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**Wednesday, 16 January 2019**

*Parliament met at 2.48 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

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

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I welcome you to this afternoon sitting. I am particularly happy to see H.E, the Vice-President, members of the Cabinet and members of the Opposition. I would like to wish you a Happy New Year. *(Applause)*

Honourable members, as we convene today, a number of our Members are not able to attend the House because they are indisposed. These are:

1. Hon. Aboud Kitatta
2. Hon. Syda Bbumba
3. Hon. Herbert Kinobere
4. Hon. Odonga Otto
5. Hon. Lutanywa Odur
6. Hon. Connie Galiwango
7. Hon. Ronald Reagan Okumu
8. Hon. Judith Babirye
9. Hon. James Kakooza
10. Hon. Wilson Nokrach
11. Hon. Charles Angiro Gutomoi.

Please, join me I wishing them a speedy recovery so that they can come back and attend to their responsibilities.

Honourable members, it is with great sadness that we note the terrorist attack that took place in Nairobi, Kenya at the Dusit Hotel Complex yesterday, 15 January 2019. H.E, President Uhuru Kenyatta has just briefed the nation that 14 persons died and several others were injured. He confirmed that all the terrorists have been killed by the Kenyan Special Forces.

I wish, on behalf of Parliament of Uganda, to extend our sincere condolences to the Government of Kenya; the National Assembly; the Senate and the people upon the loss of their dear ones. We pray that the injured are able to recover. I invite Members to stand for a minute of silence in their honour.

*(Members stood and observed a moment of silence.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, as you know, the al-Shabaab terrorists are interested and bent on perpetuating terror in this region of East Africa and beyond. I am aware that our armed forces are alert and doing their best to secure the citizens and their property. However, the remaining aspect in securing security is now left to us, the citizens of Uganda. We need to be alert. Look out for any suspicious conduct, items and anything that may disturb the peace of the country.

I urge the Members of Parliament to sensitise our people to be more alert and aware about what is happening and report suspicious activities. I also urge the Inspector General of Police to enhance community participation in the maintenance of peace in all the areas of Uganda. If we are vigilant and working together, terrorism can be checked and defeated.

Honourable members, today is exactly two-and-a-half years since we were sworn in as Members of the Tenth Parliament. I wish to congratulate ourselves upon this achievement. I urge you to rededicate and commit yourselves for which you sought the mandate of the people. The temperature in the constituencies is beginning to heat up. *(Laughter)* However, I request you to attend to Parliament and your committee work because you are on duty until the five years end. Therefore, let us use the weekends to touch base with the real people but during the week we should be here to do the work for which they sent us here.

Further, I would like to point out that towards the end of the year, the Independent Electoral Commission published the roadmap for the 2021 elections. For the last two sessions, I have been appealing to the Government to bring the necessary legislations so that we can handle them. Despite this, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs has remained silent on the issue of electoral reforms; no response has been given.

Obviously, I think they expect, as usual, to stampede this House. Sometimes in that stampede we may not make very perfect laws but it shows that maybe they do not respect this House, so, even when we say “bring what is necessary,” they are not interested. Since, especially the Vice-President and Members of the Cabinet are here, please, help the country and do your part on that one.

Unfortunately, along this line, the public believes that Parliament has not acceded to the direction of the Supreme Court. They do not know that it is the Government which was directed to do certain reforms. Therefore, I have to keep answering questions, saying: “No, it is not us. It is the Government.” Please, help us and do the needful.

I now direct the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to come here on Tuesday, 22 January 2019 and advise us about the process of the electoral reforms so that we can work out a legislative programme for the remaining period of the Tenth Parliament.

Honourable members, during the recess, I visited a few prisons. I went to Bufulubi Main Prison, Jinja Women’s Prison, Murchison Bay Prison, Luzira Women’s Prison, Kigo Main Prison and Kigo Women’s Prison.

In these prisons the main complaint was the issue of congestion. There is also the issue of very elderly persons who are in incarceration. They reminded me that they have not had the prerogative of mercy being exercised in many years in this country.

I intend to invite the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs so that we can discuss this matter.

The other issue they raised to me was that they have no national IDs and when they come out of prisons they will have no status. I hope that the Government can also consider what to do about that issue. They talked to me about their rights to vote and I said I would also inform the Government so that the Government knows what to do.

There are very many children who were born in prisons and of course now they are also prisoners because their mothers are there. They spend a lot of time there. In many places there are no daycare centres, so, the children spend the whole day within the prisons. It is not nice. I think we shall ask our Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs to follow up on some of these issues and see what can be done.

I was also informed that there is no maternity facility at the Kigo Women’s Prison. Women who have delivered have been driven to Luzira. It is a long way and someone can die on the way and there is even no transport to take them from Kigo to Luzira. All these things, honourable members, I think we should address them and see how we can support those who are unfortunately on the other side of the fence.

I would like to thank the Parliamentary Commission, the Clerk and staff for organising the Parliament Week. I hope you have had time to go to the exhibition. There are very many innovations there. There are many things that the people of Uganda are doing and I would like to invite, especially the ministers, to go there. Yesterday, I was shown a machine that can burn cancer cells in a very short time. Minister of Health and hon. Dr Baryomunsi, please, make sure that you go there. The National Enterprise Corporation is assembling tractors and the tractors are outside there. They are doing many things. Many things are being done in this country and we can do a lot of import substitution if we support our local industry. Therefore, honourable members, I urge you to visit the exhibition. It will end on Friday.

Lastly, the people of the eastern region thank Government for the bridge on River Nile; it is a major tourist attraction. *(Applause)* When it had just been commissioned, in the night there would be lights in the night and it would be multi-coloured. That alone is very exciting but these days when I pass by, the lights are not there. I was told that it is expensive to keep that but I think it is something which we can market and bring money into this country. So, I would like to appeal to the Minister of Works and Transport to ensure that the lights on the Nile Bridge are there at night so that we can make more money in the local economy. Thank you very much, honourable members.

There were a few matters of national concern. Let us start with hon. Robert Centenary but only three minutes each.

2.59

**MR ROBERT CENTENARY (FDC, Kasese Municipality, Kasese):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter relating to the critical financial situation of six Ugandan medical students in Cuba who are there under a bilateral Government programme. These students have not received their monthly stipend, which Government is under obligation to give them, for the last six months yet they are not allowed to work in Cuba. The students are suffering.

The Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Health and Embassy of Cuba are the ones who are supposed to be coordinating this programme and the students are supposed to receive their money through the Ministry of Education and Sports. I can read for you the names of these students. There is Kahemba Shadad, John Peter Ssemuddu, Stacy Mbabazi Kemigisha, Shamila Nalumansi, Haggai Bwambale and Komakech Paul Juliano. All these are medical students training in Cuba under that programme but they are stranded. They have no food and facilities to help them during their studies.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. We request the Ministry of Education and Sports to come and update us next week on how these young people are going to be rescued.

3.01

**MR FREDRICK ANGURA (NRM, Tororo County South, Tororo):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I earlier on rose up to make a comment on your opening remarks to condole with our neighbours in Kenya. Being someone who represents a border constituency, I have communicated to my people to be alert. You never know these terrorists - whenever they hit - may try to run across the border. So, maybe that message can also be reechoed further.

However, Madam Speaker, you talked about the new bridge. I would like to say that my observations are similar to yours though I had also requested to raise a matter of national importance concerning the same. I do not know whether you have noticed lately that when you are returning to Kampala from Jinja, that lane has developed some bumps. I do not know whether you have observed that. I thought that is something that we should ask the Ministry of Works and Transport to maybe tell us what could have gone wrong or something may not be very good about that.

Secondly, there is something that is very sensitive that has attacked us in the east and could have also attacked other areas. There is a yellow climbing plant that does not have roots. It is yellow in colour and has engulfed many trees and suffocated them, making the leaves dry – *(Interjections)* – A yellow one! *(Laughter)* It may not be the yellow one as a political party but the colour of that climbing plant is yellow. Once any small piece of that plant clings on a tree, it engulfs the whole tree in a short time. It grows very fast and suffocates all the leaves and the plants start drying.

My prayer is that the of agriculture ministry moves very fast to know what remedies can be done to this plant, otherwise it is going to increase on deforestation. As we work hard to reinstate the forests, this one is messing up many of our forests, including food plants which are being suffocated and dry up. Thank you so much, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Could I know the areas where the ministry should go? Which villages and sub-counties are they?

**MR ANGURA:** Madam Speaker, in the whole of Tororo County South, you will see this plant in isolated areas. I have seen it crossing now even on the way to Busoga, so it is something that is becoming dangerous. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** The agriculture ministry should examine the issue of that climbing plant, which is destroying vegetation and report to us on Wednesday next week. The Minister of Works and Transport should as well come to us on Wednesday to update us on the bumps which are on the bridge but also on the exotic lights, which should be there to attract tourists.

3.05

**MS SARAH NAJJUMA (NRM, Woman Representative, Nakaseke):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding an outbreak in Nakaseke District where four people have so far died while two people are lying helpless in hospital with blood oozes out of their body.

The Resident District Commissioner (RDC) took a step to call the relevant offices but we have not got any response. It is this afternoon, while I was coming here that I met hon. Sarah Opendi and she assured me that the ministry is going to handle the matter. However, Madam Speaker, I request you to add your voice and instruct the ministry to handle the situation because the disease is threatening to spread to surrounding areas. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any comment, hon. Opendi?

3.06

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Sarah Opendi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Nakaseke District has been previously hit by the Crimean Congo Haemorrhagic Fever and the honourable member informed me just as we were walking in. I already instructed the technical team to immediately get to the ground and find out what this could be. Allow me to come back tomorrow and inform the House as to what our findings are. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable minister.

3.06

**MR TONNY AYOO (NRM, Kwania County, Kwania):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of urgent national importance regarding Maruzi Ranch, which has resulted in a lot of tension in the whole of Lango Sub region and also to the people living in and around the ranch.

There is currently ongoing eviction of people from the ranch. The land title of the ranch has been converted from leasehold to freehold and subleased. Even the people whose land does not fall within the ranch are being included in the ranch, evicted and demarcated. UPDF soldiers, internal security team and police officers have put a camp, beating people and doing things with impunity.

Therefore, I wish to give an oral notice for a motion, under Rule 56 (1) (a) and (c) of the Rules of Procedure, seeking your indulgence to allow me to present a motion to give details to Parliament so that the House can debate this matter and give a way forward.

I would like to plead with you that pursuant to Rule 56 (1) (a) and (c), you allow and put this motion on the Order Paper so that it can be debated. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, it will appear that there might be a matter of public interest in what the honourable member is saying. We shall therefore, put it on the Order Paper. It will be debated a bit later. Let us go to the next item.

BILLS

FIRST READING

THE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES BILL, 2018

3.08

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (GENDER AND CULTURE) (Ms Peace Mutuzo):** Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2018” be read for the first time.

**THE SPEAKER:** Where is the Certificate of Financial Implications?

**MS MUTUZO:** Madam Speaker, the Bill is accompanied with a Certificate of Financial Implications. I beg to lay the certificate on the Table.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the Bill is sent to the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development. However, honourable minister, I would not have commented but the issue of laws around the persons with disabilities has suffered in this House. Bills come and get withdrawn. I hope this time this Bill will not be withdrawn; you assure this House, honourable minister.

**MS MUTUZO:** We usually withdraw the Bills because we want to align them. I would like to assure Parliament that the drafts have been realigned and we will not come back very soon once we pass this Bill.

**THE SPEAKER:** The Bill is sent to the committee for scrutiny and report back within 45 days.

BILLS

FIRST READING

THE LANDLORD AND TENANT BILL, 2018

3.10

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HOUSING) (Dr Chris Baryomunsi):** Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Landlord and Tenant Bill, 2018” be read the first time.

In accordance with our rules and the provisions of Public Finance and Management Act, 2015, I would like to lay on the Table the Certificate of Financial Implications, duly signed by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, hon. Matia Kasaija; dated 8 January 2019. I beg to lay.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the Bill is sent to the Committee on Physical Infrastructure for perusal and report back within 45 days.

However, just for the record, may I know when the Uganda Land Commission Bill is coming? We have been asking for it for several years.

3.11

**THE MINISTER OF LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (Ms Betty Amongi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to report that although we concluded the Bill for Uganda Land Commission, Cabinet, however, is in the process of restructuring agencies. This matter came in Cabinet and as a result, the Attorney-General has been requested to give a legal opinion on whether or not that should also be part of it. Once the Attorney-General has cleared that, I will then be able to bring the Bill before this House.

Otherwise, I already have the Certificate of Financial Implications; only waiting for clearance from the Attorney-General.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, even if it is to be merged, it will be governed by a law.

**MS AMONGI:** That is true, Madam Speaker. However, the context within which it would be merged is what will guide us in either bringing the Bill the way it is or after accommodating some of the issues that would have been resolved by Cabinet. That is why it is prudent that I wait for guidance from the Attorney-General and Cabinet before I can bring the Bill here. The Attorney-General has pledged to give guidance very soon.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE AQUATIC WEED CONTROL IN UGANDA

3.13

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Vincent Ssempijja):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a statement on the aquatic weed in Uganda. As you are aware, Uganda water bodies were invaded by water hyacinth in the late 1990s, which posed great socio-economic, environmental and other health hazards to our lakes and fishing communities.

Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and working with other ministries, departments and agencies, was able to reduce this weed infestation to manageable levels; that is to say, less than 20 per cent in area coverage; it had covered 80 per cent of our shoreline on Lake Victoria alone.

So, this was achieved through manual, mechanical and biological control methods with greater community participation and Government of Uganda and donor funding.

The water hyacinth is, however, resurging as evidenced by the current blockage of Port Bell in Kampala and other sheltered areas of lakes Victoria, Kyoga, Albert, Bisinia and Opeta.

Madam Speaker, you should note that lakes Albert and Kyoga and River Nile have, since 2013, been invaded by another new aquatic weed termed as the Kariba weed whose scientific name is *Salvinia Molesta*. The cover and the spread of Kariba weed has reached alarming levels continuously affecting fisheries (fish breeding areas and nursery grounds) and the water quality and quantity, consequently having an effect on drinking water supply. It also affects negatively hydro power generation, tourism and the transport system along these water bodies.

The weed has also been reported in Lake Victoria Basin, around Lake Kimira in Bugiri District and some fish ponds.

The Problem and magnitude

Madam Speaker, the Kariba weed is basically spread through viable pieces that are dispersed by water currents, animals carrying viable pieces on their bodies, unnecessary movement of different fishing gears, boats and vehicles from one lake side to another.

The Kariba Weed has spread to most water systems in the Kyoga basin and to other lakes in Kwania, L. Albert and Albert Nile. This new breed of weed adds to the water hyacinth problem, which though under control has resurgence patterns that occasionally threaten the Ugandan waters.

So, the existing equipment at the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries cannot handle the Kariba weed unless modified or when the weed is in succession with other weeds like the water hyacinth and other aquatic plants.

The support for control for water hyacinth, through the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project II ended in 2017 and it was limited to Lake Victoria alone. The support from the Arab Republic of Egypt has also since ended though the project equipment is available to undertake weed control.

Effects of the Kariba Weed on the water bodies

Madam Speaker, like the water hyacinth, the Kariba Weed is considered one of the world’s worst aquatic weeds. It forms a mat, which grows to choke water ways, blocking sunlight and oxygen from reaching the waters below, outcompeting other water plants that are beneficial to insects and the fish.

The water quality beneath the mats is continuously degraded by decreases in dissolved oxygen, increase in carbon dioxide and hydrogen sulphide and as the plants die, organic debris accumulate at the bottom of a water body thus creating shallow water environments, which are less suited for fish growth. The weed affects fish breeding and nursery areas consequently reducing the fish stocks in addition to affecting other fishing operations.

In relation to water transport, the weed interferes with the movement and docking of ferries and boats. The water covered by the Kariba weed gives off a bad smell and this has been reported to affect water supplies for domestic use.

Tourism and hydro power generation have been subsequently affected too, by the weed cover.

The control measures

The water hyacinth has been controlled through manual, mechanical and biological control. Like water hyacinth, the Kariba weed can also be controlled through manual, mechanical, biological and chemical methods.

The manual removal method involves physical removal of the weed using hand tools like rakes and wheelbarrows with the help of protective gear. This method is very labour intensive suitable only for clearing small infestations or delimited areas like landing sites.

The mechanical control method is based on harvesting, removing and transporting all types of aquatic weeds using different machines working from banks or floating on water surface. This method is effective but expensive.

The biological control method involves rearing and release of weevils or insects that feed on the Kariba weed. It is cheap, slow but effective and sustainable.

The chemical method of aquatic weed control involves the use of chemical herbicides for controlling infestations of the Kariba weed.

In addition to the above, one of the key long term options for control of aquatic weed is watershed management that aims at reducing the influx of excess nutrients into surface waters.

The interventions so far taken include the following:

Madam Speaker, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) is coordinating an inter-ministerial technical committee with representation from the Office of the Prime Minister as Chair and Secretariat, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, the Ministry of Local Government, the Uganda Police Force, National Environment Management Authority and Nakasongola Local Government.

The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and working with other ministries, departments and agencies implemented manual, mechanical and biological control since 1992 and reduced weed infestation to manageable levels, by 2005.

Maintenance control has been on to-date and to manage the current resurgence like the one at Port-bell and other parts, MAAIF has sensitized communities in district local governments and distributed manual control equipment including wheelbarrows, pangas, forked hoes, forked spades, life jackets, hip waders, hand gloves, gumboots and rakes to 23 affected districts on lakes Kyoga, Albert and Victoria. A study was conducted to assess the extent of spread of the weed and the abundance and distribution recorded to guide management strategies.

The Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt has committed $230,000 for a one-year pilot phase project to control the Kariba weed. This limited support is helping the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to modify the existing hyacinth project equipment to suit the mechanical control of the Kariba weed.

Secondly, it is also being used to procure manual removal equipment and thirdly, piloting biogas production in Bugondo, on Lake Kyoga and Wanseko, on Lake Albert.

In late 2017, NARO imported the initial batch of *Salvinia* weevils that are specific biological control agents for Kariba weed. These, though few, have underwent quarantine and host-specificity tests on a range of crops and other plants. The weevils have been deployed to control Kariba weed on Lake Kyoga.

The challenges include:

1. Government still lacks the adequate human and machinery capacity to address the challenges posed by the Kariba weed.
2. The affected local governments lack adequate logistical capacity to satisfactorily establish adequate sanitary facilities along landing sites to curb nutrient loading.
3. Lack of sanitary facilities along the shoreline provide nutrient loading for the weed to grow further. Therefore, nutrient enrichment of the water bodies from un-regulated point and non-point sources causing pollution and providing nutrients to the weed.

Financial requirements

Madam Speaker, the interventions proposed in the inter-ministerial control strategy, under the OPM, requires financial allocations to a tune of Shs 16.354 billion. The immediate actions require Shs 7.554 billion. The medium-term interventions require Shs 4.960 billion while the long-term interventions require Shs 3.840 billion.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries requires at least Shs 4 billion as an emergency fund to maintain and operate the existing equipment so as to respond to abrupt resurgences.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, given adequate resources, and with the long-term experience in weed management, my ministry is committed to control this new weeds and of course the water hyacinth resurgence. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries will endeavour to plan for resources to continue working with MDAs in managing aquatic weed infestations and resurgences.

Development partners will be further engaged to support weed management so as to ensure a health environment for fish and good water quality. I beg to submit. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**MR GONAHASA:** I thought that I should give some information on this paper *–(Interjection)-* okay, thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the honourable minister for his presentation on this weeds crisis.

Unfortunately, all the weeds the agriculture minister has been talking about are foreign weeds. Kariba is a lake in Zimbabwe. I don’t think this weed just flew into Uganda. The water hyacinth is a weed that came in from Central America. *Oxalis latifolia* which is another weed which is called *Kanyebwa* in Luganda or *Sabiiti* in Ankole are all weeds which have been brought in this into this country.

How do they get here? Most of these weeds are brought in as ornamentals. The water hyacinth came in through the airport of Uganda because the phytosanitary control systems at the airport are not working. Kariba must have come in as an ornamental flower; it is beautiful when you see it in small quantities.

Unfortunately, when these weeds get to this country, they spread. I would like to advise that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries gets back to the original phytosanitary approaches of controlling whatever comes into this country. When the Kariba weed came in - I am sure somebody must have passed it through the airport or the roads. The phytosanitary department at those points is not working. *(Applause)*

Oxalis, as I said came in as a beautiful flower, brought in by the widow of the then Archbishop, Sabiiti – *(Interjections)* - that is why it is called *Sabiiti* in Western Uganda and *Kanyebwa* here. It came in as a beautiful flower *– (Interjections)* - is it called *Kapanga*? Okay, whatever it is. The trouble is that all these external weeds are coming in and we are not controlling anything.

I would like to advise that the phytosanitary departments at the airport are strengthened and operationalised because I know that is why they are there. Otherwise, as long as they are not working we are going to get these weeds into the country and you say you need Shs 16 billion to control them. We should stop them from coming in before they spread; because once they get in they are very vegetative. They are called invasive weeds and they spread everywhere. In western Uganda, you did not have that which we call *Kapanga* in eastern Uganda. This thing is flown all over the place by birds, which eat their seeds. When you see it, it looks beautiful but with time a seed will give you a million plants. Once it grows, it has got so many seeds on it, which the birds eat and pass on. The knowledge is there; it is the operationalisation on the control of these weeds in our country which is still a problem.

Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, as the Shadow Minister of the ministry I would like us to work together and stop these invasive weeds from spreading. Spending so much money will not stop them for as long as they come in as beautiful flowers. Thank you.

3.31

**MR KENNETH LUBOGO (NRM, Bulamogi County, Kaliro):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you, honourable minister for the statement.

I come from fishing areas of Kaliro District. We have got the finger of Lake Kyoga getting into Kaliro District and connecting the other side of Bukungu. Many of my people have fishing as their key economic activity.

I have got landing sites in different places; in Panyoro, Isalo, Kyanfumba and the other side of Nawaikoke, which is Bulamogi North West. It was just last week when I got complaints from people that they are failing to do fishing because of this weed, which may have been named here in a different name. They have its name as *Nankabirwa* – *(Laughter) -* I think the name was derived from the time when hon. Ruth Nankabirwa was the Minister of State for Fisheries, maybe because of controlling the lake or that kind of stuff.

They are saying that because of this, access to the lake is next to impossible. Somebody can get into the lake for fishing and cannot come back to land or one can get out of the lake but the following day they cannot get back to do fishing.

Honourable minister, I am wondering whether among the districts you are talking about, Kaliro is involved yet I am not aware of the equipment that you have given to these districts. What are the districts you are talking about? You are saying that 14 or 16 districts around Lake Victoria and Lake Kyoga have been supplied with equipment to deal with this problem of the weed.

In case Kaliro, and I believe it is not included, is not part of them then you need to get it to the list of these districts because my people can no longer do fishing and they are not yet probably considered by you. If you are not yet aware that there is this problem then you need to do an urgent visit, do a study and support Kaliro and the districts of that part to also get rid of this weed. Thank you.

3.33

**MR NOAH MUTEBI (NRM, Nakasongola County, Nakasongola):** Madam Speaker, I would like to also thank the minister for the presentation.

I represent a constituency, which borders Lake Kyoga. We have a number of landing sites like Eninga, Kasambya and others. When you look at Lake Kyoga in the early 80s when you used to visit it, it was clean. You could see whatever was happening but when you do so now, it is covered with a water weed. As my brother stated, our fishermen also named it *Nankabirwa*. It is the common name there.

Fishermen face a number of challenges in terms of doing their fishing activities. The ferry, which crosses from Rwampanga to Lango Sub-Region, is also facing a number of challenges in crossing. One takes more time than that they would have to cross to Lira or Amolatar when in actual sense it would have been easier if there was no water weed.

I heard the minister mentioning some of the landing sites in Nakasongola where those other instruments have been put but I have not had the opportunity to look at them. I have never seen them in the area I represent. Maybe the minister can come back on board and testify to me so that I get convinced. Otherwise, I would like to appeal that something must be done to save our lakes. If we do not wake up the lakes will be no more in this country. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Before hon. Anthony Okello comes up, I would like to ask the minister - in Benin, there is a Centre of Excellency called, Songhai. I have been there myself. I took two members of Parliament to study that model. In that Centre of Excellency, they convert this hyacinth into soap and other things.

I know that two years ago, hon. Janat Mukwaya invited us to a big meeting at Imperial Royale, where she introduced the model. We backed it and she said the Cabinet had adopted it. I had expected that the Cabinet would use that model to take away the hyacinth. I would like to know what has happened.

3.36

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO (NRM, Kioga County, Amolatar):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Lake Kyoga is rich in nutrients and it provides ideal conditions for the growth of this strange water weeds. Like the honourable minister has stated, the growth of this plant has already had detrimental effect on the body of Lake Kyoga and its inhabitants.

Sad to note is the fact that although we made noise in this august House in 2013 when the weed invaded Lake Kyoga, it has taken close to six years to receive a statement from the honourable minister about the bad nature of the weed on our lake. All these years we could not get any intervention.

I am wondering whether the ministry has got any aquatic weed control policy as a government. Even more worrying is that the minister is telling us that we do not have any existing equipment to handle this strange water weed yet it has lasted six years.

As the minister tells us about this strange water weed, I do not see any immediate hope that he is presenting in spite of it lasting six years. The inter-ministerial committee talks about Nakasongola but Lake Kyoga is covered by a number of districts. Why not Amolatar, Kamuli, Kaberamaido, Kaliro, Apac, Serere, among others?

Madam Speaker, Egypt is committing about $230,000 to handle the issues of modifying the equipment but the honourable minister is not telling us what Government of Uganda is committing towards this. He is only saying that we need to budget for Shs 16 billion but if we had intervened earlier like six years ago, don’t you think we would have required less?

Therefore, we have many statements from the Minister but zero intervention. What hope do we take to our people, Madam Speaker?

3.39

**MR AMOS LUGOLOOBI (NRM, Ntenjeru County North, Kayunga):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for this comprehensive presentation. However, my submission comes from the area of financial requirements. This particular activity - the fight against Kariba weed has been appearing in the budget of the ministry under National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) for many years as an unfunded activity.

When you look at the figures, it is not much money. Like my colleague said, this figure has been building up. Before the weed spread, the figure was around Shs 6 billion but today it has gone to Shs 16 billion. However, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries with a budget of over Shs 800 billion, I believe that the problem is simply that of lack of prioritisation within the ministry. This money can easily be prioritised within the ministry’s programme. If they think that fighting this weed is important, they could have postponed some of the activities like under National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), they could have spared Shs 16 billion from their huge budget even under NARO or the ministry itself. This money could be found because it is very big.

If you really thought that fighting this weed was important in the ministry and indeed, it is important because it is affecting fish breeding with very many other consequences, it would have been funded by now.

Therefore, I think we just need to direct the ministry to prioritise this activity and provide the fund, they do not even need to go to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to get Shs 16 billion. It is within their budget.

3.44

**MS DOREEN AMULE (NRM, Woman Representative, Amolatar):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just like my colleague has said, the problem of the waterweed and water hyacinth has been caused by a bit of negligence on the part of the line ministry and Government.

We who come from places surrounded by water do not only face the problem of the waterweed but it tends to be an economic, political and social problem. The ministry should prioritise. For example, we had a new ferry that was constructed by billions of shillings of taxpayers’ money but it repeatedly breaks down, simply because the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has not seen the need to control the weed for over six years. A distance that should be covered in only one hour or forty five minutes takes the whole day roaming on the water, when it is raining and when it not.

There was a time when our people got lost on the water for over 12 hours, roaming from one direction to another on the ferry simply because *- (Interjections)-* honourable members, you do not use ferries but if you did, you would know the inconvenience we face when it rains and in storms. Boat sailors cannot know which direction to take because every side is covered by the waterweeds. We are saying this does not only stop with agriculture; it affects even the fishermen whose livelihood depends on the waters. They go fishing and want to come back but cannot tell what direction they are supposed to come out from.

Therefore, the honourable minister should take it as a serious issue. Like hon. Okello said, this has been the plea of our people for a while; we have been presenting it several times here in Parliament but now, even when we hear the statement of the Minister, it is not giving us any hope. We pray that this august House takes it as a priority and direct the Ministry to commit money to clear the waterweed as soon as possible. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER**: Honourable members, you recall about two months ago, hon. Anthony Okello came here complaining bitterly about the inability of the ferries to move because of the water hyacinth. It is not a new matter. What did the Minister of Works and Transport say that time? I do not remember. Then we had asked him to handle that issue.

3.44

**MS LOWILA OKETAYOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Pader):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for the statement. However, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is partly to blame for this problem. My brother, hon. Okello was spot on and the Chairperson of Committee on Budget pointed out what seems to be the problem.

Honourable minister, you recall that on a number of times, we pointed out and raised concerns when we interacted with the ministry that the ministry was not giving adequate attention to the Fisheries subsector. Whenever the ministry outlined priorities and interventions, we would hardly see anything to do with the Fisheries subsector.

It is true the weeds are affecting the Fisheries subsector and yet, if we are to increase on the export earnings for this country, the fishing industry is one of the low hanging fruits.

However, Madam Speaker, even if there are gaps in the planning of the ministry, this House must also do something for this sector. The other time, we were talking about the Foot and Mouth Disease, now we are talking about the waterweeds. What the ministry gets is not adequate to address all these challenges. This is a productive sector and we have said this time and again. What is allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has now come down to less than 3 per cent of the National Budget.

Now that the House has started scrutinising the National Budget Framework Paper for the next financial year, let us give attention to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. It should not be less than 3 per cent because this is a productive sector.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, let us address this. At worst, if we could allocate 5 per cent to this sub sector, the Ministry would be able to handle some of these challenges. What they get is very little. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.48

**MR MUHAMMAD NSEREKO (Independent, Kampala Division Central, Kampala):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for having tried to put up a statement in defence of what the ministry is trying to do. In this case, we must interrogate what pertains to the economic importance of fisheries in Uganda and agriculture, as an entire subsector. All along, we have been here and our argument has been the underfunding of the agricultural sector contrary to what was adopted by all the African countries in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in mainly the sub-Saharan Africa.

However, what should we talk about? The Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries clearly said that there is a problem with the trans-boundary movement of weeds and toxic substances. If we have an economic intelligence unit, you must know that those that are willing to sabotage this economy shall hit straight at agriculture; in that case, the fisheries sector of this country. It started with the water hyacinth and now, the Kariba weed. We can definitely brace ourselves for more to come.

In that entire sector, there is movement of not only herbicides but also pesticides for animals. On the issue of cattle, someone said that people are importing pesticides and other things because the border controls for what enters this country is appalling.

Unless we go into details to interrogate what comes into this country in form of drugs, weeds and flowers, then we shall have to brace for more. This is a business and it is done intentionally. As there is no one willing to buy herbicides in those countries, they will have to move the weed into Uganda and other countries so that there is market for their herbicides.

What are the effects of herbicides that you intended to buy in order to control this weed?

1. Pollution of our lakes like you have heard what is happening on Lake Kioga.
2. Destruction of the eco-system; the birds that feed. Some of those plants and weeds are killed by those herbicides.
3. The quality of the fish you produce no longer meets international standards because it is feeding partly on food that is affected by the herbicides that you have sprayed in the water. What happens in the long run is that no one accepts your fish on the international market.

Therefore, we need to investigate and interrogate more whether this is a matter of sabotage because as you finish with the water hyacinth, then the Kariba comes in. As you control the Kariba, you will get another problem. We must look at our border control and what comes in in form of agricultural products in this country.

There are no checks on whatever you want to bring, whether it is animal feeds or fish feeds. These just come in and before you know it, these are breeding grounds or habitats for the growth and promotion of foreign weeds. It will definitely hit the agricultural sector hard through fisheries and animal husbandry.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I would like the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to seek more funds in order to carry out thorough investigations through the economic intelligence unit of this country *–(Member timed out.)*

3.52

**MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (DP, Kalungu County West, Kalungu):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would also like to thank the minister for this statement. However, as a professional teacher, let me put it on record that it is more of an agricultural lecture. Indeed, this question was given to a student during an agriculture lesson and he answered it the way the minister has given it to us; this fellow should get distinction one.

Honourable members, the reason ministers are asked to give statements is not only to teach us about the problem but to also avail us with remedies. In the minister’s statement, one of the interventions is that the Office of the Prime Minister is coordinating an inter-ministerial technical committee, which involves the UPDF. This is not about bad fishing but it is about a weed.

Madam Speaker, the minister is giving us financial requirements; short term, medium term and long term. What have you done so far as a ministry? The Chairperson of the Committee on Budget, hon. Amos Lugoloobi clearly said that they have money in the ministry and they cannot fail to raise Shs 3 billion. He knows what he is talking about. We cannot just come here and listen to the minister telling us he needs Shs 16 billion in the short-term and Shs 3 billion in the long-term. What have you so far put in to prevent this problem?

I rear some pigs in my village and I remember during the problem of water hyacinth, we used to feed this weed to pigs. Do we need these types of animals to feed on this weed so that we reduce it? However, coming here like the minister has done and giving us a statement with no remedy and simply lamenting? Six years down the road, we are losing fish and money.

Honourable minister, Kalungu, where I come from, also has fish. Could you give us a remedy? Out of this money, what can you spend? Can you use some Shs 3 billion for some time? What would you want Parliament to help you with? Tell us directly. Do you want to go for a loan? Tell us that so that we bring the request here. Otherwise, like most Members have said, we are losing business. I beg to move, Madam Speaker.

3.55

**MR JACK WAMANGA WAMAI (FDC, Mbale Municipality, Mbale):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. When I was listening to the minister making the statement, I wondered whether hyacinth has just come to Uganda. It has been here for years. I also kept wondering whether there are scientists in the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

I was in Benin and I went to that Songhai Project. A professor told us that Ugandans are crying of water hyacinth but we should see what they have done. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should have thought and worked out a method on how to use this weed. Our friends, the Kenyans, are now producing 35 megawatts of power in their home by using water hyacinth; a farm investing $ 250 million and they are producing power out of this plant. Nevertheless, for us, we seem not to be moving at all.

If I asked the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries what Uganda now exports – almost everything has dwindled. We have been exporting tilapia fish to the European market, which is a delicacy. However, now with the water hyacinth in Lake Victoria, what are we going to export? There is nothing. Therefore, you should have seriously worked on this problem so that at least, we maintain the export of fish.

What have the East African Countries that share Lake Victoria done with this problem? Can you ask the scientists in this country to wake up and make sure they use the water hyacinth to produce energy, paper and animal feeds so that our fishermen can fish and we export it?

Honourable minister, the ministry has got problems. The other time, farmers had maize but there was no market for it. What are we exporting now? Even Bugisu and Arabica coffee are not there. What are we exporting in your ministry? Please, let us maintain the export of fish to the European market because that is what brings in money.

Let your scientists in the ministry not sleep. Let them wake up and utilise water hyacinth; produce paper, energy and animal feeds. That way, we shall get rid of this plant. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.57

**MR PAULSON LUTTAMAGUZI (DP, Nakaseke County South, Nakaseke):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would also like to thank the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. We are all aware that fishing is one the fastest growing sectors in Uganda and we earn a lot of money from it.

When I see the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries lamenting because if you fail to implement the Maputo Declaration of the 10 per cent, I hear now there is an implementation of three per cent, I wonder what can be done in agricultural sector. I do not think every weed is dangerous. If it has come and we now have it, let us find a way and turn it into a blessing.

For example, hon. Ssewungu talked about the water hyacinth and people are now using it to feed pigs. Since it is already here, can’t we find researchers to find a way how we can use them commercially? Maybe, time will come because according to the way I see, this Government allowing all kinds of seeds to enter into the country, there is no quicker way to control the movement of these seeds, which come in form of flowers. I support you but let us find a way to use the already existing weeds within the country such that we can use them as animal feeds instead of lamenting about the weed which is already here. Yes, there are here but how are we going to deal with them as we find ways of controlling the incoming so called flowers which come in form of weeds. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

4.00

**MR JOHN BAPTIST NAMBESHE (NRM, Manjiya County, Bududa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to add my voice to that of the colleagues to thank the honourable minister for the statement on this aquatic weed control. The honourable minister in the statement lauds the biological control method for these weeds as being cheap, sustainable, affordable and effective. If you have deployed these biological control methods, using the insects to consume the weeds, why is the weed dangerously evasive on the lake? There are very many lakes that have been mentioned in this statement.

In places where these biological control methods have been used, these insects or the weevils turn out to be very problematic. They devour anything including human beings. Therefore, what plans do you have in the ministry to stop these insects from being a menace to the eco-system?

You also said that the machines that have been mechanically destroying the water hyacinth cannot do the same with Kariba weed and that they need modification. Does Kariba weed have branches, do they have a complicated character because both these weeds have certain characteristics in common. They have very high reproduction potential.

However, I do not think an aquatic weed like Kariba weed is any different in character from that of a water hyacinth. It does not have branches; it does not have taproots or deep roots that it will be very complicated to require the modification of the machines to destroy it using mechanical means.

Finally, this is the clarification I would like to seek from the minister. The minister is blaming these weeds for shocking the lake and reducing on the levels of oxygen. That the levels of –(*Member timed out*.)

4.03

**MR GODFREY WATENGA (Independent, Lutseshe County, Bududa):** Madam Speaker, I would also like to appreciate the minister for the statement he has made. Unfortunately, the Uganda I know is better at controlling effects than causes. When the minister was making a statement, I expected more effort to be put on the causes on how this weed came into existence on our waters.

That is why I was calling the minister to employ other scientific approaches to make more findings of how this weed came into existence on our waters. This will help us to adopt the measures of controlling the current situation. I beg to submit.

4.4

**MR KENNETH EITUNGANANE (Independent, Soroti County, Soroti):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for the statement. This seems to be a persistent problem since 2010 like hon. Okello has said.

However, my concern is, as a ministry, what is your capacity to counter this problem? The chairman budget committee has spoken about availability of funds within your ministry.

Madam Speaker, I would like to implore them that we are now in the budgeting process; could we see this as one of the items that you prioritise as this House lobbies to support you? The most interesting thing, honourable minister, in the previous year, the department of crops in your ministry took back to the Consolidated Fund Shs 10.5 billion unutilised. Where do you put your priorities? This makes it very difficult for this House, as we try to lobby, to step up your budget. Can we do something?

Madam Speaker, in Soroti County, Lale sub county borders Lake Kioga. It has become an area of notorious people because this weed has rendered them jobless and people have started stealing and killing because the weed is now uncontrollable and there is no sign of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries on the ground doing anything.

I have heard the minister speaking about hoes and I do not see them in my constituency; not even wheelbarrows or gumboots. This is a problem. It is compounded more by these floating weeds and it makes the matter worse.

Honourable minister, as we go to the budgeting cycle, can you put this Shs 4 billion or whatever you are requiring for the short term solution so that this House can advocate for this? We have a problem and let us get going. We start with Shs 4 billion and it does something as we go building on it year in and year out so that we can start to do the work. You have many technical people but your house needs to be worked on and it seems they are sleeping. You wake them up, let them go on the ground and advise you technically, so that when you come to this House, you come with good information that we can use to solve this problem. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

4.07

**MS RUKIYA CHEKAMONDO (NRM, Woman Representative, Kapchorwa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity. I would also like to thank the minister for bringing this statement. The water hyacinth is not only on Lake Victoria. You know that Sipi Falls is one of our tourist attractions. When you reach any area where the water flow is not very fast, the water hyacinth is there.

At Sipi Falls, we have already started a project where we are taking water to Bukedea and we have observed that when you go to any area where that water hyacinth is, at the next area, the water level is reduced. After the hyacinth point, the water reduces. That means it absorbs a lot of water and yet this is the source of the water we are going to send to other districts.

Secondly, there is another weed, which has come to Kapchorwa. There was a team of visitors some time back, who came with a flower, which they planted where they were residing. The people picked it and it was taken to gardens. Even if you use Weed Master to kill it, it will only kill the leaves but the roots multiply and spread. Even if you take that weed to a banana garden, the banana plantation will get affected. If you plant maize and that weed is there, you will not harvest the maize.

I request that the minister picks interest in this weed. Our area is a food basket and it is already affecting us; it will move to other districts.

Honourable minister, can you go and reorganise the ministry and organise the budget. This is the right time. Bring it up. If it means getting a loan, I think this august House is going to support it as long as it is going to support the issue that is affecting all of us. Thank you.

4.10

**MS MARGARET BABA DIRI (NRM, Woman Representative, Koboko):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for bringing this statement. These weeds are really a menace to our waters and economy. In fact, we started with the water hyacinth and now we have this new one and it is also spreading very fast. I know another time, we shall get another one.

Honourable minister, we should carry out research on this water hyacinth or weeds, which come to our waters. How are they coming? Are they coming together with these seeds brought to us for refugees? Are they coming from plants or fruits brought by other people? In developed countries like America, you cannot go with a seed of, say of beans or apple. They think you are taking it there to contaminate theirs but we allow anybody to come with anything to Uganda. That is why we are suffering. Therefore, I would like the minister to take interest and do research on it.

Madam Speaker, they are not only these visible weeds. We have the aquatic plants like fungi. When you see the water green, it means that water is dirty because some effluent orrubbish from, say, factories have got into the lake and they provide food for fungi to grow. Once fungi are there, the fish are now scrambling for oxygen and they cannot eat those fungi. It is a very big problem.

Therefore, we should also address the issue of our industries, which are put along the rivers and lakes. What kind of rubbish do they pour into the water? The same applies to our waste products – the sewage, which we let to go into the lakes; is it well treated or we have some germs there? We need to take on all these so that we address this issue.

Madam Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to another weed, which has appeared in Koboko and we have nicknamed it “Garamba”. When you plant your *–(Member timed out.)*

4.13

**MR RICHARD GAFABUSA (NRM, Bwamba County, Bundibugyo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I would also like to thank the minister for the statement. For the record, I would like to be clarified on what the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs is doing on the inter-ministerial committee in regard to fighting aquatic weeds in Uganda.

Secondly, I expected that in the effort to fight these aquatic weeds on our lakes and water bodies, we should be looking at our drainage system in Uganda. Most of these water bodies are shared with other countries. The statement is silent on what we are doing in collaboration with other countries like Kenya and Tanzania because we share Lake Victoria with them. We need to know what we are doing with the Democratic Republic of Congo because we share Lake Albert with them. We need to know what we are doing with Rwanda because River Kagera comes from there and you may find that most of these weeds actually come from the other countries.

It is not enough for us as a country to put all our efforts to fight these weeds and tomorrow we see resurgence. Who knows if they are not coming from Kenya, Tanzania or Rwanda? The country is putting a lot of effort and not collaborating with the other countries we share these water bodies with.

On the issue of funding, previously, when we were fighting the water hyacinth here, we got funding from Egypt and in the Minister’s statement, he is again mentioning funding from Egypt. What are we doing with other countries? The reason I think Egypt is giving us financial support is because of the Nile and how the Nile sustains their livelihoods. What about other countries such as South Sudan, Sudan and others that also benefit from the Nile? If the quality of River Nile has been affected, those countries also get affected. We also have to work with them. They can also give us some financial assistance.

Lastly, Madam Speaker, I also wish to add my voice on the issue of scientific research. If we have these weeds, they are not entirely bad. There must be some useful *–(Member timed out.)*

4.14

**MR REMIGIO ACHIA (NRM, Pian County, Nakapiripirit):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for this statement but I am not going to blame him now because this weed came to Uganda and became visible in 1997. At that time, I was working with the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), when we intervened in Lake Victoria.

However, I would like to raise one thing, which we raised even in the Committee on Budget. The issue of funding to fight this water hyacinth has been in the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for the last nine years. I have been a member of the Committee on Budget and it has always come. They wanted Shs 2 billion, it rose to Shs 6 billion and the minister is now talking about Shs 16 billion.

Madam Speaker, in the same ministry, there is what we call off-budget support. This is money the ministry gets, which even this Parliament is not aware of and does not appropriate. According to the records available in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, this ministry gets money from projects to the tune of half a trillion shillings. We have raised this matter and the National Planning Authority raised it last year in its report, that some of the monies the ministries get, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is not declared- (*Interruption)*

**MR NANDALA-MAFABI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank my brother for giving way. The clarification I would like to seek is, you have said you are a Member of the Committee on Budget. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries gets half a trillion shillings, which we do not appropriate; that is off-balance sheet or off- budget financing. Yet, the ministry is again coming here to ask for more money. However, we cannot do much until we get the accountability of the other money.

The clarification I am seeking from hon. Achia is, as a Committee on Budget, what action have you taken to deal with such? I am told it is cross-cutting. Recently, when we met National Planning Authority, it said it gets off-balance or off-budget support. So, how do you help us to get to the bottom of this issue?

**MR REMIGIO ACHIA:** Thank you for that clarification. Madam speaker, we need to ask the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to come to this House and make a statement on all the Ministries, Departments and Agencies that are getting money from several projects that is not declared to this House for appropriation. Some of them do not come for approval here and I can say this confidently. In the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, when you come here - honourable minister, you have not told us how you are working with NARO. We know that NARO has been crying for this money. There are scientists here who have been asking for that money to develop interventions for this. Are you working with them?

How much money have you reorganised within your ministry to take action immediately so that we know how much to give you? Thirdly, since the 1990’s, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been discussing the Nile Water Basin Sharing Agreement with Egypt and other countries.

Other countries like Tanzania and Rwanda have signed it but Uganda has not. In that agreement, there were draft proposals specifying the rights and responsibilities of countries downstream like Egypt, South Sudan and the Sudan. It specified that if they want our water, they cannot just – they have been stopping us from building dams along this river. They stick to the 1920’s Agreement.

How far have Government and the ministry gone to require countries like Egypt to officially budget for the maintenance of this lake? When you mentioned $230,000, what is it? Is it a favour to us? This is our lake. If they have not signed the Nile Water Basin Sharing Agreement, what action is Government of Uganda taking to finalise that negotiation?

Other countries have signed the proposal but I am aware that Uganda has not signed for reasons the minister probably is aware of. What does giving $230,000 mean when they are actually going even to the UN Court to say that Uganda should not put up more dams? They are negotiating to put more dams or they go to war. We cannot put up more dams on River Nile.

Lastly, within the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, resources can be found to take action right now without even the Minister in charge of Fisheries. I do not know why the President does not want the Minister in charge of Fisheries to be there. Resources can be found in this second quarter. The minister can reorganise because there is so much money off-budget. Most of the officers in the ministry are concentrating on projects and forgetting to spend – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** If what hon. Achia is saying is true, then it is really scandalous, if there is money floating and it is never declared and even a certain amount is returned to the Treasury because they cannot use it. We have no vaccines for Foot and Mouth Disease, hyacinth and tsetse flies.

By the way, this has reminded me. In the Seventh Parliament, this House attempted to discuss the issue of the Nile waters raised by the late hon. Amon Muzoora. The way the Government moved to stop him from moving that motion here on the utilisation of the Nile Basin waters. Government harassed him until he gave up the motion. - I was here; I am telling you.

4.22

**MR PIUS WAKABI (NRM, Bugahya County, Hoima):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I represent Bugahya County, which stretches up to Lake Albert. Lake Albert has also been attacked by the same weed, which the fishermen call Mobutu weed.

We are facing all these challenges because this country lacks a direct political supervisor for this sector. Our Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is able but has been stretched. He is here fighting Foot and Mouth Disease and he is also in charge of NAADS. What happened to the Minister in charge of Fisheries? Why has the President taken three years without appointing a minister? We are able. Even I, Pius Wakabi, can handle that ministry if I am appointed by the President. *(Laughter)*

It is my request that you request the President to appoint one of us here in Parliament. We can handle that ministry. Otherwise, our Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is overstretched although he is capable.

Secondly, UPDF has always managed because this country has experiencing peace in these last years. Our UPDF officers are just there in the barracks. Why can’t they help us in the fight against these water weeds? That is my submission. Thank you very much.

4.24

**MR FELIX OKOT OGONG (NRM, Dokolo County South, Dokolo):** Madam Speaker, the issue of weeds affecting our water bodies has reached an alarming level. Honourable members, if this Parliament does not act immediately, then all our water bodies are bound to cause many problems to our people.

I live about fifty meters from Lake Kwania. In the past, we would draw water from near my house. However, this lake has been infested with weeds. Our people called it Nankabirwa because that weed came when hon. Ruth Nankabirwa was the minister. Because they love hon. Nankabirwa so much, our people, especially boys, are now smoking this weed *–(Interjections)–* Yes. It is a serious matter and the Ministry of Health should intervene. This is what they are now smoking in our area –*(Interjections)*– Yes. It is like opium. It is actually more dangerous than opium.

The coverage is now over 500 kilometres into the lake. One side used to belong to me but now it is all covered. Even our animals cannot drink water because it is all covered by the weed. Lake Kwania and Lake Kyoga are now silting. It used to be about eleven meters deep but right now, it is only about six meters or even less.

We used to harvest and eat a lot of fish in the lake but right now, you hardly get any. Therefore, I would like to make an appeal to the minister and the entire Government of NRM. This is a Government that is very serious with intelligent people, intelligent ministers and Members of Parliament. We need to act now. We need to control the importation of plants and flowers into our country. Which body controls this? I want the minister to tell me. There is no control at all. Ugandans love flowers and plants wherever they go, including some Members of Parliament. We just import these plants as ornaments, flowers and yet, they have some dangerous effects to our people. We need a body to control it.

There is Lake Victoria Management Body, in Lake Victoria. How far have they gone? Look at their budget. There is a lot of money yet Government does not control how it is used. You have Lake Victoria Management Body. What about Lake Kwania and Lake Kyoga? We should also have a similar management body. The minister should institute it. That is our appeal. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** I was also thinking about the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project. What do they actually do? You know, when you are flying into Entebbe during the day, you can see that Lake Victoria has shrunk; it is full of weeds. I think we need to investigate what these people are doing.

4.28

**MR JOHNSON MUYANJA (NRM, Mukono County South, Mukono):** Thank you. This is the time to act on issues of water, more so the water weeds. There are very many non-governmental organisations working on Lake Victoria and they are getting funds from foreign countries; for example, Lake Victoria Region Local Authorities and Counties Cooperation (LVRLACC) and many others. They are getting millions from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and other countries.

Because there is no coordination, we end up having a challenge. Many people are just interested in trips. I remember when I had just come here, Madam Speaker, you gave me an opportunity and we went to Mwanza. Allowances were paid in dollars and people enjoyed that.

This is the time for the minister to get in touch with all the East African countries and they work seriously to clear the weeds. In 2010, we had the water weed and the Government called upon the fishing communities to assist and we played our part. Why are the fishing communities keeping quiet now? It is because the military has harassed our people on the lake beyond measure. When you tried to intervene, Madam Speaker, you know what happened; they said that the Speaker and the Parliament of Uganda are intervening in issues where they do not have any right.

Therefore, the minister should come out clearly on this so that we start now. They have money but we can also come up with a supplementary budget. Otherwise, let him plan to involve the communities. We can use the machines we used during the water weed invasion in 2010 to clear this weed. Right now, the fishermen are scared. They cannot come out because they think that if they do, they will be arrested, yet the water weed is becoming too much. The fishing communities have suffered more than enough and this is the time to act –*(Interruption)*

**MR ANGURA:** Thank you for giving way, honourable member. As we talk about the lakes, I would like to inform the House that the water hyacinth is not only in the lakes but even in the small water bodies in our communities.

As you move from Kalerwe Market along the Northern Bypass where Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) has not yet cleared the swamp for road construction, there is a lot of water hyacinth there. Therefore, I think we need sensitisation not only for the people around the water bodies but for the entire country. In any case, how did the water hyacinth move from Lake Victoria to Kalerwe here?

**THE SPEAKER:** I wanted to ask hon. Lugoloobi how we can recover the money hon. Remigio Achia is talking about, so that we summon the minister and confront him with the evidence of that money. Why are we struggling when we have money? Can you devise a way so that we identify where those funds are? You can think about it.

4.31

**MS ROSEMARY NAUWAT (Independent, Woman Representative, Amudat):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his report. In the minister’s report, he stated clearly that support for the control of the water hyacinth through Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project II ended in June 2017, and even the support from the Arab Republic of Egypt has ended. However, the hyacinth and Kariba weed are still on our lakes. There is, therefore, need for us to support the ministry so that they help us fight this weed.

As we wait for a bigger budget, however, there are some other activities the ministry can still carry out. The minister informed us that there is a manual method which is labour-intensive and it uses simple tools like wheelbarrows, spades, pangas and knives. There is a need to use the manual method as we wait for a bigger budget. After all, it will create jobs for the communities around the lake.

Madam Speaker, we are talking about weeds on our water bodies, but when I was in the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry, we were informed that there are weeds which are invading our game parks. So, as we talk about the weeds on the water bodies, there is a problem of weeds also in our game parks. Therefore, I call upon Government to budget for the fight against weeds so that we do not lose our water or take contaminated water, or lose our fish and wild animals. Thank you.

4.33

**MR NATHAN NANDALA-MAFABI (FDC, Budadiri County West, Sironko):** Thank you. The Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project was approved by Parliament for the purpose of managing the resources of Lake Victoria. The money was for all the East African countries surrounding the lake. If that is the case, I would agree with what a colleague said, that for us to be able to manage Lake Victoria, it would be important that as East Africa, we deal with the water hyacinth together and not as Uganda alone.

I was the chairperson of the Committee on National Economy and when we were going to approve LVEMP II, I recall we moved around Lake Victoria. That was when I discovered why the Kenyans were fighting us. They said we assume we have a big mass of water but the breeding grounds for fish were in the rivers originating from Kenya. We saw it ourselves. That is why I would like to say that even the breeding grounds for this water hyacinth could be from one of those areas and we could probably be getting the end product.

That also comes to what you said about our colleague, hon. Muzoora. When the Egyptians were saying River Nile is theirs and they should maintain it, if you all remember, especially those who used to pass via Jinja, there was a man who looked like a white person but he was an Egyptian and he was working for the interests of Egypt. When hon. Muzoora was putting up that case, there was a team which left Parliament and went – Actually, Egypt wanted to make a contribution. Even for this water hyacinth, Egypt should be asked to come in because when we clean this water, we are cleaning it for them as well. They are the chief beneficiaries of this water –*(Interruption)*

**MR AYOO:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to give information to hon. Nandala-Mafabi. Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project is one of the institutions of the East African Community and it is based in Entebbe, Uganda. It is true they have been mobilising resources to ensure that all the EAC partner states surrounding Lake Victoria work together to deal with the water weed. However, one of the biggest problems has been the mismanagement of resources.

It would, therefore, require all the partner states surrounding Lake Victoria to again come together to ensure that they remove the water weed. Probably, you will discover that the amount of water weed in Kisumu is too much and it is moving all over the place. Unfortunately, while Uganda is doing a lot of work to deal with the water weed, the other partners are not doing the same. Therefore, I would like to say that this is the right way to go. Otherwise, we would be trying to do something here when the other partner states are not doing much and we will not move far. Thank you.

**MR NANDALA-MAFABI:** Thank you very much. Yes, I was aware it is in Entebbe because I came to Parliament before you. *(Laughter)*

Madam Speaker, if you see our colleague raising the issue of the budget, it is a serious issue. The agriculture ministry has the biggest amount of money *- (Interjection) –* Yes! I can tell you, when you talked about half a trillion shillings, you saw me going out; somebody has just sent me a message that the agriculture ministry must be clocking about a trillion shillings in off the balance sheet or off the budget funds.

Madam Speaker, it would be important that you request the Auditor-General to quickly assist us and audit the agriculture ministry because of these resources they have been getting without reporting to Parliament. When they talk about the water hyacinth, like my brother everybody is crying that we need our water clean. They want to steal it in addition to what they are stealing. We shall say that we must clean the water very fast.

You remember when they wanted to steal money for water for cows, they called us from recess and they said, “We urgently need water because the cows are dying in Mbarara.” Of course, by then the agriculture minister *–(Interjection)-* You were not here. We came from recess in the Seventh Parliament to do this, yet the agriculture ministry had water and dams which had been built by Dr Specioza Kazibwe but they wanted more money to go and eat. Therefore, Madam Speaker, my proposal would be that the minister should go back and look for money within the budget or the off-balance sheet if he wants to do some work urgently.

However, also in addition to that, this is an East African problem which could easily require calling on all the East African countries. Maybe the agriculture ministers of the East African Community should quickly discuss this because it is a serious issue and we are going to lose fish and subsequently income if they do not do it.

Madam Speaker, the minister was aware that we are tired. This should have come as one of the substantive motions by the minister himself or somebody if he was serious. The issue we are talking about concerns one of the most important resources that even the Chinese are saying that if they are to give us more money, they need to take Lake Victoria. If the Chinese can steal Lake Victoria, who are you not to steal Lake Victoria? By now, you would have deployed all your money to work on Lake Victoria as quickly as possible.

Finally, I have discovered *- (Member timed out.)*

4.40

**MR EDWARD OTTO (Independent, Agago County, Agago):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Allow me to thank the minister for that statement that he has given. This is a very important matter. I thank my colleagues for all the insight they have given with respect to this matter.

It is fair for me to also state that Agago County and district are named after a river but the river is almost no more. We used to have a practice of fishing and we also used to use the water for very many other things. Normally, when we have brothers from Karamoja coming to the area during drought, it is that very same river that serves them. However, on a sad note, I should report that this river is currently affected by weeds and it needs de-silting.

This is a very big problem. I do not want to lament anymore - it is part of the problem - but a multipronged approach needs to be devised to deal with these issues. Ordinarily, we would have called for a supplementary budget because this matter needs to be dealt with urgently. However, given what my brother raised about the other funding, we need to look into that - whether through a committee or other means - to help us understand whether that money is available. If it is not available, we need to find a way of appropriating money or getting money, maybe even through a supplementary request, to deal with this matter.

What my colleague, hon. Nsereko, raised about possibilities of even introducing weeds is a very serious matter and we need criminal sanctions in place to deal with such matters. If you see how lucrative the pesticide business has become in this country, it begs the question that somebody should be motivated to trigger these weeds as my brother said.

I have observed that when you travel to countries like Canada and other countries, they ask you if you have been to a farm or if you have carried any farm products. However, when you are coming to Uganda, I do not see that happening and yet it is a very big issue. In other countries, they confiscate things at the airport and if you try to bring in products from farms, there are devices in place to deal with this. They protect their environment. We need to do that too.

When I lived abroad, in many of the stores or supermarkets, there were special places for *– (Member timed out.)*

4.43

**MR DAVID ABALA (NRM, Ngora County, Ngora)**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his report, although it does not provide the strategy the ministry is putting in place to address the issue of the water hyacinth in Uganda.

I would like to say a few things. One, I would like to read one statement from the report, and that is point No.9. It says that the support for control of water hyacinth through the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project II ended in June 2017 and it was limited to Lake Victoria, and the support from the Arab countries also ended. This means that the ministry is now sitting and watching and maybe praying to God and Parliament to look for a way to address this matter.

This is what I seem to be seeing from what he has just said. There is nothing he has specifically indicated showing what the ministry is trying to do. At the same time, in today’s *New Vision*, they are saying that over 30 million Ugandans are going to be affected by the water hyacinth in Lake Victoria. Thirty million is a huge number and that is why the ministry should do something. If they have been slumbering or relaxing, they should wake up. That is the basic issue I would like to state.

Secondly, I would like to say that if we are to subtract 1995, when the water hyacinth was serious in Uganda, from 2019, that means it is now 24 years. If we are to compare this with the age of a human being, that means this is a mature man of 24 years. The ministry is still saying they do not have the capacity in terms of equipment to address the issue of the water hyacinth in Uganda! That is where my problem is.

The ministry seems not to understand the dynamics involved because they are saying they are have run short in terms of human resources and equipment and yet they are there. The policy seems not to be clear and that is where my concern is. I am one of those affected because Lake Bisina is also affected and we have problems crossing to the other side of Katakwi. That is why I would like to implore the ministry; if they have been relaxing, sleeping and dozing and may have not been having glasses to see that the water hyacinth is dangerous, they should take it from here and have this matter addressed now and permanently. That will be *- (Member timed out.)*

4.46

**MR WILFRED NIWAGABA (Independent, Ndorwa County East, Kabale):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. River Kagera has many tributaries that originate from my constituency, and the biggest river that drains into Kagera cuts across my entire constituency. Some of the problems we are talking about originate from upstream there. As the minister comes to answer most of the issues you have raised, I would like him to tell us the adequacy of the Plant Protection Act vis-à-vis these aquatic and other evasive weeds.

Secondly, I would like to know whether the ministry has an aquatic weeds and other evasive weeds control policy and if he finds it inadequate. I would like to also know whether he is thinking about coming up with a law to regulate this very important aspect of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

Thirdly, I know as a fact that when the water hyacinth became a menace, some of our scientists did research on the uses of the water hyacinth. However, the biggest challenge we have is that the research done by our scientists, especially those with the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), is exclusively funded by international foundations, particularly the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and other foreign countries. There is little money, if any, that comes from Government specifically geared towards research as a component to scientists. They are only receiving salaries but the biggest output, which is research, is donor-funded.

What programme does the ministry have to ensure that our scientists are fully facilitated to do research without relying largely on donors? When the donors pulled out, particularly the Rockefeller Foundation, that research component on water hyacinth stopped. I know it as a fact because one of the leading scientists is my own relative.

Also, you have talked about provision of a budget for short-term, medium-term and long-term control. Would you mind if you – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Please conclude.

**MR NIWAGABA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Would you mind if you brought that specific budget within a week’s time so that the House assigns it to the Budget Committee and the Committee on Agriculture for thorough scrutiny and advice on where money is? This is because we need immediate and urgent action. This is not a matter that should be sat on, waiting for the overall budget process. If you did that within a week, we would be grateful.

Lastly, we would like to know whether you have institutionalised, in your ministry, a particular department to look at these evasive and aquatic weeds as a long-term solution. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, under rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, we were supposed to debate only up to 4.30 p.m. However, when I realised that the matter was nationwide, I allowed these additional 30 minutes. Let me now invite the minister before we lay out some strategies.

4.50

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Vincent Ssempijja):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Members for these enriching submissions. Some of the issues are helpful to our ministry; for example, we can discuss the issue of the budget. I will be ready in two weeks to come and we look at where we can get the money from.

On that note, let me also inform Members that the sector is not getting a lot of money. We are not an island; Uganda shares borders with Kenya. Let us look at what others are doing in agriculture and look at Rwanda also; there is no mismanagement.

For a subsector like research – Coincidentally, I have been meeting the NARO team in Nakyesasa since morning. I did not know that I was on the agenda of Parliament today. I was just called on telephone to come, so I did not know that this issue would come up. We have been discussing issues of funding research; how can we help our scientists who are doing a good job?

These scientists have come up with the best varieties for beans and grass for feeding animals in the whole world. Our scientists have even come up with research, which has already been proved. We are now working on registration of anti-tick vaccines and the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). We need money not only to go through the processes but also to go commercial. You know how much money is needed. I do not think that the money that we give for research today can commercialise even one type of vaccine.

Therefore, let us not be convinced that the agriculture sector has enough money. If there is money in those projects you are talking about, we cannot get money from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for projects. I think projects normally get money from elsewhere – *(Interruption)*

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Thank you. In this House, once you hear the chairman of the Budget Committee giving information about budget allocation, what else do you need? For hon. Nandala-Mafabi, when it comes to off-balance sheet, you will never argue with him. What the chairman of the Budget Committee is saying is that you cannot fail to get some money to start with. The person who brought up this matter six years ago has major interest in this.

If you would like to see promotion of your ministry, how do you look for money within your budget? We cannot say that you have a lot of money. We know the problems associated with your ministry; National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) is taking a lot of money and wasting it somewhere. How do you look for some money within? That is the information I would like to give you.

**MR SSEMPIJJA:** Madam Speaker, I will approach the chairperson of the Budget Committee and we see how to handle this problem because it is a serious one. If we allow this Kariba weed to continue, it will certainly reach unmanageable levels and it will be very expensive for us as a country. Parliament needed to know that there is a problem.

The other issue is about the other districts. The districts around Lake Kyoga have an organisation that we have been working with. They formed the Lake Kyoga Integrated Management Organisation (LAKIMO) for all those districts, including Kamuli. These are the ones we have given the hand tools and other smaller equipment to keep on fighting the weed.

The Kariba weed has small threads; it is not like the water hyacinth, which is – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER**: Please conclude, but we want the solutions.

**MR SSEMPIJJA:** With the little money that we have, we are repairing and changing the forks of these excavators into buckets so that we can scoop the weeds. The only unfortunate thing that we found on Lake Kyoga is that it is shallow. The bigger ferries where we put the excavators cannot move on the whole of Lake Kyoga but can move in very few areas because it is shallow. Lake Victoria was easy for this kind of technology because it is deep and therefore it is easy to carry the bigger equipment.

Therefore, we have issues and we need better technology. That is why we are looking for funding. Madam Speaker, as I end –*(Interruption)*

**MR AOGON:** Honourable minister, we used to hear about the dredgers that help us to remove sand from the lakes. Don’t you have any right now, so that we can be able to deepen those waters and then apply your systems?

I remember when we had the issue of Lwera, the natural resources committee was dealing with the problem of dredging and they said that the Chinese were using those machines to scoop sand and they were deepening the lake. What do you have to say about this?

**MR LUBOGO:** Honourable minister, you had told us that there is an arrangement with districts around Lake Kyoga. I have informed you that Kaliro District, which is suffering from this same problem, is not part of the districts that are being assisted. Therefore, can you please clarify on that?

**MR SSEMPIJJA:** Madam Speaker, the scooping of sand from Lwera is not under my ministry. Therefore, I cannot answer for things I do not know. However, for Kaliro, I want to inform the honourable members that our researchers are working on how to use this Kariba weed. We have already tested the production of biogas; our researchers are doing it and results are promising. We can get biogas out of this weed instead of just losing it.

Madam Speaker, you gave the example of the Songhai Model because these people use the weeds for feeds, biogas and fertilizers. We already know this and we want to copy from them; that is why we are testing biogas. Therefore, we think that it will work out and out of the bad of the Kariba and other weeds, we may get something good.

About the people who stayed on Lake Kyoga for 16 hours, I am going to take that up seriously. That is why we are working with other ministries. The agriculture ministry alone cannot manage some of the things we are talking about here. The Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF), for example, because they have marines who can swim in the lake, we are using them. We are using hand tools for the time being and that is why we are using the UPDF. It is not for any other thing. We are using them to help us get some of the resources, especially boats and divers, so that they can help us keep in fighting this and we do not just lament without doing anything.

We have also tested the biological control method and research has shown that those insects have no problem with human beings and other aquatic lives because they do not even live for long. Once they feed, they produce a lot but they die early; so they have no problem.

Madam Speaker, this item has been appearing as an unfunded priority for all this time because we thought that we would be assisted as the agriculture ministry. We think everything that we present is very important.

Some people talk about the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) money. Madam Speaker, let me use this opportunity, and I will end here, to say that NAADS was supposed to cater for 68 per cent subsistence farmers. If we had sat here and looked at the 68 per cent and how we should approach subsistence farming, you would have seen that this Shs 300 billion is nothing. That is why you do not even see it. That is why one time the President promised Shs 1 trillion for NAADS. But of course, whatever happens, people think that NAADS will handle.

Honourable members, as we go to the budget time, please look at agriculture in a special way. I have already asked NARO to present our products and a paper to Parliament to inform you about what we have achieved with the small resources that you give us. I know the Members will appreciate our efforts. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, obviously we do not have a solution. The minister’s plan is for the future. Therefore, I want to urge Members to get angry about this issue. You know, trees are gone, waters are going; can we do what we did in the Ninth Parliament? We stood up for health; we had a standoff for three months. Can Members get angry enough to force Government to provide money for this issue? Otherwise, no one will remember that we were lamenting.

Therefore, chair of the Budget Committee and colleagues, during this budget, we must -No, our committee will design a strategy. Honourable minister, you said you were going to look at the budget and try to look for money.

**MR SSEMPIJJA:** Madam Speaker, I requested Parliament in my paper to avail money to fight this weed. It is a priority and that is why I am here.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay. Honourable members, the Budget Committee and the Committee on Agriculture are directed to find money during this budget time. The Ministry of Finance is not represented here; they are the ones who disorganise our things. We must find this money. That is a directive from the House. Thank you.

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION RAISED BY HON. EDWARD MAKMOT ON THE INSECURITY IN AGAGO DISTRICT, OCCASIONED BY INCURSIONS OF KARIMOJONG HERDSMEN

**THE SPEAKER:** Is the Minister of Internal Affairs around? He is not here; let us go to the next item.

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION RAISED BY HON. DAVID ABALA ON THE BRUTALITY OCCASSIONED BY POLICE PERSONNEL IN PALLISA DISTRICT THAT LED TO THE SHOOTING AND DEATH OF MR JOSEPH OUMO AND INJURY OF MR ROBERT ACELUM IN AKISIM SUBCOUNTY, PALLISA DISTRICT

**THE SPEAKER:** Again, the Minister of Internal Affairs is not here. Go to the next item.

BILLS

SECOND READING

THE LAW REVISION (PENALTIES IN CRIMINAL MATTERS) MISCELLANEOUS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2015

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I was informed that this matter was deferred for consultation between the mover and other stakeholders. Therefore, we also defer it now to Tuesday next week.

BILLS

SECOND READING

THE SECURITY INTEREST IN MOVABLE PROPERTY BILL, 2018

**THE SPEAKER:** Similarly, I think this Bill was also deferred for further consultation. That is what you did last week. So we defer it to Tuesday next week.

BILLS

SECOND READING

THE KAMPALA CAPITAL CITY AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2015

**MR NIWAGABA:** Madam Speaker, we were scheduled to hold a meeting today with the Minister for Kampala Capital City Authority with the view of harmonising. We have not yet met and we pray that we be rescheduled to next week.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay, item No.8 has been deferred to next week.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO STREAMLINE THE REMOVAL AND REINTEGRATION OF CHILDREN IN STREET SITUATIONS

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not see the mover or the seconders. The item is deferred to next week.

**MR EDWARD MAKMOT:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The urgency of the matter I raised and the developments on the ground with ethnic tension which is –

I was part of a security meeting. I raised this matter in December after the incident and a statement was expected the following Tuesday. I have been coming here on this issue, and this is the third time. Clearly, I know the minister is not here, but I would pray that some directive or timeline should be put for either tomorrow or some other time. Otherwise, it is casually passing and yet we are failing to contain the situation on the ground. Thank you.

**MR MICHAEL AYEPA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The matter that the honourable member from Agago raised is very serious and urgent. The Karimojong are disturbing the people of Agago and Abim. They enter without permission and discipline. They are not orderly and they just do anything they want there.

Abim loses 50 cows every day. The other day, our people told me to tell Government to relocate them to Kotido and bring the people of Kotido to Abim so that they feel their suffering. They came in October and burnt all our crops and now this time, they are busy taking away our cows. The same situation is happening in Agago.

We do not see the security presence in this area. We used to have the Anti Stock Theft Unit (ASTU) in that area but they have now been removed and very few are left. The ministers are just enjoying their offices for nothing and yet we say we have a government. If the Government cannot defend us, we shall defend ourselves. Let the Government give us permission to defend ourselves. We can look for guns wherever they are and defend ourselves. Why isn’t the Government taking this as a matter of serious concern?

5.12

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR KARAMOJA AFFAIRS (Mr Moses Kizige):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The question was directed to the Ministry of Internal Affairs but yesterday I reported that I have been handling this matter from the beginning of December 2018. For the two weeks I was not in Karamoja, there were so many developments. When the first -

**THE SPEAKER:** Order, Members!

**MR KIZIGE:** When the first incident happened on 5 January 2019, security meetings were held and they continue to be held. Even today, security meetings are being held for the police in the Karamoja, Acholi and Lango areas. For us to be able to report comprehensively, we have called a security meeting in Abim on Wednesday next week, where we shall have all stakeholders, including Members of Parliament. Thereafter, we shall be in a position to come back to the House and report.

Therefore, we are praying that we are allowed to continue with that meeting. Otherwise, security has been deployed but as a minister in charge of Karamoja affairs, I am not in a position to go into the details of the sort of deployments that have taken place. Thank you.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** I rise on a procedural matter. Madam Speaker, yesterday I listened to you on the Radio One Spectrum talk show. One of the issues you articulated very well was that we, Members of Parliament, are always ready for business but we are frustrated by Cabinet. We used to at least have Gen. Moses Ali here every day but I do not know what happened to him these days.

Madam Speaker, look at the Order Paper that you have read today. When you talked about security, one of the ministers that would have been here today to make a statement on the Floor would have been the Minister of Internal Affairs. On Tuesday, we had matters of national importance and the same ministers were not around.

I am a member of the Appointments Committee, Madam Speaker, and you know how we struggle when we are vetting these ministers; they promise heaven on earth. The Ugandan Constitution limits the number of ministers but it also has an opening for us to raise those numbers. The President says he wants a bigger number of ministers to help him perform his duties well and run the country –

**THE SPEAKER:** You are now debating. Let us move on. Let us take a decision. Can the Leader of Government Business ensure that the Minister of Internal Affairs is here tomorrow? During this season, there is always tension in this House among the Langi and Karimojong; it happens every year. Therefore, we need the Minister of Internal Affairs here tomorrow.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE NATIONAL MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND SOCIAL ETHICAL NORMALCY

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not see the mover. Let us go to the next item. There was a new item on the agenda. There was a motion brought by hon. Tonny Ayoo. Let us deal with that. We amended the Order Paper to say that we shall allow that motion later today.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT TO INVESIGATE THE GIVEAWAY OF MARUZI RANCHING SCHEME AND THE ILLEGAL LEASING AND GRABBING OF LAND BELONGING TO THE RANCH

5.16

**MR TONNY AYOO (NRM, Kwania County, Apac):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move this motion under rule 56 (1)(a) and (c) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda.

The motion is for a resolution of Parliament to investigate the giveaway of Maruzi Ranching Scheme and the illegal leasing and grabbing of land belonging to the ranch. The motion reads as follows:

“*WHEAREAS in 1968 the Government of Uganda leased out Maruzi Ranching Scheme, comprised of 64 square miles of land located in Apac District, to Uganda Livestock Industries Ltd for a period of 99 years on terms and conditions stipulated in the lease agreement and including, among others, that the lessee –*

1. *observes and performs all covenants in the lease agreement,*
2. *pays a yearly rent of Shs 21,074/50 to the lessor,*
3. *uses the land for only the purpose of a beef production scheme,*
4. *does not subdivide or give away any rights or licences whatsoever over the said land or any part thereof;*

*AWARE that, as a result of the northern insurgency of 1985, the business of Uganda Livestock Industries Ltd was disrupted leading to the eventual collapse of the ranching scheme;*

*FURTHER AWARE THAT with the coming into force of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and the subsequent enactment of the Land Act, Cap 227, the land in issue reverted to the Government of Uganda under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries;*

*NOTING THAT with the change of government and the internal displacement of people, the ownership of the land became a matter of community concern, leading to legal contestation vide High Court Civil Suit No. 023 of 2014 between over 8,000 residents of Acamkado, Ayeolyec, Aganga, Tar Ogali, Kungu parishes in Akokoro and Ibuje subcounties in Apac District and the Government;*

*FUTHER NOTING THAT there have been several attempts by unscrupulous elements both within and outside the central and local government to illegally evict local communities in total disregard of existing court orders;*

*ALARMED THAT despite the Apac District Land Board's efforts to protect its interest in the above lease by caveating the same, the lease was illegally converted from leasehold to freehold title in the names of Uganda Livestock Industries Ltd comprised in Freehold Register Volume (FRV) 1560 Folio 20 in 2016;*

*FURTHER ALARMED that the Uganda Livestock Industries Limited went ahead and illegally leased out the said land to Hillside Agriculture Ltd in September 2018 for a period of 50 years, comprised in Leasehold Register Volume (LRV) 4624 Folio 1 covering 54 square miles;*

*COGNISANT OF THE FACT THAT this trail of transactions elaborated above points to an elaborate scheme designed with intention to undermine the democratic principles of the rule of law by illegally rendering whole communities landless contrary to the Constitution;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by Parliament that:*

*1. A select committee of Parliament be constituted to investigate the illegal giveaway of Maruzi Ranching Scheme, the ownership of the land, and all transactions carried out in respect of the land and report to the House within 45 days of this resolution.*

*2. Investigates the circumstances under which the above leasehold title was converted to freehold, then subdivided and leased out to Hillside Agriculture Ltd.*

*3. The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and all concerned parties do forthwith stop any further transaction in relation to Maruzi Ranch including the compensation, subdivisions, sub-letting, evictions, boundary opening, land clearing and any further activities pending the report of the select committee of Parliament.”*

Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is it seconded?

*(Motion Seconded)*

**THE SPEAKER:** It is seconded by several Members. Can you justify.

**MR AYOO:** Madam Speaker, as a concerned citizen, I took interest in finding out what was going on in Maruzi Ranch. I went to the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development zonal office in Lira District and did a search. I realised that on record, in the land information system, the Lease Register Volume 717 Folio 4, which was registered on 24 April 1969, is the only document that exists and proves the true ownership of the said land at Maruzi Ranch.

I beg to lay on the Table the certificate of registration above on Maruzi Ranching Scheme.

The second document that I found on the title was a caveat that was put by the chairperson District Land Board Apac District, on 6 July 2018, expressing their interest and stopping any further activity by any person or any changing of the title to any person. I also beg to lay at the Table this caveat.

Madam Speaker, in possession I have certificate of title under freehold registered Volume 1560 Folio 20, that was registered on 19 January 2016, in the name of Uganda Livestock Industries that converted the freehold title to leasehold title. I also beg to lay this title, at the Table.

Furthermore, I also beg to lay at the Table registered title vide leasehold registered Volume 4624 Folio 1, in the name of Hillside Agriculture Limited that was registered on 7 September 2018, in the name of Hillside Agriculture Limited. I am laying all these titles at the Table because-

1. We would like to understand the circumstance under which the leasehold public land was converted to freehold and eventually subdivided;
2. Parliament invested a lot of money into land information system but these other two titles, the freehold and leasehold Volume 1, have been registered only in the analogue and not in the land information system. It was not registered at the zonal office from Kampala using the manual system.

Madam Speaker, these are some of the issues why we think those two titles were fictitious and only meant to serve the interests of those who made them but not following the first leasehold that had conditions that were supposed to be followed.

Madam Speaker, people have been evicted from this land and in the process of eviction, the Uganda People’s Defence Forces team and the internal security team are on the ground. They set up a camp and they move at night, arrest people, ferry and drop them in Apac and ask them to find where to go.

Two women delivered from the camp that has been set up at the ranch. One person was shot and quietly taken to hospital – I will be able to provide the details. A 13-year old girl was raped at night. Many people were injured and some of them are in custody at Apac Central Police Station.

Madam Speaker, what alarms the most is the process of compensation. People are being compensated with Shs 400,000, Shs 200,000 and Shs 100,000 without any schedule for payment and valuation. What is annoying is that you are asked to stand before your house, your picture is taken and you are given Shs 200,000 and asked to go away. If you refuse, you are beaten and taken to the camp. The people who are doing compensations and payments are the District Internal Security Officer (DISO), the Gombolola Internal Security Officers (GISO) and some UPDF officers. They give you Shs 400,000 and add a zero to make it read Shs 4,000,000 or Shs 200,000 and add a zero to make it read Shs 2,000,000.

I, therefore, wish to know from the Minister of Defence and Internal Affairs the circumstances under which he deployed UPDF officers with uniforms without nametags to enforce compensation. They are using teargas on the people.

For the land which is 54 square miles, Hillside Agriculture Limited has paid a total of Shs 9 million, which is supposed to cater for premium which is a one-off, annual ground rent and stamp duty. We, therefore, wish to find out the rate used to pay the Shs 9 million. We shall provide evidence.

Madam Speaker, the Uganda Livestock Industry was divested and, therefore, defunct. We would like to understand circumstances under which it is participating in converting leasehold land to freehold in their own name and also subdividing and allowing people to get into the land and start demarcating the land even without any clear survey mapping to the extent that even people who do not belong to the area of the ranch have been included where they are demarcating and their land has been taken, yet they have lived there since time immemorial.

Looking at all this, the volume of the land which is being opened is bigger than the original land of the scheme and therefore, the other people’s land is being grabbed when they are not aware. Even the team doing it is not aware that the size of the land in the new title is bigger than the size of the land on the ground. This has become a serious concern to the people and there has been no effort to help them. I visited the site.

Therefore, I would like to ask this Parliament; if the title – which is the only one on record – is the first leasehold of 1969 and the other two titles being purported and are not in the lands information system, it should render the whole operation illegal. As a result, instead of evicting people, the ones evicting should be the ones to be evicted from the land. It is, therefore, on that ground that our prayer No. 3 is very pertinent in resolving this matter, that all activities be suspended.

Madam Speaker, we are not against the project but things must be done in an orderly way so that it is supported by the people to ensure that it is sustainable and that both the people and Government benefit from it. A project done in a clandestine manner would end up depriving people and people will not support it and in any case, people may sell this land.

When the land law was enacted, the title in the name of “Uganda Livestock Industries Limited” would have automatically reverted to the district land board. All the transactions that are now taking place would be done together with the district land board, the district planning committee and the district council knowing the terms and conditions of leasing out the land.

Even so, one of the conditions that was put for livestock production was that you cannot remove the people of Lango from their cultural practice of rearing cows. Therefore, you would have elements of rearing cows while bringing in the new palm oil project. However, all this has been ignored.

Madam Speaker, it is on this basis that I beg to move and request that this Parliament considers this motion and because of the commitments during this time of the budget, we are praying for a select committee where one or two people would be picked from different committees and facilitated so that they deal with this matter urgently. As we said, we are not against the project but let us do the right thing and in the right way and move on as a country. Thank you, Madam Speaker. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. I think there is some information from the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

5.33

**THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Ms Janet Okori-Moe):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank hon. Ayoo for that motion but I would like to inform the House that the matter he has presented is before the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. The committee has already processed its work. We did not just go to Maruzi but all other ranches and Government stock farms.

We have already interfaced with the minister of state for lands. We also found it prudent to interface with the senior minister in charge of lands, together with the minister in charge of agriculture because they had issues to answer together. We have also interacted with the Uganda Land Commission.

Before we went on recess, we were to interface with Apac District Local Government but we were caught up by time. When we resumed last week, I called the technical team attached to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to plan how to meet the Apac District Local Government before we finalise our report on Maruzi and all other ranches.

Madam Speaker, the reason it has taken us time to produce this report is because we had two key issues before the committee; the one on fisheries which is about to be tabled here and the one for Government stock farms. I request the House that we hold our breath and wait for the committee’s report and we discuss this matter comprehensively. I thank you.

**MR OKOT OGONG:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee for that good report. However, I do not know whether the chairperson is aware that as they carry on with their investigations, our people who are around the camp in the ranch are being evicted, terrorised, taken to camps and the Uganda People’s Defence Forces soldiers are beating and raping them.

Madam chairperson, are you aware that this is happening as you carry out your investigations?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I think there are two issues. The first one is the overall issue of finding out about all the ranches. The second one is to do with the evictions; so, we need to separate the evictions from the other issue. Do you want to say something, hon. Macodwogo?

3.38

**MR MAXWELL AKORA (UPC, Maruzi County, Apac):** Madam Speaker, I beg your indulgence. I beseech you that as the MP for Maruzi County where the ranch is located, I should offer a position before the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs and the Minister of Lands respond.

First of all, I would like to –

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, let us listen. The motion is there but we need to know whether we should proceed with it or stop it. Let us first hear what he has to say.

**MR AKORA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Honourable members, as I said before, I represent Maruzi County where the ranch is located – *(Interruption)*

**MRS OGWAL:** Madam Speaker, it is very painful to put a colleague to order on a very important matter like this one. However, I plead with my brother, hon. Maxwell Akora who represents Maruzi where the ranch is that first and foremost, before he entered this Parliament, he swore by the Bible. Can he first tell us and declare his interest on this matter before he makes a contribution, which will convince the Speaker and the House?

Can he first declare his interest on this matter? Is he in order to pretend that he is just contributing to the matter when he could actually be the cause of the matter?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, he had just started and had actually not said anything; so, let us hear what he has to say and then we can either rule him in or out.

**MR AKORA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for that wise ruling. Hon. Cecilia Ogwal is a senior Member of this House and is senior to me in all respects. I respect her views. Indeed, as you ruled, I had not yet uttered a word but I had indicated that as the Member of Parliament for Maruzi County, I would assist this House to understand the situation on the ground.

I would like to thank my colleague, hon. Tonny Ayoo, the MP for Kwania for raising this motion. I was informed about three weeks ago by hon. Felix Okot Ogong, together with hon. Tonny Ayoo, that they had received a petition to the Speaker of Parliament from a number of residents in Maruzi County with regard to their claim that they were being evicted by Government.

I thought I should shed light on this because I was actually mentioned in that petition and that is probably the reason why hon. Cecilia Ogwal is indicating that I should declare my interest. My interest is very clear and honourable; I represent the people of Maruzi County and secondly, I come from the sub-county in which Maruzi Ranch is located; that is Akokoro Sub-County. I come from the parish in which Maruzi Ranch is located; that is Ayeolyec Parish. Traditionally, the land belonged to my ancestors - the Oyima clan - so I have a very clear attachment and good knowledge of the history of Maruzi Ranch.

I would like to thank hon. Tonny Ayoo for bringing up the background which I agree with, that the land was leased to Uganda Livestock Industries in 1968 by the Uganda Land Commission for livestock development in the name of Maruzi Ranch. Uganda Livestock Industries belonged to Uganda Development Corporation. I –

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you are now going into a debate. I thought you are giving us information about what is there. Are there evictions or not? That is what we want to hear.

**MR AKORA:** Madam Speaker, I indicated that there is a petition. In fact, when hon. Ayoo sought leave of this House, he indicated that he wanted to present the petition. I have had the opportunity to read that petition. That petition points fingers at a number of people or parties that are said to be involved in evicting or depriving the people of their land. I am mentioned in that petition and I thought I should clarify as to why I am mentioned in that petition.

Madam Speaker, I do not know if you have looked at that petition. I have browsed through it and there is no –

**THE SPEAKER:** I have asked you a question; are there evictions or not? That is what I want you to answer.

**MR AKORA:** Madam Speaker, I was in the constituency last week and I received reports that there was an incident in Maruzi in the ranch over the weekend. I do not exactly know what Government is doing in terms of evictions but what I know is that the people have been sensitised. The people have – *(Interjections)* - Madam Speaker, I beg your indulgence.

Land issues are very sensational and I would like us to listen carefully so that we get to the truth of the matter. The community that I represent has been engaged. I have not disagreed with any position. I just want to clarify on what is going on.

The position has been that the community – *(Interjection)* – I will come to that. You do not climb a tree from the top. *(Laughter)* The community has been sensitised as to the status of the Maruzi Ranch.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Can I invite the seconder?

5.45

**MS BETTY AWOR (NRM, Woman Representative, Apac):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am the Woman Member of Parliament for Apac District. I stand to second the motion moved by hon. – *(Interruption)*

**MR SSEMPIJJA:** Madam Speaker, I wonder whether we are proceeding very well by accepting to second this motion when this Parliament, under your guidance, instructed the committee of Parliament to look into these matters and the committee is ready to provide a report. Are we proceeding well?

**MS OKETAYOT**: Madam Speaker, is the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries in order, knowing very well that when this issue came to the public, the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries took it up and the committee invited him and asked him to halt the process of the giveaway. He, however, defied the directives of the committee and went on with the process of the giveaway and people are being evicted not only from Maruzi Ranch.

Madam Speaker, you will recall that hon. Achiro and I raised the issue of what is happening in Aswa Ranch; how the UPDF are making people suffer. People are being evicted from the ranch. My local leaders - the LC III Chairperson of Angagura sub-county and the District Councillor of Angagura - were last week arrested by police that had travelled all the way from Kampala.

Therefore, is the honourable minister in order to say that the issue is with the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and yet he has defied the directives of the committee? Is he in order?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, let us separate the issue that the committee is investigating from the issue of the evictions. I would like us to address the evictions. Are the soldiers there or not? That is what I want to hear so that we take a decision on it and then we can ask the committee to expedite.

Hon. Okori-Moe, how much time do you require to finish your report?

**MS OKORI-MOE:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Actually, we were ready to proceed to meet the Apac District Local Government this week. However, the Budget Framework Paper came in, which is more urgent. Therefore, we plan to meet Apac District Local Government next week after which we shall present our report on the Floor of Parliament. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** We can wait for the report but I would like us to address the issue of the evictions. Who directed the evictions and what is the army doing in Maruzi?

5.50

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (DEFENCE) (Col. Charles Okello Engola):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I received information about the incident at Maruzi Ranch yesterday. However, I did not get any information about evictions. I was told that there are soldiers who are camping there. I called the RDC of that district to inform me because I wanted to get information from the ground - whether the soldiers were there or not. The RDC is the head of security in a district.

The RDC confirmed to me that there are a few soldiers on the ground and that these soldiers were requested for by the district authorities. According to him, the district authority requested for 30 soldiers -

**THE SPEAKER:** To do what?

**COL. OKELLO ENGOLA:** I do not know what confusion was there - (*Laughter*) but the RDC told me that they requested for 30 soldiers and 30 police officers to be deployed at Maruzi Ranch because they were expecting problems at the ranch.

This morning, I advised the UPDF authorities to withdraw those soldiers with immediate effect. The issue of eviction of *Wanainchi* from that place is not the work of the UPDF; the UPDF does not do evictions. It is there for the people of this country.

I have, therefore, sent a team on the ground to find out. If truly the UPDF was doing that, we shall look for the culprits so that they face the law. That should not happen because the UPDF is supposed to handle the peace of this country and the peace of the people of this country. There is no way we can allow the UPDF to do what they are not mandated to do by this Constitution. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, let us hear from the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development.

5.53

**THE MINISTER OF LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (Ms Betty Amongi)**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I take your guidance that we wait for the committee report. However, when I consulted with the Member of Parliament who moved the motion two days ago, the area Member of Parliament, the Woman Member of Parliament, the RDC, RISO and other security agencies, I directed them to first of all stop what was reported to me as compensation. Compensation is handled by the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, specifically by the Office of the Chief Government Valuer.

The report I got was that NARO and NAGRIC are on that land and that this investor and NARO were opening boundaries. In that context, there were people whose crops were destroyed as the boundaries were being opened. Those people were asking for disturbance allowance for their crops but not compensation. That is in writing.

I would like to confirm to this House that compensation is written officially. The rate for people with grass thatched houses, under the Land Act, is determined by the District Land Board.

On the issue of eviction, I have already indicated that I have directed that in circumstances where they allege that evictions are being carried out and compensation is being done, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development has not gone there with the technical officers for -

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, you should be clear. Direct now that there should be no evictions on Maruzi Ranch; that is what we want to hear.

**MS OGWAL:** We would like to know who ordered that eviction. Was it the ministry?

**MS AMONGI:** Madam Speaker, the Minister of Defence has indicated that the district chairperson of security or the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) requested for security. As it stands now *- (Interjections) –* no, I have said that nobody at the centre has ordered for evictions. We have written letters to the RDC telling her to stop any eviction.

We have already constituted a team to go on the ground, together with the area members of Parliament to agree on how we are going to handle this matter. I would like to thank the Members who have moved the motion and said that they support the project but want the matter to be handled properly.

As a minister, I agree with them that the matter should be handled properly because those are people who come from the same place as I do; I cannot disadvantage them. I would like to pledge that I will work with the area members of Parliament to make sure that issues of compensation are handled properly and secondly, that there are no evictions. Thank you.

**MS OGWAL:** Madam Speaker, the minister is not clear. Who ordered the evictions and what are the grounds for eviction? That has not come out clearly.

**MR OKOT OGONG:** Madam Speaker, it has also come to our attention that over 10 people have been arrested and detained by police in Apac and others have been transferred to places we do not know. There are those who have been shot and injured. There are those who have been injured. There are women who delivered in the camp because our people are being collected in a concentration camp in Lango. You can imagine. They are worse than Kony. What are we going to do with those people?

We must know if the minister ordered for the evictions and for compensation. Who owns the land and where is the money coming from? Where are those people getting money from?

Madam Speaker, we have information that there are unscrupulous people who have linked up with other mafia in this Government and they want to take away that land at no cost. You can imagine 54 square miles being sold at Shs 9 million.

Apac District Local Government should be getting revenue from ground rent and premium of over Shs 1 billion per year but the land is given for free at Shs 9 million without any tax being paid. Is that fair and yet our people are being taken away and beaten? People in other forests are respected but our people in Lango are not respected. Are we animals? They must tell us. Our people must be respected.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, you know that under our rules, you cannot consider the same issue in the same situation more than once. My worry is that there is a pending report. If we bring this one, we are going to kill the other one. Therefore, for now, can we address the issue of the evictions? In addition, I would like to ask hon. Okori-Moe, the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, how many members do you have on your committee?

**MS OKORI-MOE:** We have 28 members, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** If you do not mind, I would like to propose that part of you remain on the Budget Framework Paper and part of you go to Apac to meet the district local government so that you can conclude the report quickly. The evictions must stop.

**MS OKORI-MOE:** Much obliged, Madam Speaker. We are going to do it that way, although the plan of the committee was to invite them here *- (Interjections) -* well, we shall go there. Thank you very much.

**MS AWOR:** Madam Speaker, can I be allowed to second the motion?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I would like to defer the motion until we get that report so that we can do them together. If we take a decision on the motion, it also affects the report. That is my difficulty. We cannot discuss both in this session.

**MR NAMBESHE:** Madam Speaker, from the look of things, this is a matter of urgent public importance. Any delay may result into issues that we may regret tomorrow. Would it not be procedurally right that this motion is seconded and we debate it and come up with a position?

**THE SPEAKER:** What decision shall we take? How do we resolve it in the end? It would mean that two committees of the House are investigating the same issue.

**MS OKETAYOT:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Now that you have guided that the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries can divide the members of the committee; some to handle the Budget Framework Paper and others to go on the ground, get the facts and come up with a report and since this matter is of urgent public importance, wouldn’t it be procedurally right for us to agree on when the report should be presented on the Floor of Parliament? Can’t we give a timeframe as to when this report should be presented?

**THE SPEAKER:** What we should do is, let us allow the seconder to speak and we do not debate until the report comes.

6.05

**MS BETTY AWOR (NRM, Woman Representative, Apac):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand to second the motion moved by hon. Tony Ayoo. This project is welcome and we support this it. The project will be initiated by an investor named Hillside Agricultural Investment Limited.

However, the way in which the eviction is being carried out by the police and the Uganda People’s Defence Forces is a concern. Why should our people be beaten? Many of them are now sleeping out of their homes. Why should you bring in tear gas? These are poor people. Remember, these are people who have been on this land as far back as 1960, before the land was given to the Government for establishment of the present Maruzi Ranch, which was established in 1968.

Facts on the ground indicate that it is now security personnel carrying out compensation for the people who are supposed to leave that land. This does not make sense. What is the resettlement package for these poor people? We should let them live happily.

Madam Speaker, these are some of the facts for which I stand to second. From the onset, there has been lack of involvement of political leaders. I am the Woman Member of Parliament of the area but I have been side-lined.

I am also aware that before land is sub-divided, there is a procedure, which has to be followed. May I know from the Minister of Lands whether that procedure has been followed? We are going to ask for proof.

May I also know from the minister whether the Physical Planning Committee of Apac District was involved in this sub-division? As hon. Tony Ayoo indicated, the title, which the investor is holding, was issued by the lands office in Kampala. I would like to know why the regional office would not issue the title in its own region, which is the Lango sub-region?

The area in question - Maruzi Ranch - has acreage of 64 square miles of which Hillside Agricultural Investment Limited was allocated 54 square miles, as indicated on the certificate of title. To whom is the remaining 10 square miles allocated?

Madam Speaker, there were a number of people who were arrested last weekend and I have their names here. They are:

1. Alex Okello
2. Jackson Omara
3. Ocen Odongo
4. Calvin Opero and
5. Okao Yakobo.

These people are innocent and they should be released.

I beg to second this motion. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let hon. Amoru also finish with seconding the motion and we shall then agree on how to move.

6.10

**MR PAUL AMORU (NRM, Dokolo North County, Dokolo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for granting this motion the attention it deserves. I would also like to thank hon. Tony Ayoo and all the Members who have shown support to this motion.

Following the presentation by the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, we would like to concede that the other issues be stayed awaiting the final report from the committee but two issues could still be focused on now.

The first one is that the Lango Parliamentary Group is interested in knowing, specifically, who ordered the evictions and the grounds for which it was done. This is important because a lot of losses have been experienced; property is lost and people are injured. If this is understood clearly, other matters of compensation in that regard will be properly addressed. We think that, that issue is sticking out and the House should insist on finding clear information on who was behind this eviction order.

Secondly, it has come out clearly that there is a lot of controversy around the ownership of this land and the process is now subject to investigation. We would like the House to stay or stop all forms of eviction and any other activity relating to that ranch as we wait for the committee.

In addition, since this matter is of a regional nature, the Lango Parliamentary Group would like to move to the ground and be able to beef up that process so that the information that will come to Parliament will be harmonised and will possibly facilitate effective debate.

Finally, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, in guiding land management institutions such as the district land boards and the Uganda Land Commission, issued guidelines in line with the Land Act Cap. 227 paragraph 9 (2) that all leases granted by Uganda Land Commission, out of the former public land for which the Uganda Land Commission has no certificate of title, now vests in the district land boards. It is for this matter that I personally support and second the motion.

There are new issues that were previously not brought to the attention of the committee and a select committee probably would have done much more precise work on this. However, within our rules, as I have indicated, we have already conceded and we plead with the committee to expand on what they were originally looking at so that when we come here, we will not see need to create a committee since there are other developments that have come from what originally formed the basis for their investigations. I beg to move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, the motion has been moved and seconded but as I indicated, debate will be deferred until we have heard from the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

The committee is directed to go to Maruzi and come back within two weeks. This is an urgent matter so even if we are doing the budget, group one should go to Maruzi and the other group remains here and we debate it even before we go into the budget. *(Members rose\_)* Why don’t you wait for me? Why don’t you allow me to give my ruling?

I was addressing the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries first to go and complete their report, taking into account what has been said and report within two weeks.

I am directing the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to stop the evictions immediately. *(Applause)* After that report, we shall debate this matter. Thank you.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (LOCAL GOVERNMENT) ON THE AUDITOR-GENERAL’S REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2016/2017 ON 115 DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, 41 MUNICIPAL COUNCILS AND 63 TOWN COUNCILS

**THE SPEAKER:** Are they not here? PAC? Okay, honourable members, I think we have done quite a bit of work. House is adjourned to tomorrow at 2 o’clock. Thank you very much.

*(The House rose at 6.16 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 17 January 2019 at 2.00 p.m.)*