional referral hospital and 26 health centres IV have been rehabilitated and another 10 health centres IV are under funding from the Government of Uganda;*

*FURTHER AWARE that the curative arm of health services is delivered through public, private and private not-for-profit health facilities that comprise 107 hospitals for which 40 are public general hospitals, 47 Private not-for-profit hospitals, 14 regional hospitals, six national hospitals and 183 public health centres IV in Uganda;*

*CONCERNED THAT many Ugandans rely on the public health system to address their health needs yet despite the investments in the health sector, healthcare services remain largely inaccessible due to inequity in distribution and hard-to-reach geographical areas, which inadvertently affect timely access to emergency healthcare services thus causing high out-of-pocket expenditure, poor prognosis and preventable deaths;*

*FURTHER CONCERNED that many health centres IV in the country are not fully functional due to poor and inadequate health infrastructure yet research indicates health centres IV are notably cheaper to construct and renovate;*

*For instance, it is estimated that the cost for construction and equipping the Ministry of Health preferred 60-bed capacity health centres IV would cost Shs 22 billion compared to Shs 65 billion for the preferred 200-bed hospital capacity;*

*NOTING THAT the health centres IV remain non-functional for various reasons. For instance, the annual health sector performance report estimates that 31 out of 183 health centres IV were not able to carry out a caesarean section and that the total number of caesarean procedures carried out in health centre IVs was 39,060 compared to 71,961 performed in general hospitals implying that hospitals are overloaded. More so health centres IV do not provide comprehensive emergency obstetric and new-born care services due to lack of staff equipment and medical supplies are still inadequate yet reports indicate that for the Financial Year 2022 to 2023, the funding requirement for medicines and related consumables for 183 health centres IV is almost similar to that of 40 general hospitals;*

*ALSO, an inadequate wage and failure to recruit medical personnel affects availability and absorption of staff in health centres IV;*

*FURTHER NOTING that a bigger part of the population has more direct contact with health centres IV hence they are better placed to respond to emergency health services and to provide a quick remedy to scaling up access and equity for primary and secondary healthcare as well as reducing the need for referral of patients to hospitals;*

*NOW THEREFORE be it resolved by Parliament that:*

1. *Government prioritises investment in health centres IV through the provision of additional funding to facilitate construction of new health centres IV and rehabilitation of existing ones as well as provision of medical supplies to address emerging challenges at the health centres IV,*
2. *The Ministry of Health is urged to recruit more doctors and also adequately train and retain a sufficient number of health workers at health centres IV to cater for the needs of patients who access the facilities.*
3. *Government should provide additional funding for blood storage equipment in health centres IV that do not have emergency equipment to enable them comprehensively handle emergency obstetric and new-born care.*
4. *Government should strengthen diagnostic services at health centres IV. This includes laboratory and imaging services (ultrasound, foetal Doppler and X-ray machines.)”*

The motion has been moved by Dr Charles Ayume, Member of Parliament, Koboko Municipality and seconded by hon. Silas Aogon, a Member of Parliament, Kumi Municipality.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Dr Ayume. This is coming out of the other report from which you heard of very few referral hospitals; we need to equip the health centres IV. It is cheaper to have many health centres IV than having referral hospitals. That is the basis of this motion. Let it be seconded; you will vote against it. Okay, is it seconded? Yes, hon. Aogon.

6.14

**MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi):** Madam Speaker, this is a very popular motion even before it is seconded; nearly the whole House is willing to give support. I want to applaud you, honourable colleagues. However, allow me to first appreciate the honourable Chairperson of the Committee on Health for the very good work you are doing.

Within one year plus, many things have changed. Your committee is doing a great job and I am happy with the methodology that you are adopting. You go down and collect evidence, come and present a motion backed up by facts.

For that matter, I stand to second this motion that has been presented before the House. Indeed, if you go down to most of our constituencies, you will realise that there are so many gaps. If we, as a country, decide to fill the gaps in the health centres IV, there will be a huge change.

Concerning issues of human resource, when the doctor was presenting the findings of the committee after their visits in the report that we have just concluded, all of you noticed that some health facilities had more staff, more doctors and more qualified personnel as compared to others. Therefore, there are issues of equity, availability and access that we need to handle as a country and this motion comes in handy to urge Government to take action quickly.

Madam Speaker, if you go out of the Kampala area, you will notice that there is serious shortage of blood in health centres IV. Emergencies can only be dealt with properly when we act in a timely manner. However, in a situation where health centres IV are ill-equipped, it is only death that is most likely to take place. Therefore, it is very important that we all support this very important motion.

Madam Speaker, we need to reduce on the need for referrals. Once we strengthen our health centres IV, there will be no need for us to always try to run with patients who are in dire need, to Kampala, aware of the current traffic jam that we have here. You can drive from upcountry and when you are about to reach Mulago – the time you spend from upcountry to Wakiso can be two hours but between Wakiso and Mulago, you need another two hours and that is the kind of problem we have. Working on these health centres IV means we are solving such a problem and there will be a big change.

Madam Speaker, look at the number of health centres IV that we are talking about. We are talking about 183 but the general hospitals are around 40. If we are going to invest money in these 40 that are not scattered all over - the serious ones that we are talking about. However, these health centres IV are all over in our constituencies. Which constituency here does not want a health centre IV?

I am aware of some places where there are no health centres IV completely. If we are to allow Members right now to speak out here, they will come up and tell you, “In my constituency, there is no health centre IV”. This is the right motion, this is the right time and this is the right moment. We must rise up and support that Government fully funds the presence of these health centres IV.

There are health centres IV where these so-called theatres are actually butcheries. When your wife is taken there, you have to go for prayers and fasting first because you are not sure whether she will return. If you are not a proper believer in God, things may not even work out. Therefore, supporting this motion is the way to go.

Madam Speaker, when you talk about issues of equipment – we visited a health facility in Tororo with my colleague, hon. Sarah Opendi and we found that there is equipment lying there idle and not fixed. This is something, which is taking place all over the country. Most of the places have this kind of thing. Equipment is there but not being utilised.

In some facilities, you find that the buildings are there but not equipped. In some places, the health centres are there but the doctors are not there and in most places, there are no medicines. In most cases, you find that the labs are not operational, there is no blood and this has been a big challenge. Indeed, it is necessary that we support such a motion. I beg to move. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, most of the districts do not have district hospitals so, it would be prudent enough for us, if we love our electorate, to urge Government to operationalise health centres IV. *(Applause)* That would be the best thing. It is not anything for debate. It is straightforward that we need these health centres IV to be operationalised to a level of a district hospital.

In my district, I do not have a district hospital so, we really need to agree. Minister, we are going to ensure – Yes?

6.18

**MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I remember that Government came up with a policy that in each and every constituency, there should be a health centre IV. It is true Government created very many constituencies and there are some constituencies without even a health centre III. I pray that the honourable minister considers uplifting those health centres III to the level of a health centre IV.

Finally, Madam Speaker, right now –*(Interruption)*

**THE SPEAKER:** There is a clarification.

**MR OKUPA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have been around for some time in this House –

**THE SPEAKER:** For 30 years in the House.

**MR OKUPA:** Not yet 30 - *(Laughter)*- and hon. Gilbert Olanya joined later. I do not remember a policy of every constituency having a health centre IV. I beg to be corrected by the Minister of Health as to whether that policy exists or whether that policy has ever existed. If it is the wish of the Members then let us bring it from that angle because we should be able to speak with facts.

The Minister of Health –

**THE SPEAKER:** Can we hear from the minister? Let the minister clarify as she is competent enough.  
  
6.22

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Ruth Aceng):** Madam Speaker, Government took a decision – and I will re-echo what decision Government took – that every sub county in this country should have a health centre III – *(Interjections)* – I am still talking. Where the sub county is big; where access is more than four kilometres, the sub county is divided into two and it is given two health centres III. This is so that we can phase off health centres II.

Secondly, that every constituency should have a health centre IV –*(Applause)*– and that every district should have a district hospital. Those were the decisions taken by Government.

However, I have listened carefully to the chairperson of the committee. It is true that having a district hospital in every district will take us very many years to achieve. However, if we can strengthen the health centres IV, they can function as the district hospitals. *(Applause)* This is what the chairperson has said and, Madam Speaker, I agree and I also agree with the motion. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you so much. I now put a question that the House adopts the motion for a resolution of Parliament urging Government to prioritise investment in health centres IV.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

*Motion adopted.*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you so much. Honourable members, before we go to the next item, I want to refer - and I am saying I want to refer - Members to revise rule 79. I may not act now because you are first offenders but I want you to take time and look at rule 79. Revise it as it is like your Bible if you are coming to the House.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND DISCIPLINE ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, there is a report from the Committee on Rules and Privileges and after a thorough analysis of that report and the issue that was raised, I have concerns that came from a Member of Parliament, hon. Ikoojo on rule 155(2) of our Rules of Procedure that states: “*The Speaker shall commit the proposed loan or guarantee request to the Committee on National Economy and to the relevant sectoral committee under which the subject matter of the request falls.*”

After careful consideration of this rule, I wish to guide the House as follows: this rule was amended in 2021 to provide for an input of a sectoral committee in consideration of loans and guarantees to the respective sectors. This was necessitated by the high number of non-performing loans and disbursed funds and very high commitment fees on loans that the Government was giving out.

Also, Parliament was faced with the problem of following up on loans due to a lack of coordination between the National Economy Committee and a sectoral committee, which are responsible for the oversight role of the loans that are being given to these institutions because they lacked information.

It was therefore prudent to give sectoral committees an opportunity to participate in the loans or guarantee agreements of loans that were being approved and processed for them to have information on what has been given out, what is outstanding and whether there is value for money that is being done.

With the operations of the sector that is getting the money, it is the role of the sectoral committee to do the work. It is the sectoral committee that would then guide the National Economy Committee as to whether that was a priority of the sector. This helps to direct Government resources to the most critical needs of the people. We have had scenarios where loans are given out, you go on the ground and there is nothing being done.

This is therefore to indicate that there is no duplication of committee work. The consideration of loans or guarantees should continue as per the rules in place. We are not amending that rule as it helps us with the controls. The sectoral committee must know what is happening and the National Economy Committee should also know what is happening.

I want to thank you for today and I adjourn the House to 2.00 p.m. tomorrow.

*(The House rose at 6.30 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 7 July 2022 at 2.00 p.m.)*