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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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TUESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2024



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 19TH SITTING - 1ST MEETING

Tuesday, 24 September 2024

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

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. I will be amending the Order Paper to accommodate the response by the minister for fisheries on the issue which was raised on Thursday, and her response is ready.

I also received a petition from the civil society, on the European Union Deforestation Free Products Regulations. I refer this petition to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries so that we can appraise it and understand more and see how best we can help our people in terms of compliance with these very critical regulations that are going to affect our sector.

A lot is going on; a lot of confusion and people do not know where to start from. The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has tried, but I think we need to be brought on board fully so that we can participate in the sensitisation process.

Let us get to matters of national importance. Let us start with a procedural point from Hon. Ssemujju.

2.20

MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso): Mr Speaker, thank you very much. When we were being sworn in, we all made an undertaking to defend the Constitution and then we prayed. Article 208 of the Constitution, says:

1. "There shall be armed forces to be known as the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF)."
2. "The Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces shall be non-partisan, national in character, patriotic, professional, disciplined, productive and subordinate to the civilian authority as established under this Constitution."

Mr Speaker, this is mandatory. Therefore, I draw your attention and the attention of this House, to the utterances made by Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, who happens to be the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF).

First, that after his father's presidency, no civilian will be a president in Uganda. But two - I hear people who are jeering - that as CDF, he has now endorsed the National Resistance Movement (NRM) Chairman for the next presidential elections. These two issues go against the core principles of this Constitution. The CDF, a military officer, is endorsing a candidate of a political party.

Two, he is also issuing threats that no civilian will be President after his father. Therefore, the procedural issue I am raising, Mr Speaker, is whether the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs must not be asked to account for these statements.

We have UPDF officers here. Most of the time they are quiet. They fear tarnishing the name of UPDF but there is one who is consistently breaking all the limitations in the Constitution. Mr Speaker, the procedural issue - because we took the same oath; you remember, even before you became the Deputy Speaker, we all took the same oath and made an undertaking that we shall protect the Constitution. The constitutional order is being overthrown when we are looking on.

Mr Speaker, can you, using your power, ask the Government to explain why a particular UPDF officer can be allowed to overthrow the Constitution, announce which candidate to support, and issue threats to civilians that he will not allow, or the army will not allow a civilian to be a President in Uganda?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Deputy Attorney-General?

2.24

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the matters raised by Hon. Ssemujju. I want to say that Article 208, which says UPDF shall be subject to civilian authority, does not take away the right to have an opinion, freedom of expression, the rights and freedoms enshrined in article -*(Interruption)*-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, here we receive opinions whether you accept or not, popular or unpopular. This is where someone should stand up freely, and speak. So, let us give the Deputy Attorney-General a chance to submit, then you can rebut. If you do not want him to speak; if you do not want him to express his opinion - remember an honourable member has asked me that I should ask the Government, and I have asked the Government. This is the chief advisor of the Government; where else would I go? Please, honourable Deputy Attorney-General, complete your point.

MR KAFUZZI: Chapter 4 of the Constitution is one in which the Bill of Rights is enshrined.

And at no time does the Constitution tell us that Article 208 ousts Chapter 4 of the Constitution. Being a military man does not put you outside the ambit of Chapter 4 of the Constitution. You retain the right to express yourself; you retain your right to form an opinion.

It would be different if he was ferrying ballot papers and voter materials for a particular party. Even then, if he has to do it for security purposes under the circumstances, each case would be adjudged, based on its facts. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Since we are allowed the Attorney-General, we can also hear from the Shadow Attorney-General. *(Laughter)*

2.27

THE SHADOW ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Wilfred Niwagaba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. All along, I thought I went to the same law school with my learned friend until today. *(Laughter)* I am not saying that I am disappointed because he has expressed his opinion, but I think it is vulgarising a very important matter which Hon. Ssemujju has raised.

A serving military officer who is currently at the helm of the UPDF comes up and makes statements which not only contravene Article 208 of the Constitution, but also the UPDF Act itself. An Attorney-General comes and defends that kind of conduct as part of the freedoms of expression and opinion, well knowing that some freedoms are subject to the law. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry for the interruption, Hon. Niwagaba. Some of us are not on social media and all that. Where are these statements, because there are things being referred to? – No; because it seems there are statements which some people have read and some of us have not read. If one could lay it on the Table, it would help some of us.

I am asking honestly because we may take it that everyone is on social media waiting for

statements. Therefore, if we can lay it on the Table – Hon. Kayemba-Ssolo, do you want to lay your phone on the Table?

MR KAYEMBA-SSOLO: Yes, Mr Speaker. I would like to lay my phone, which has the official Twitter accounts of the CDF.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please lay; describe your phone and lay. *(Laughter)* Hon. Sseggonna says he wants to help.

MR SSEGGONA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Under the same Constitution, a person is innocent until he pleads guilty or is found to be guilty. When you passed over the mantle to the Executive and it was owned up as a fact but defended by the law, I was relieved. I expected the Executive, which you were asking to respond, to say, “We shall investigate”, but because they knew, they did not undertake to investigate. *(Laughter)*

Owing to the seriousness of this matter, Mr Speaker, I thought, with your guidance, that the right way of dealing with this would be to refer the matter to an investigation, irrespective of who is involved because it is about our life. It is about the safety of everybody in this country. It is a matter that should be investigated.

I went to not only law school but the same high school with the Attorney-General, Hon. Kafuuzi. I am not disappointed because one core thing we were taught is to express opinion. The Supreme Court of this land has ruled, in Andrew Mwenda and Charles Onyango Obbo v. Attorney-General, that a person has a right to express even a wrong opinion. *(Laughter)* I was going to say that outside Parliament, I can say, “Even a stupid opinion”, but fearing where you are seated, Mr Speaker –*(Laughter)*- I opted to refrain.

My appeal to you, Sir, and this House, for the safety of this country and everybody, is that subject this to an investigation, so that we have my brother, Gen. Kainerugaba, to also say, “I said or I did not say - I was not in my usual moods or something else”, so that we give him a right to defend himself. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me first rule on that. Honourable colleagues, the UPDF has its code of conduct and disciplinary procedures. If any member of the UPDF violates their code of conduct, they are subjected to disciplinary action. I have seen Generals and senior officers going there.

I do not want Parliament to turn itself into an investigative body – *(Applause)*- before the institution can utilise its own mechanisms, in case there is a problem. I am not going to be referring this matter to a committee for investigation. We have a lot of business to handle here. Let us leave institutions to handle theirs. Hon. Niwagaba, conclude.

MR NIWAGABA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As I conclude – *(Interruption)*

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, I would like to give information to my Shadow Attorney-General. I was the Shadow Minister responsible for Defence and Veteran Affairs in this Parliament.

The fully constituted Minister of Defence came and appeared before our committee. Hon. Ssempijja, who was the minister, headed that delegation, supported by the state minister then - who is now the minister, Hon. Oboth - and the then CDF, Hon. Mbadi, who is here.

I put this question to them. I told them that we have a serving military officer who appears to be above the law and is contradicting an Act of Parliament. When I began to ask the question, Hon. Ssempijja immediately felt cold and rushed out of the committee meeting here in Parliament. Hon. Oboth immediately took a phone call and said, “I am coming back”, literally running away.

I challenged the CDF who had the command - and colleagues who sit on the committee were there. I said, “As the Army Commander, can’t you issue orders?” The CDF, Hon. Mbadi said, “Do not cause me trouble” - *(Laughter)* - and said, “Please, leave me alone.”

Therefore, the question we are dealing with is –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, why does Hon. Ssemujju want to cause us trouble - *(Laughter)* - if that is the issue?

MR ODUR: First, I want to give that information, but now, Mr Speaker, you also see that the trouble wants to come to you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. I hope Hon. Ssemujju has heard. You have given him good advice. *(Laughter)*

MR ODUR: Yes, but beyond that, Mr Speaker, in the Act, there are provisions for the minister to make regulations and there are many regulations that have been made. The last one that I heard and saw the President launching was called “The UPDF Establishment”.

By law, every regulation made by the minister must come before this Parliament, so that we can scrutinise it to see whether they conform to the spirit and letter of the law that we have made here.

That Act has not come, but I saw the President and the people who briefly explained say the Commander-In-Chief, who is given powers by the Constitution and the Act, has now delegated some powers as a Commander-in-Chief to somebody else. That is extremely contradictory to what we have here because the Commander-in-Chief is protected and has immunity, et cetera.

I, therefore, request that you prevail over the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs to bring the Uganda Peoples’ Defence Force (UPDF) Establishment so that we can interrogate the powers that the regulation has given to the CDF. He may be acting because the powers are provided in that so that we can nullify it.

Otherwise, one day you will wake up and find that there is no Government elected by the people and someone is prevailing over a Government, which is unconstitutional. It is a danger that we should take care of.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, specifically on the issue of the UPDF Establishment.

MR KAFUZI: Mr Speaker, I have listened to Hon. Jonathan Odur. Yes, there are regulations made and if you are concerned that they have not been tabled in Parliament for purposes of perusal, the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs can do that because it is well within the right of Parliament.

Be that as it may, my senior colleagues, the Shadow Attorney-General and my former head boy, Hon. Sseggona, cannot legally point to any clause in the Constitution that ousts anyone’s right to freedom of conscience, expression and having an opinion.

Now, unless you are telling us that the Constitution has a conflict within itself, of which no court has made a pronouncement, the status quo remains. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this matter is closed. *(Hon. Ssemujju rose_)* Yes, how? How I have closed it is how it has been closed because I pronounced myself twice.

Number one, this matter - if it violates any law to do with the UPDF - has its disciplinary procedures; it will handle.

Number two, the official spokesperson of the Government is here. Official spokesperson, is this an official statement of the Government? *(Laughter)*

2.39

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you, Mr Speaker and Hon. Ssemujju for raising the issue.

In Government, there is a formal way government officers communicate for that to be an official communication of the Government. For instance, I speak for the Government but I cannot just be at a party conversing and you

take my conversation to be a government policy and so forth.

Therefore, what Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba commented was just a casual comment, which we do not take - *(Interjection)* - Yes, there is a formal way through which the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) communicates - *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a point of order from Hon. Ssewungu.

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, with due respect to the Minister of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance, on the frontbench, there is only one person who is appointed a minister based on his qualification; that is the Attorney-General.

The reason he is given that kind of attention is because he is going to be a legal advisor for the Government. Here we are, Mr Speaker, you have stated already that you cannot determine the matter in this House because the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) has its administrative structure.

Now, here we have a Minister of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance still confirming the same illegality and mischief - when you say that you have a method of communication as the Government and one of your government officials goes out of the method of communication, it becomes illegal.

We have seen the sons of first presidents; Obote's son is here -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, what is your point of order?

MR SSEWUNGU: Tito Okello's son is also here. Is it in order for the Minister of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance, who could come in to give a better remedy that can change and solve the mischief we are seeing, to continue giving it more appetisers on the Floor of Parliament?

We have seen many Members of Parliament who have praised the Government, Gen. Museveni and his son, and they have lost here. You know what is happening to Hon. Hatwib Katoto; he was always shouting here and singing every song about the National Resistance Movement (NRM). He is now looking for Gen. Museveni and cannot get him. You go and ask Hon. Hatwib Katoto -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, your point of order?

MR SSEWUNGU: Is he in order to continue misbehaving because of the things - *(Member timed out.) (Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I guided on this matter. Secretary-General of the Patriotic League of Uganda (PLU) - *(Laughter)* - Honourable minister, I will allow you to conclude.

2.42

MR DAVID KABANDA (NRM, Kasambya County, Mubende): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I request that you use your powers and ask Hon. Ssemujju to read the message because he said that it is on the official account of Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba.

Let him read it because you cannot challenge something that is not there. The Twitter message that they are talking about - I have checked the account of Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba and it is not there. Why should we waste our time on something that is not on his account?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, honourable colleagues, these are administrative issues for the Uganda People's Defence Force. Let us close it from here. Hon. Afidra - Yes, Hon. Odur, point of privilege?

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, as a Member of Parliament and the Parliament as an institution, we have, in support of our work, people who are recruited to give the best technical support that they can to this Parliament to function properly. That includes supporting me as a

Member of Parliament whether on research or any guidance that is required.

I am concerned, and deeply as such, by - I am going to use about four words to describe this and I request that Members to bear with me; the demotivation among the staff within Parliament, the incompetence, if I may, among the technical staff at Parliament, the sabotage coming from the technical wing of Parliament that impedes the ability of this Parliament and us as Members to do our work.

If you look at the quality of the reports that are coming up, sometimes we have had issues - just reports - you will find a problem and you wonder who these technical officers are who make these reports. If you go to offices, you find people who seem not to even understand their roles within this Parliament.

The last example that borders either sabotage or incompetence is when, the Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament and you, the Deputy Speaker, were faced with the question of how to proceed on the censure motion of the four Commissioners, you sought technical guidance from our technical people here in Parliament.

Either because of laziness, incompetence or sabotage, all they could do was to go and open the Black Laws Dictionary, landed on a word called *res judicata*, put it in writing and then said, go and tell the Parliament that this matter is *res judicata*.

Mr Speaker, if you look anywhere in the world, there is no scholarly work, there is no judicial interpretation, there is no publication that says the doctrine of *res judicata* is available to Parliament.

The senior lawyers are here; even in your first semester at law school, you will be told it is a doctrine exclusively available to the courts of law, in circumstances where they are sued.

Even when it goes to court, court must try it. A judge cannot sit and say, on the face of it, this matter is *res judicata*. It must be pleaded by both parties and its evidence is adduced

to show. And then, in the end, you make that decision.

How can then the technical people in this Parliament put the entire reputation of Parliament; your reputation as the Deputy Speaker, the Rt Hon. Speaker, and even senior lawyers here, including the Attorney-General on this side, that a matter that should come on the Floor, just go and use a Latin word, *res judicata*; and we all sit here and accept! *(Laughter)* Is that not sabotage? I have lawyers here who are more senior than me who can come and explain this further.

That doctrine cannot be invoked in this Parliament as a bar to any process that comes here. In any case, even if it were to be invoked, it is under Section 6 of the Civil Procedure Act. All the ingredients are laid there; the parties must have been the same, and they must have gone to a court before. In this case, the movers of the censure motion, including myself, who signed number one - I was not a party to that court suit.

Secondly, it is exclusively available to only the courts of law. A judge or a judicial officer sitting is the one who can. That one did not happen. The subject matters must be the same and there must be evidence adduced by the other opposite party to show that the matter has been tried and settled. This did not happen.

Therefore, my issue is, is it that the technical wing wants to show that this entire Parliament is so incompetent that they just pick a Latin word and just put it there and then we all accept and agree that now the matter is *res judicata*. Did we not go to school? *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR ODUR: So, Mr Speaker, my request - *(Interjection)* - I will receive information - is for your good chair to vacate that decision. To vacate that decision, any other reason can be given, but let Parliament look serious. Let our technical people help us; let our technical people show that this Parliament is properly constituted. So, I kindly request from you - I will take the information.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR SSEKIKUBO: Thank you, Hon. Odur for giving way. The information I have, Mr Speaker, goes to the root of our motion.

Indeed, it is true in the said communication; I went and looked at it, where your chair ruled that the censure motion cannot proceed indeed because of *res judicata*. That a matter had already been decided by a competent court of law, and now Parliament had turned itself into another court of law which was not the case.

Mr Speaker, Parliament is a House of record. It is very important that what is ruled today is able to stand the test of time. For you to hide behind *res judicata*, which is totally inapplicable; totally, not anywhere, Mr Speaker, and you sit in an honourable chair, and you guide the 559 souls here, some very well learned, I find that that matter needs to be true and I hope I hand – *(Member timed out.)*

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, sir, my last point. One of the authorities, apart from the Civil Procedure Act, I referred you to, Section 6, is the judgment by a very esteemed honourable Justice of the High Court; Justice Stephen Mubiru. In a case he decided in Arua - I think it was Elizabeth Ozia or something like that v. Shaban somebody. I will get a copy.

It is extensive in discussing that doctrine. It cited authorities at the level of the Court of Appeal, at the level of the Supreme Court; well elaborated. I think we need to find a way of vacating that ruling and that decision so that this Parliament is seen seriously.

In fact, I pity the senior lawyers who are here, if we allow it to remain, including the deputy head of the Bar and the learned Attorney-General who are here, seniors like Hon. Ssegona - that this Parliament can sit and accept - and even you, Mr Speaker, from Makerere Law School. I must emphasise that it should not be allowed to stand. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Procedure, I had allowed Hon. Akol first.

Before I rule, I had allowed Hon. Akol on a point of procedure then -

MR AKOL: Mr Speaker, last week as I was driving from Gulu to Kampala, I saw the debate especially when my good friend Hon. Ssekikubo brought a serious issue here about the same – *(Interjection)* - you see, in my Luo accent, we do not have “S”, we do not have “Z”, okay? We do not have “X”. So, when a person from my sub-region say, “recharge” – *(Interjections)*- don’t mind. Because we do not have “S”, we do not have “H”, we do not have the what– So, that is okay.

Therefore, when the matter was being discussed on the Floor here - unfortunately the presiding person is being disorganised. When the discussion was here, I was actually watching on my phone, what came very clearly is that you ruled on that day that, “On this matter, whoever is not satisfied with it should go to court.”

I find that we are just moving in the same circle. I read a book, “*Who moved my cheese*”; and some of you who have not read it, please take the opportunity to read it. There are issues which you should not be relying on - the same issue all the time. Since you ruled on this matter, are we proceeding well to again discuss the same issue here? Mr Speaker, is it procedurally right?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Basalirwa, and then the Attorney-General.

2.54

MR ASUMAN BASALIRWA (JEEMA, Bugiri Municipality, Bugiri): Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, you did read a letter here, and I think it is important that we move at the same level.

Mr Speaker, in the letter you read, incidentally the courts were able to define both statements; subjudice and *res judicata*. I want to read the judgment that you cited in your letter of “*Mohammed Alibhai v. Attorney-General, Miscellaneous Case No. 217 of. 2021*”. And this is what the judge said, “In my view, while

Parliament – (*Interjection*) - I am making reference to the letter, it is on record, you can read it. “*In my view, while Parliament and its relevant committees were vested with the constitutional right and mandate to investigate and inquire into the matters that are subject of the impugned report, their mandate does not extend to undertake investigations into matters that are the court proceedings and decisions*”. This is what they said, “*If done, this contravenes the res judicata rule where a matter is already determined, and the sub judice rule where the matter is pending before the court. In this case, it should be noted that the subcommittee was operating as a quasi-judicial body -*”

I am giving information that the same courts have already clarified *res judicata* and *sub judice*, with regard to parliamentary proceedings.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let me make it easy - (*Hon. Ssekikubo rose*) - the Speaker is the one who has been asked, not any Member. So, it is me to respond. I would like to make it very clear that the Speaker made a ruling and this ruling will not be vacated. If you are dissatisfied with the ruling of the Presiding Officer, the Rules of Procedure are clear on the procedure to do that.

Secondly, as leaders of the House, anything which we believe contravenes the law and will condemn this House to costs is an issue we shall not get involved in. In the case of Justice Murangira v. Attorney-General, as quoted in the letter, Parliament tried to bring all these arguments. It was condemned to a huge cost, which was met by the taxpayers. That matter is closed. Procedure Hon. Ssekikubo –

MR SSEKIKUBO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Without going into what you have guided, we all know that for you to raise *sub judice*, a matter must be active in court, so that the debate of this House can either negatively or positively influence the decision of the court and that was done. There is no matter pending before the courts of law so that now we say we are talking about *sub judice*.

Number two, if you look at the judgment itself, it gave out points of entry, for instance, penalising the Clerk to Parliament. It gave out points of entry so that this Parliament could take stoke of the ruling and correct those areas which the court found to be negative.

At this stage, there is no way you can say that you are going to negatively influence a matter before court. Only, it put it to your shoulders and the shoulders of this House. The Clerk to this House has been condemned to be punished and indeed those are action points that must proceed from that judgement. We are now saying, that once we have taken stock of the ruling, it is now the right time to debate and see where we went wrong, and who are those to be held accountable. Indeed, it is within the hands of this Parliament to find the way forward, we are condemned Members.

You sit in this House, but we were all condemned and the court castigated the leadership of this House. Therefore, do we fold our hands even on that point of law?

Lastly, how about other issues that do not talk about the service award? We talked about fictitious trips which are different from the service award and that was not part of the court. We talked about where this – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, let me make it very clear. Your rules are clear that you cannot proceed on a matter the Speaker has ruled on. You can only do that if you want to challenge the ruling. No, honourable you do not point a finger at the Presiding Officer that is – Hon. Linos, you are NRM, go to the side of NRM.

Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have Hon. Daniel Okello, Speaker Lira City West Division. Hon. Ebong Sedrick and Hon. Jane Ruth Aceng represent him in Parliament. He has come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming him. (*Applause*)

In the public gallery this afternoon, we have pupils and teachers of Fantasy Junior School from Kween County, Kween District. Hon. William Chemonges and Hon. Rose Emma Cherukut represent them. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Honourable colleagues, in the VIP gallery this afternoon, we have a Committee of members on Human Resources and Community Development from the National Assembly of Namibia. They include; Hon. Gerhardine Nono Rukeevi - Chairperson and Leader of the Delegation, Hon. Dr Elifas Mangundu Dingara - Deputy Chairperson, Hon. Herlinde Lucia Tjiveze, Hon. Loide Namutenya Ipinge, Hon. Tjekero Tweya and Mr Johan Petrus Frederick - Parliamentary Clerk.

They are currently undertaking a benchmarking visit with the Parliament of Uganda. Please join me once again in welcoming them *(Applause)*
Hon. Sseggonna -

MR SSEGGONA: I thank you, Mr Speaker. Definitely, I will not refer to a matter where you have made a ruling, but I am deeply concerned that while you maintain your ruling, some words have been used against our professional staff. Words like incompetence, and sabotage, which in my humble opinion do not go down well and demoralise people who serve us, but also the confidence of the people that we serve.

I thank my brother, Hon. Jonathan Odur, because first, he raised them as a matter of privilege, but also apologised to us that he was about to use them. Now that you have maintained your stand in your statement, is it not procedurally right that you find a way of doing away with those words against our staff?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, number one, the Speaker of Parliament is not someone whom you think will just receive a statement from a staff and just append a signature. We consult, but the final document that is signed is our document. It is not a document of the staff. In your opinion, you can call us incompetent, and abuse us. You know, words do not kill.

By calling me anything, I lose nothing. I have not seen myself losing a kilogram. Sometimes, I instead add on kilogrammes, so, I do not mind being abused. However, I would like to defend our staff and thank you, honourable, for raising it. Our staff have been appraised and finished the review of our strategic plan and our staff ensured that the committees deliver on their mandate. We processed all our Bills and the Budget. I have seen reports from the committees on accountability.

Honourable colleagues, you have been here praising the reports coming from the committees of Parliament. Our staff are very competent - *(Applause)* – and we are proud of them as the leadership of Parliament. If you disagree with our staff, it is your opinion. However, it cannot go on the record of this House that our staff are incompetent. Hon. Jonathan Odur, you can clarify if you want to.

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, I used deliberately - this is my clarification of about four words. I said it borders on incompetence, sabotage and demotivation. These are my reasons; for a staff of Parliament to be competent, they must have passed through the competency test.

That is to say, they have been invited through a transparent process to apply for a job and they have been shortlisted, competed and emerged the best.

Mr Speaker, I would like to put it on record here that we have not had the opportunity for the members of the public - the best of the best in Uganda - to compete for jobs in this Parliament.

Therefore, it cannot be said that people who have been picked based on being a friend, a relative and an in-law, come to this House and are protected.

Going forward, – *(Interjections)* - I will give you information but let me clarify. All I am saying – *(Interjections)*-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us listen to our honourable colleague.

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, I used this because I am aware – (*Laughter*) - and I am going to invite submissions from professional human resource people who are members here.

We have, in this Parliament, senior and very competent technical officers who are demotivated and are not willing to do work now because positions that they should be able to serve in have been dished out in ways that do not match the Public Service Standing Orders. They are very resourceful persons whose capacity this Government has invested in.

Others have even worked for over 20 years but they are just reading newspapers in this Parliament. They do not have work to do because they have handpicked people - some of whom were even in secondary schools. Some of them even did internship in this Parliament and they are now bosses to people who supervised them. Do you expect such a public servant to work?

Mr Speaker, I am inviting you together with the commissioners to reflect and salvage the situation in this Parliament. You cannot have resourceful people being wasted when we have trained them, in exchange for people who are just going to walk in and do not know what to do.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague [Hon. Alioni rose] there is no Member holding the Floor, Hon. Alioni, you had already been cut off by then; sorry.

I thank you, honourable member – (*Hon. Alioni rose*) Hon. Alioni, please take your seat. You know that you are supposed to request when you are seated, this is not a bar. (*Laughter*)

Hon. Ssekikubo, we are in the Parliament. In our culture, we say that; “Even when you are beating a snake, you leave it some space.” I hope you understand me – (*Laughter*) so, even when you are testing my patience, you should leave some space knowing that I am a human being. Thank you.

However, much I appreciate the clarification brought by Hon. Odur, it puts our staff in bad light in that they can interact with you any time. Even Members, you cannot satisfy them all. These staff have their own channels - when you look into this Parliament, I think the new staff are not more than 10 per cent. If you say that the new staff are the ones topping -

For example, among the directors, I do not think that there is any new director who has been recruited; these staff have been here. Moreover, these are the people we deal with; we do not deal with the junior officers down there.

However, as a leadership, we own whatever decision is made in Parliament. So kindly, do not put it on staff. Put it on the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and the Commission.

Therefore, in case one has judged our decisions to be incompetent, well, we shall incompetently lead you for some time until 2026 – (*Laughter*) - and unfortunately, you are with us up to 2026 – [*Hon. Ssewungu rose*] no, Hon. Ssewungu.

We shall competently lead you until 2026, Hon. Ssewungu wanted that. But it depends, if you are looking at whatever from an angle of being incompetent, what do I do for you? Honourable Minister for National Guidance, I want to close and we proceed beyond this issue.

3.14

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Mr Speaker, when we were drafting the Rules of Procedure, we were very deliberate in protecting the office of the chairperson. We knew that sometimes the Speaker may make a ruling and you may be happy with it or not.

However, we provided that we should not casually challenge the Speaker while chairing. In rule 87(2), we provided on how, if you are dissatisfied with a decision by the Speaker, you can appeal it.

Therefore, isn't it procedurally incorrect for us to spend an hour infringing on the rule, which we wrote ourselves - that if you are not satisfied with the ruling of the Speaker there is a method you use to challenge it? Therefore, I invite you-

MR SSEKIKUBO: Is this your house?

DR BARYOMUNSI: Yes, it is because I am the Member of Parliament for Kinkizi East and I am elected to speak here.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, can we close?

DR BARYOMUNSI: I am inviting you to close this debate so that we go to the next item because the people of Kinkizi East would want to hear the next items. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this is what I referred to - Hon. Ssekikubo, I am going to tolerate many things but this business of coming from your seat to the microphone all the time - I request you, kindly - you are a senior legislator; let us respect the rules.

Honourable colleagues, let me make it very clear. It is against our Rules of Procedure, to proceed on a matter that the presiding officer has ruled upon. If you want to challenge that matter, like Dr Baryomunsi said, you can challenge it within our rules.

Honourable colleagues who have matters of national importance, because of time, we shall handle them tomorrow. We have many issues to handle. Next item?

BILLS FIRST READING

THE CONSTITUTIONAL (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs - Hon. Mbwatekamwa?

MR MBWATEKAMWA: Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me way. We also have constituents we represent here. We come with matters of national importance, sit and all of a sudden you rule and say, "Let us go to the next item" and we postpone. There are some matters that we cannot postpone.

Therefore, is it not procedurally right to allow people with matters of national importance like Hon. Mbwatekamwa - (*Interjections*) - Yes, because a hailstorm has hit my area, is it not procedurally right to give us time to also air out views?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this is the problem I face. I know you have issues but I do not have anywhere to get time. Honourable colleagues raise issues that keep rotating and taking the critical time that should be used to raise constituency issues. Our colleagues, because I have not allowed a stranger to submit in this House. All the submissions have been by Members.

Honourable colleagues, I have tried my level best to ensure that this does not look like a House that suffocates Members. That is why I am as patient as I have tried to. Anyway, I know Members who came with matters of national importance today; they are very critical matters. I know what most of them are going through; let me pick them. We can go through these matters of national importance quickly.

Honourable colleagues, tomorrow I am going to have a meeting with a few senior legislators and I will make a ruling on points of procedure especially on the interruption of debate in the House. That is where our focus is going to be. The other day, I had to get out of here at 8.45 p.m. because we were trying to push so that our output for the people can be valued. But if we spend two hours on issues of chasing who and who, we end up losing a lot. Hon. Mbwatekamwa, matters of national importance.

3.20

MR MBWATEKAMWA GAFFA (NRM, Igara County West, Bushenyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The matter I am bringing up is that at the beginning and in the middle of this month, heavy rains with hailstorms hit my constituency that is Igara West, in Bushenyi District. The subcounties that were affected are;

1. Kakanju,
2. Bitooma
3. Kyamuhunga,
4. Nkanga,
5. Nyabubare and
6. Kyamuhunga Town Council.

Mr Speaker, some schools were affected; their roofs blown off, crops destroyed and some roads were washed away. I am seeking relief from the Prime Minister's Office. In most cases, we come here, table our issues and reports come from the district, but a ministry that is in charge of disaster preparedness, tends to be unprepared. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I am seeking your indulgence that this time, let the ministry prove that it can assist our people. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Mbwatekamwa. Honourable colleagues, tomorrow we have an item where the country's preparedness to handle disaster will be presented and we shall have an extensive debate but these issues from Members could not wait any more. They are around four, honourable minister, so let me allow them so that you can respond at once.

Honourable colleagues, for now, procedural matters are put aside. Let me give a chance to Members to raise issues for their constituencies. Before you, Hon. Kaberuka, I wanted to first handle disaster - I have you on the list - I know yours is equally a disaster issue but from a different sector. Hon. Veronica Nanyondo?

3.22

MS VERONICA NANYONDO (NUP, Woman Representative, Bukomansimbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On Thursday, 19th September, last week, heavy rains destroyed

the whole of Kisojjo Primary School, bringing down two blocks. In the nearby areas of Budda, electric poles went down as well.

Through you, Mr Speaker, we request the Office of the Prime Minister to help this school because it is a Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB) Centre for four schools and the Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) will be sat for in two months. We request the Prime Minister to help us with a temporary structure where our children can sit their Primary Leaving Examinations as we wait for the capitation grant which is taking long and is not enough to handle school problems in the district and Uganda at large.

Secondly, we request for relief because plants, gardens and food crops were destroyed. We request some seedlings, if possible, to be given to the affected areas of Budda, Kisojjo and Kijjampiki villages.

We also request the Prime Minister's Office, to come on the ground, because when we send pictures and information to the office, you just send iron sheets without coming on the ground. This time it is better you come on the ground, assess the situation, and put a temporary structure to help our P.7 pupils to sit their exams comfortably. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Alex Byarugaba? All these are matters on disaster.

3.26

MR ALEX BYARUGABA (NRM, Isingiro County South, Isingiro): Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, I am here to present a matter of national importance regarding heavy rains and hailstorms, which affected parts of my constituency. Last week on the 18th of this month, a cocktail of heavy rains, hailstorms *-(Interjections)-* Yes, and –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Alex Byarugaba, wait. Hon. Noman Ocheru, what is the issue? First, do this for me, then submit - Hon. Byarugaba, as you conclude.

MR OCHERO: Mr Speaker, is it in order for Members in this House to put on barkcloth while in session; like Hon. Chemaswet, and the woman who just submitted - to be naked - disturbing the Members? Is it in order for him to put on a barkcloth?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that barkcloth?

MR OCHERO: Yes, Mr Speaker, I have just verified that it is a barkcloth. Is it in order?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, you know, Hon. Chemaswet is seated far away from me; so I need to first call him here for close observation, then I rule later. Hon. Byarugaba?

MR BYARUGABA: Thank you once again, Mr Speaker. As I was saying, on Wednesday last week, a cocktail of strong winds, heavy rains and hailstorms pounded and devastated banana plantations and crops in my constituency.

People's houses, churches and schools were all destroyed. The most affected parishes were Nyakarambi, Bugongi and Kihihi all in Nyakitunda Sub-county in Isingiro South.

Those in the affected parishes have been left homeless and with no food at all. Bearing in mind that the main food crop in that area is bananas and once you lose a banana plantation, you immediately go very hungry.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we need order in the House. Hon. Alex wait –

Colleagues, there is a lot going on - I do not know. There are many transactions going on – people are concluding deals quickly. Let us be focused.

MR BYARUGABA: Thank you once again, Mr Speaker. So far, a detailed report has been made and submitted to the Office of the Rt Hon. Prime Minister. My prayers are:

1. That the Government, as a matter of urgency, supplies food rations to the people in the three affected parishes I mentioned earlier on.

2. That iron sheets are supplied to the affected families to enable them to have a shelter and roof their structures and premises - especially churches and schools.
3. Lastly, the first maturing seeds and seedlings be made available to the affected areas to take advantage of the current rains and the planting season. I pray and submit accordingly. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Bataringaya Basil –

3.28

MR BASIL BATARINGAYA (NRM, Kashari North County, Mbarara): Thank you, Mr Speaker for the opportunity. Just like my colleagues, heavy rains have devastated my constituency; Kashari North, Ntura, Ngango and Kibingo Parishes in Kagongi Sub-county.

The recent rains affected the Parish Development Model (PDM) –(Interjection)- yes because those who received PDM money used it to buy coffee seedlings which have been destroyed. Then a tornado also hit Kibingo Parish some time back and this was reported here.

Therefore, my prayers are;

1. In this recent one, the Prime Minister should intervene and help our people to get the seedlings that have been destroyed, but also, the earlier ones like Munyonyi Primary School whose roof was blown off - iron sheets were promised even before the Karamoja iron sheets disappeared and yet we have not received ours.
2. Lastly, the water sources that were destroyed by the tornado should be restored. So, I pray. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister –

On Thursday, we expect the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to update us on the management of Kiteezi.

3.31

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, RELIEF AND REFUGEES (Ms Lillian Aber): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Hon. Mbwatekamwa, in his prayers, requested that he needs relief food items and I would like to confirm that a report was received at the office and when procurement is done, we will be able to provide the relief food items to your constituency.

Hon. Veronica talked about the issue of a temporary shelter. I will go back to the office and coordinate with the technical team and Red Cross to see if we can erect a temporary shelter to support the school. Relief food items will also be provided upon receipt of the report from the district.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries will coordinate the issue of seedlings because the Ministry for Disaster Preparedness, Relief and Refugees does not have plans for seedlings but we can coordinate with the ministry of agriculture and provide that.

On the issue of coming on the ground, we have a structure that has a District Disaster Committee. So that if a disaster occurs anywhere in this country, the District Disaster Committee visits the site, comes up with the report and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) writes to the office of the Prime Minister and it is provided.

However, having said that it does not harm organising to come and visit the constituency.

Hon. Alex raised a request for food. I have taken note and I will be waiting for the report from the district which should include the request for iron sheets. The seedlings will still be under the coordination of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. The request from the honourable member from Kashari – Hon. Bashir also included a request for seedlings.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Bataringaya Basil not Bashir

MS ABER: Hon. Bataringaya Basil requested for seedlings. That will still be coordinated under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and I am happy that Hon. Frank is in the House.

However, on the issue of the iron sheets, as long as we have the report provided and sent to the Office of the Prime Minister only then will we be able to provide them. Thank you

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, tomorrow we are discussing issues of disaster extensively because there are very many - every constituency.

Therefore, I would not want us to go into this prematurely when we asked for a statement from the minister. Let us receive a report on the preparedness of the Government to handle looming disasters because we are in the rainy season. So let us continue this way.

Hon. Afidra –

3.34

MR RONALD AFIDRA (NRM, Lower Madi County, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to speak about the people of Lower Madi.

The issue I would like to raise as a matter of national importance is about the reinstatement of the wage bill for Madi-Okollo District. Madi-Okollo is a new district, which was carved out of Arua District. When we came out, Arua gave us staff to start with.

For the past three years, consecutively, the wage bill has been allocated by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for Madi-Okollo District. However, every time the District Service Commission would wish to advertise to recruit people for different positions, three things happen:

One, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development always delays clearing the District Service Commission for recruitment.

Secondly, the Ministry of Public Service - after clearing Madi-Okollo District last financial year to recruit staff - I would like to acknowledge on the Floor that the Minister for Public Service gladly requested the entire Madi-Okollo District to come to his office and review the available wage to recruit staff. He gave clearance to Madi-Okollo for recruitment of staff.

However, again the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development came up and said Madi-Okollo could not recruit staff.

The third one is, when these issues came to the PS, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, there was a ban which we all accepted. It was for verification and validation of the Public Service we have in this country. However, we were assured that once the ban was lifted, recruitment of staff would then start.

Last financial year when we were working on the budget for this financial year, a corrigendum was brought by the finance minister here, Mr Speaker. In that corrigendum, the wage bill for Madi-Okollo District was removed. I followed it up with the Budget Committee and said, the money which was removed was the money for recruitment of staff in Madi-Okollo District. However, that was not honoured by the Budget Committee and the ministry.

What is the implication of this for Madi-Okollo District? Mr Speaker, let me just submit that Madi-Okollo District has 38 per cent of staff, the lowest in this country.

Second –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, can you give us your prayers?

MR AFIDRA: Yes. My prayers are that:

1. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development reinstates the budget for Madi-Okollo for recruitment of staff because it is not in this financial year; they removed it. This can come through a supplementary because we need staff recruitment of teachers.

2. Because we have the highest burden of non-completion of primary school in my district – 90 per cent could not even finish Primary Seven as most of them failed, we are asking the Ministry of Education and Sports to construct for us technical schools that can absorb those who are unable to finish primary school.

3. The Ministry of Education and Sports, again, to fast track the construction of the two seed secondary schools that we have. At least those who survive P7 could be absorbed in these seed secondary schools which are Anyiribu, Ulepi, Ewanga and Rigbo Seed Secondary Schools.

That is an offer for us. I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the request is the first one coming to you.

3.38

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The honourable colleague is asking for three things and one of them is a supplementary budget to enable Madi-Okollo District to recruit staff.

Mr Speaker, from his submission, the issue of understaffing and the need for staff for Madi-Okollo District was foreseen during the budgeting period. Therefore, it is a matter which does not qualify for supplementary financing.

Mr Speaker, the Minister of Public Service is here. We do not clear recruitment as the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Recruitment in the Government requires clearance by Public Service. What we check for is the availability of funding.

Mr Speaker, to the best of my knowledge, in our Budget speech, we were very explicit; recruitment this financial year can only be by replacement and for specialised areas. The

other recruitment was banned. I want to –
(*Interruption*) - I take clarification.

MR NSEREKO: Thank you, honourable colleague. What the honourable colleague raises is pertinent. By the time we are creating administrative units, we present Bills and clear them with a Certificate of Financial Implications. The implication of that, honourable colleagues, is that we shall provide funds to support their existence.

Now, he is running to you as the chief planner for this Government to see to it that for the service delivery that you talk about to be effected, there must be staff. In the absence of that, where should the honourable colleague run to? That is the question. (*Members rose*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable colleagues, I do not have time, please. You know I had refused matters of national importance because of time. Maybe, honourable minister, just let the district submit their request for supplementary then you process it through the normal procedures so that we do not reject it from here.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, you know my background. Sometimes I insist on these things for the record and for future reference. I am not going to stand here and say we shall provide a supplementary for staff recruitment –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, we have not said you do that.

MR MUSASIZI: If these staff were in post and we had arrears, I would say, I will provide. However, where you want more staff, plan for them and we budget. We cannot do it this year.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. To me, the only issue the honourable minister was putting across is, let the technical people submit to you and your technical people will assess. If it qualifies, they can help. Where it does not - because why I am cautious on the issue of saying this qualifies or this does not is, when the ones you give supplementary are brought here, you will be shocked at how many qualify and how many do not. (*Laughter*)

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, this year is a different year.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay.

MR MUSASIZI: This year is different. You are yet to – that is why you have not seen our supplementary schedule because we are not providing a supplementary budget where there is no resource.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On qualification. (*Hon. Afidra rose*) No, Hon. Afidra, please.

MR AFIDRA: Mr Speaker, allow me to lay the evidence of Madi-Okollo –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just read the headline.

MR AFIDRA: Yes. We have the request submitted by Madi-Okollo District to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development as far as the Wage Bill is concerned for the last three consecutive years. Allow me just to lay for reference so that it helps in the supplementary. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kaberuka?

3.43

MR JAMES KABERUKA (NRM, Kinkizi County West, Kanungu): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter that is giving sleepless nights to the people of Kanungu and that is the outbreak of anthrax, which is affecting animals and human beings.

Mr Speaker, about two weeks ago, there was an outbreak and about three people have already died and cows are dying. We need help from the Minister of Health to quickly dispatch a team to make sure there is an assessment of the gravity of the matter in Kanungu such that we are sure of the security, health and well-being of our people.

Two, Mr Speaker, I need your attention. I need the agriculture minister in charge of animal husbandry to also dispatch a team to go and assess the magnitude of the matter and provide

a remedy for that situation. As we talk, the mobility of the vets is not defined because they do not have motorcycles, fuel, or anything and the district is also grappling with lack of funds. We need serious support.

Mr Speaker, another thing I wanted to pray to you, which is - because I know you are very nationalistic -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you know we agreed on only one matter.

MR KABERUKA: Mr Speaker, please get interested in this.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have other Members with issues. Kindly, I will give you space tomorrow.

MR KABERUKA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me get assurance from the Minister of Health and the agriculture minister in charge of animal husbandry that our people are secure. Thank you.

3.46

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Anifa Kawooya): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I take note of my colleague from Kanungu. I want to report that the ministry received this information and we got in touch with our district health officer and a team is down on the ground.

We are waiting for a report so that we take a big team from the ministry. As of tomorrow and over the weekend, our Director for Health Services will be in Kanungu. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Agriculture Minister -

3.47

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (FISHERIES) (Ms Hellen Adoa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, the Cabinet directed the agriculture minister and the Minister of Health to rush to Kanungu after Hon. Dr Chris Baryomunsi raised the matter. As we speak, our team is on the ground.

We are assembling the headquarters team to join them and one of the things they are going to start with is to put a quarantine because it can spread to other parts of the country. So, we are already on the ground and we took note yesterday and made a directive. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Colleagues – Yes, Hon. Baryomunsi -

3.48

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Like my colleague, the Member of Parliament for Kinkizi West said, indeed there is an outbreak of anthrax and so far, 73 heads of cattle have died and three people have also died.

The district authorities have already mounted a public health campaign. My request to the agriculture minister is, maybe the team goes - Yes, a team is on the ground but we need vaccines to vaccinate the cattle that are not yet infected and also, the district has made a requisition for additional drugs, especially to handle the human health side.

Therefore, I am just adding my voice as a Member of Parliament from the area that both ministers should work with us to ensure that the Government is fully on the ground. I thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, in the Public Gallery this afternoon, we have pupils and teachers of Joshua Cheptegei Junior School from Kapchorwa Municipality. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Cheptoris Sam Mangusho and Hon. Chemutai Phyllis.

They have come to observe the proceedings of Parliament. Please join me in welcoming them. You can stand up so that we welcome you our dear - Where are they? I see future champions in here. Thank you. We shall handle other matters tomorrow. Next item -

BILLS
FIRST READING

CONSTITUTIONAL (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General -

3.50

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Mr Speaker, I beg to submit that the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2024 be read for the first time. Together with it is attached the Certificate of Financial Implication. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Attorney-General. I refer the Bill to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs for consideration and reporting back as per Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure. Hon. Kaberuka -

MR KABERUKA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the spirit of harmony, and considering the previous promises by the Government on the constitutional amendments where the Government and the minister promised on this Floor of Parliament that they were going to bring a Constitutional Review Commission and make sure that we look at the whole Constitution and see what is attainable and worth reviewing -

Mr Speaker, a ruling was made here that we are not going to have piecemeal amendments. Is it procedurally right to continue receiving piecemeal amendments as if the Government is in slumber?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR KABERUKA: Shall we continue as if the people that made the promises have died? Are they not here? What is the problem that they cannot have that constitutional review and we have a clear position of Ugandans, Mr Speaker? Are we proceeding right that we continue having the - You have a position as a chairperson, tomorrow we will see it. Is it

really right that we continue receiving these piecemeal amendments?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Anthony Akol - I will rule later.

MR AKOL: Mr Speaker, on the same issue, I also personally brought in a constitutional amendment and I got a letter from the minister saying that he will bring a comprehensive amendment. We want to know what they are bringing. Does it include all our amendments or they are actually on only one amendment of their interest? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Attorney-General, we have been working together and we consulted you several times and we said, instead of going piecemeal, everything should come together. We should handle all the constitution amendments for this term so we know they are done. However, I see you focused on RAPEX only. So, honourable Attorney-General -

MR KAFUUZI: Mr Speaker, the Bill that I have tabled for amendment of the Constitution is intended to deal with four aspects that are under RAPEX: the Equal Opportunities Commission that we propose should be merged with the Human Rights Commission, and the Law Reform Commission that we propose should return to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs under First Parliamentary Council. We thought we would limit ourselves to that for purposes of rationalisation then going forward, in future, the Government can establish a Constitutional Review Commission for a comprehensive review of the Constitution. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Attorney-General, this could not wait for - because you can as well amend the Constitution without a Constitution Review Commission; you have always done so. You see, the dilemma we are in is that colleagues have been bringing private members' Bills to do with the constitutional amendment and your office guided us very well that it would be better, since this is a Constitution, if we do a comprehensive

- because you know the process to begin with; to get quorum for amending a Constitution. We would need to do all this work at once. You know, the ball is in your court. We cannot stop you as the Government.

MR LUBEGA-SSEGGONA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I enjoy the privilege of having been here for the last one decade plus. The person, a very dignified man occupying the Office of Deputy Attorney-General, later elevated to Attorney-General in form, name, and style of Hon. Fred Ruhindi sat there, got up, walked to the same microphone in 2015 and promised this same constitutional amendment process. He promised a commission. That was reaffirmed by another dignified man, Rt Hon. Dr Ruhakana Rugunda.

As we speak, the discussion that has been going on by the honourable Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Hon. Nobert Mao, is that he has prepared comprehensive constitutional amendment proposals which are before Cabinet. The same Cabinet is here presenting a Constitution (Amendment) Bill with four points, as the honourable Attorney-General said.

Mr Speaker, are we proceeding well to allow this same Executive to over-run Parliament even when you have guided and asked the question, “Why don’t you?” Then somebody comes and says, “I have an amendment; four proposals and in future, Government may consider -” This is when they have thwarted efforts of private Members. Are we proceeding well?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Nuwagaba, just wait a bit. Honourable Attorney-General, I want to understand. As the Government, have you decided to amend the Constitution in a phased manner? Have you changed your position on this, to say rationalisation is the first batch of the amendment and then we are coming up with comprehensive amendments to cover other areas of the Constitution? I just want to have that clear.

MR KAFUZI: Mr Speaker, let me repeat what I have just said. The Bill presented is for handling aspects under rationalisation. That is the first segment that we are dealing with, as the Executive.

Going forward, we shall present a Constitutional Review Commission by which we shall handle the rest of the aspects for review of the Constitution.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Motion without notice.

3.58

MR MEDARD SSEGGONA (NUP, Busiro County East, Wakiso): Permit me, Mr Speaker, at this juncture, to move a motion without notice that this Parliament finds pleasure in requesting, with honour and dignity, the honourable Deputy Attorney-General to go back to the Executive and present comprehensive constitutional amendments as we agreed in this Parliament. I so move. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this is a motion which has to be accepted by me. Yes, under rule 59(1)(j). Do I consider this to be an emergency? No, I do not consider this to be an emergency that would require – I can see the spirit but I also hope that the Attorney-General has really understood the opinion of Members.

Now, honourable colleagues, look, this is not a matter that is voted on. By the time it goes on the Order Paper, it means we have allowed it as presiding officers. Therefore, let us proceed on this. Honourable Attorney-General, please hurry with the comprehensive Constitution amendment.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE ARBITRATION AND
RECONCILIATION (AMENDMENT) BILL,
2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure, Hon. Mpuuga -

MR MPUUGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is not in my nature to take the House into circles, especially after your guidance.

However, we have a challenge here on the matter that we have just vacated. While we await the commitment from the learned Attorney-General to present wide-ranging constitutional reforms, some of them touch on a core subject of elections. The Electoral Commission is going ahead with this programme road map as scheduled.

Hon. Lillian Aber was supposed to be a member of the Constitutional Review Commission in the 10th Parliament. I was partly to review her appointment and many others. As we speak, she is a minister.

The review commission we talked about is not even in the budget. May we get serious commitment? We have hardly 12 months to go into electoral activities. I have heard parties announcing their own road maps, including the ruling party.

Are we just being convenient in this? Are we really getting commitment? And as we wait for the Attorney-General to think about it, I want to inform the House that as a private Member, I will be ready next week. After all, the Speaker's guidance was in good faith to say, get ready or I will allow Members to present.

I, therefore, want to inform the House that I will be ready. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Of course once we start allowing the ones of Government in piecemeal, we shall allow for private Members. But, honourable colleagues,

I think what we should also do - the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should come and update us on the issue of electoral reforms. When is he presenting the electoral reforms? This is because we shall be stampeded at the last minute. Honourable Minister of Information, you remember the court has, on several occasions, touched on that issue and the Electoral Commission itself – I have seen the Chief of Electoral Commission saying, no, reforms come in late, we do not have time to –

If they are there – Hon. Byakatonda, is it on the same matter? I see you are carrying a lot of documents. *(Laughter)*

MR BYAKATONDA: Mr Speaker, I rise with a very heavy heart on a procedural matter, under rule 73, the *sub judice* rule. I have evidence of quite a number of matters in the court regarding one of the Bills under rule 73(3)(d) to the effect that there are active criminal proceedings –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, remember Rule 80 of our Rules of Procedure. Let us reach there, you will raise your issues.

MR BYAKATONDA: I thought since it was actually the same – Okay, much obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, let us close this. Honourable Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs –

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE ARBITRATION AND CONCILIATION
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

4.04

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Mr Speaker, I beg to submit that the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2024 be read for the first time. Together with the Bill, I have attached the Certificate of Financial Implication. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. This is referred to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE NATIONAL TRIBUNAL BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Attorney-General –

4.04

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Mr Speaker, I beg to read that the National Tribunal Bill, 2024 be read for the first time. Together with it, I am presenting a Certificate of Financial Implications. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. This is referred to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs for consideration. Honourable Member -

MR BYAKATONDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Bill at hand for processing is being used in the court on a number of cases whereby the entity is represented by the Attorney-General with the possibility of recovering over 1,000 properties.

Last Friday, there was a hearing at the Law Development Centre court (LDC) and a number of courts but we are using the same Acts that we are purporting to amend. This will jeopardise the process of recovering property and under rule 73 could allude to *sub judice*.

Wouldn't it be procedurally right to have this stayed until these matters in court are concluded? I beg it to lay the evidence to that effect.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, kindly read the document you have laid.

MR BYAKATONDA: This is from the Director Public Prosecutions (DPP) Office Uganda vs Muhammed Alibhai. Reference to HUDC CO01 dated 21 February 2017. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, when you look at this Bill, I do not think it has an impact on the case going on in terms of its amendment because people are claiming for their properties. Is it saying that they should not be paid? If we went ahead to amend the Bill, would people lose the right of claiming their property? Hon. Niwagaba –

4.08

MR WILFRED NIWAGABA (Independent, Ndoorwa East County, Kabale): Mr Speaker, if I go to the issue as raised by my honourable colleague, the intention of this particular Bill is to wind up the Custodian Board. So, the complainant in this particular case will no longer exist, meaning the accused person will have the cases terminated and the properties where Custodian Board and the Government had interests would be taken by the complainant and possibly shared with the officials who will have facilitated the winding up of this particular body.

Therefore, this is a situation where the *sub judice* rule must be strictly applied, one, by ensuring that we do not wind up the Custodian Board until these matters have been disposed off or until the properties involved have either been returned to Government or the complainant itself which is the Custodian Board.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Attorney-General, when you are proposing mergers - you are going to have many other agencies facing the same. Yes, the Attorney-General, before I give my ruling, let me first hear from the commissioner.

4.09

MR MATHIAS MPUUGA (NUP, Nyendo-Mukungwe Division, Masaka City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Matters of this Custodian Board came to the Budget Committee. I remember Hon. Musasizi was aligning them and the committee was circumspect as to the potential winding up of this matter because there was no current audit of assets within and without the powers of Government and we demanded that an audit be provided.

Now, a Bill to finally wind this up is potentially problematic. We might be working and considering the Bill without proper information. Mr Speaker, I would like to urge you to ask the learned Attorney-General to reconsider the Bill.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Attorney-General -

4.10

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Mr Speaker, I respect the arguments that my colleagues have raised. I request that you give us time to look into them and report back to the House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Attorney-General. So, for now, the Bill is not considered for first reading for record purposes because I have not referred it to the committee.

Honourable Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development –

BILLS FIRST READING

THE NON-PERFORMING ASSETS RECOVERY TRUST ACT (REPEAL) BILL, 2024

4.11

THE STATE MINISTER FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Non-Performing Assets Recovery Trust ACT (Repeal) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR MUSASIZI: The Bill is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Same case. Do we have - Yes, because I do not have any - It is only Hon. Byakatonda who brought evidence on the Table.

4.13

MR MATHIAS MPUUGA (NUP, Nyendo-Mukungwe Division, Masaka City): Mr Speaker, if the report of the Budget Committee for the financial year running is brought here, we had a very potent conversation with the honourable minister and the report was adopted because it was questioning the winding up wisdom without an inventory but the minister had no response to it.

I think he is doing this in good faith and I do not want you to infer wrong motive on his part but the House business could receive a lot of help if this is stayed and matters thereto looked at up close for a proper Bill to be considered. The honourable minister is aware of the misgivings in the committee.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we can proceed with this one and if the committee hit a snag and find those challenges, they will come to the presiding officer and we shall guide them.

For now, my hands are tied and I have limited information on this so I cannot stop a whole Government business based on what our colleagues have said.

MR LUBEGA-SSEGGONA: We have sufficient information which we simply need to put up because we have that report of the Budget Committee which we went through and adopted.

Equally, I have been a member of the Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and Enterprises (COSASE) before and these same issues have been raised. We do not want to lose somebody who would otherwise benefit Government by claiming what belongs to us. Otherwise, we are helping in the killing of that person who is helping us to recover what we believe - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let the committee go deep and bring out all these issues. Otherwise, we are now doing their work. I refer the Bill to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development for processing.

**BILLS
FIRST READING**

**THE PUBLIC ENTERPRISES REFORM
AND DIVESTITURE ACT (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024**

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development –

4.15

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Public Enterprises Reform and Divestiture (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. I confirm that the Bill is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development - *(Member rose)*

MR MPUUGA: Mr Speaker, may I call for a reference? There is a very serious matter with the statute. This House and particularly in Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development questioned the failure by the Government to wind up Uganda Electricity Board (UEB) and matters of winding up UEB are still pending. UEB is one of the key entities under this arrangement.

Secondly, the Umeme concession is due either for renewal or winding up and a very serious matter regarding the assets of UEB not properly considered at winding up remain. This is going to put us in a very precarious situation and the minister is aware. I do not know why he is ignoring that UEB was key; I am bringing out UEB as one of the key entities whose liquidation was never completed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Mpuuga, you see, in plenary, we are behaving as if the committee cannot scrutinise and report on such issues and based on those issues, either

recommend that we go on with the Bill or we do not.

Let the committee - That is why we give them 45 days and if that is not enough, they come for more time. So, let us refer the Bill to the committee and it will do its job.

MR MPUUGA: Mr Speaker, I agree with you. My trouble is that the minister, being aware of these facts, goes ahead to bring a Bill. It really sounds as though he wants to find the House dosing on duty to cut through.

The liquidation of UEB has very serious implications. There are people; former staff who were not paid, assets and contests - It is a bit problematic. Why the minister would have motivation to bring it is my challenge. Otherwise, it is not with the principle of winding up.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The committee and the House - no one will find us asleep. We have people like you; we are awake. Yes, Clerk?

**BILLS
FIRST READING**

**TIER 4 MICROFINANCE INSTITUTIONS
AND MONEY LENDERS (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024**

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

4.18

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “Tier 4 Microfinance Institutions and Moneylenders (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. The Bill is accompanied by a Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The Bill referred to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development for consideration.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE COTTON DEVELOPMENT
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

4.19

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Mr Speaker, I move that the Bill entitled, “The Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. I hereby lay on the Table the Bill with an accompanying Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for consideration, as per Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE DAIRY INDUSTRY (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

4.23

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Mr Speaker – *(Member rose_)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju?

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, if you look at the Front Bench, from where Hon. Obua is seated, you can see smartly dressed ministers and I want to commend them. *(Applause)* But Hon. Frank Tumwebaze has made it a habit to come to Parliament dressed as if he is going to milk cows. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, see how all the ministers are dressed. If Hon. Frank Tumwebaze does not respect Parliament, at least he should respect colleagues. Is he in order to come to Parliament to transact official Government business dressed as if he is going to milk his cows? *(Laughter) (Mr Ssegona rose_)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. A colleague has been bombarded. Let him first absorb this. *(Laughter)*

Honourable colleagues, rule 82 on the dress code for male Members, prescribes:

- i. *“A suit, shirt and tie;*
- ii. *A pair of long trousers with a jacket;*
- iii. *A kanzu and jacket;*
- iv. *A safari suit - and on this safari suit I want to emphasise that it has to be a full suit, meaning the trouser - like our brother from Kagoma.*
- v. *A decent traditional wear - Hon. Frank Tumwebaze earlier on argued that this is a decent traditional wear.*
- vi. *Military attire for Members of the Armed Forces.”*

Let us agree, honourable colleagues, that the argument should stop today because Hon. Tumwebaze argued that this is African traditional wear - *(Interjections)* – Listen, and it is decent. I want to guide that going forward, we do suits, either safari – and Hon. Tumwebaze has many but today he is putting on a decent traditional wear.

MR TUMWEBAZE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your wise ruling and for confirming that I am smartly dressed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But only for today.

MR TUMWEBAZE: Only for today, and I have another suit for milking. So, Hon. Ssemujju, do not worry.

Mr Speaker, I move that the Bill entitled, “The Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time and the Bill is hereby accompanied by a Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for consideration as per Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
ADVISORY SERVICES (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

4.23

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Mr Speaker, I move that the Bill entitled, “The National Agricultural Advisory Services (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. I beg to lay on the Table the Bill with the relevant Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for consideration as per Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE NATIONAL COFFEE (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

4.24

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Mr Speaker, I move that the Bill entitled, “The National Coffee (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. I lay on the Table the Bill with the corresponding Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Bill is referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for processing as per Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE NATIONAL FORESTRY AND TREE
PLANTING (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Government Chief Whip, on behalf of the Minister for Water.

4.25

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, I move, on behalf of the Ministry of Water and Environment, that the Bill entitled, “The National Forestry and Tree Planting (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. The Bill is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implications. I beg to move and lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable Government Chief Whip. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Natural Resources for consideration as per Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE NATIONAL INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY AUTHORITY UGANDA
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

4.25

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The National Information Technology Authority Uganda (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. In accordance with the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, I beg to lay the Certificate of Financial Implications signed by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The Bill is referred to the Committee on ICT for consideration, as per Rule 129 of the Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE UGANDA ROADS AUTHORITY ACT
(REPEAL) BILL, 2024

4.26

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Gen. Katumba Wamala): Mr Speaker, I move that the Bill entitled, “The Uganda National Roads Authority Act (Repeal) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. I present the Bill and the Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Physical Infrastructure for consideration, as per Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE UGANDA ROAD FUND
(AMENDMENT), BILL 2024

4.27

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Gen. Katumba Wamala): Mr Speaker, I move that the Bill entitled, “The Uganda National Road Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. I beg to lay the Bill and the accompanying Certificate of Financial Implication.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Physical Infrastructure for consideration as per Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

Honourable colleagues, we are going to receive the statement from the Minister of Fisheries responding to the issues which were raised that day and then we will proceed.

STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF
PREPARATION OF REGULATIONS TO
OPERATIONALISE THE FISHERIES AND
AQUACULTURE ACT, 2023

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. Yes, Hon. Opio -

DR SAMUEL OPIO: Thank you. Mr Speaker, last week you instructed the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to come today and give a statement on the status of the delayed verification of payments for the ex-employees of the East African Community.

I had also asked the Minister of East African Community Affairs to give a status on the tabling of the East Africa Community Mediation Agreement Bill.

As a result of that, the senior citizens have come to witness the presentation. However, on the Order Paper, this is not provided for. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I was requesting your indulgence that if possible, this statement be provided since the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is here. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I would advise that before you invite people to come and witness what is going on, you first read the Order Paper. For now, I have an Order Paper I am following and I will not be able to amend it. Thank you. Honourable Minister for Agriculture - I remember it was not Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development but the Minister for East African Community Affairs.

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you very much. As far as I am concerned, I was the one who was here last week and I did not make that undertaking. I am therefore wondering – It is good you have clarified.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I want our senior citizens to know that these are issues Parliament has given time and it will continue giving time. Next time we can coordinate better.

I have a lot of competing items. Even when the statements come, sometimes I have other salient issues which I must handle. The senior citizens must know that these are issues we are giving a lot of attention to and Hon. Opio has been at the centre of it. The committee has also done a wonderful job in this regard. Thank you.

4.30

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (FISHERIES) (Ms Hellen Adoa):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am here to give a statement on the status of preparation of regulations to operationalise the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act, 2023.

I received official communication from Hon. Hamson Obua, the Government Chief Whip, asking me to present the report today, after Hon. Robert Migadde and Hon. Moses Kabuusu had presented the two issues. The two issues at hand are, one, why we have delayed to bring the regulations to Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I would like to apologise for the delay to bring these regulations to Parliament – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a point of procedure. Honourable minister, please take your seat.

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, a while ago, referring to the Order Paper, you said we have a lot of business to transact. I do not know how this Government works. You are supposed to bring regulations and you bring a statement to explain why you have not brought the regulations and you want to take Parliament's time for that?

Mr Speaker, the procedural issue I am raising is whether a minister who is aware that she is supposed to bring regulations must come here and waste our time reading a statement on why she has not brought them.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, I think the part of regulations is very clear. It is long overdue. Honourable minister, we need regulations.

However, in the statement, there was a second aspect on the issue of silver fish, which had been banned. Honourable MPs from the fishing areas wanted their communities to hear from the minister and we understand why they banned silver fish.

That is why I insisted on the statement rather than saying, just bring the regulation. Honourable minister, I request that you read the statement verbatim because you submitted it to Parliament.

MS ADOA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to summarise in three forms. One, because I received the communication –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, it is a short statement. Read it the way it is. You see, we have it on record. Read it the way it is, it is short.

MS ADOA: Which part, Mr Speaker? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You had reached on number one, as you have it there.

MS ADOA: Yes, one, I said I want to express my apologies for delaying with the regulations but right now, I want the House to know that we have already distributed this draft to different categories and given different stakeholders these regulations. What we are now doing is to consult with the different stakeholders, including MPs from our fishing communities.

We are also going to consult with the civil society, different fishers and processors. As you are aware, this should be inclusive and applicable so that when we bring it here, it will be evidence-based and an updated version of the regulations.

Secondly, we were also asked –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I request that you read your statement, especially on silver fish.

MS ADOA: Secondly, on the assertion by the Commander of the Fisheries Protection

Unit that it is Parliament that has delayed the regulations, I wish to emphasise that it is not Parliament that has delayed the regulations, but our ministry.

The FPU Commander, being under the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, might have assumed that Parliament is the one that passes the regulations. We are going to write to the ministry so that we interact with them and harmonise this position.

I also wish to clarify that my ministry banned the use of “hurry-up” not silver fishing. In my statement, I advise silver fishers to use other methods, not “hurry-up”. The fishers know these other methods by different names such as *chota chota* and *lampara*. These methods, Mr Speaker, must use nets with mesh sizes that are not more than 10 millimetres for Lake Victoria and for Lakes Albert and Kyoga, they should not be more than eight millimetres.

The dimensions of the nets for each fishing vessel should be of horizontal length not more than 90 metres and depth of 14 metres for Lake Victoria, 16 metres for Lake Albert and four metres for Lake Kyoga.

The use of “hurry-up” –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, the minister is reading a statement. We told her to bring the statement so we cannot start raising “points of order”. Whether the information is wrong or not, according to you, that is what she has brought. So, you can give us –

MS ADOA: The use of “hurry-up”, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I think you need to read the rules properly. When the Speaker is speaking, keep quiet. You cannot continue because a Member has raised a matter, which I must answer.

Honourable colleagues, whether you agree with the information or not, you will be given a chance of rebuttal so that you show the

minister that the information she has given is misleading. However, we cannot stop a minister from reading a statement because we consider the information inaccurate, according to us.

Honourable minister, conclude your statement.

MS ADOA: Mr Speaker, the use of “hurry-up” has not been allowed and will remain banned. Silver fishing is only allowed during the dark phase of the moon, that is 15 days per month, and only in waters more than two kilometres from the shoreline.

All fishers are advised to seek guidance from their respective districts and the MAAIF technical staff that we have at the districts and sub counties. Thank you, Mr Speaker and colleagues, for listening.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery we have our elders who worked for the East African Community. They are former employees of the East African Community. They had come to listen to the statement from the minister.

Government Chief Whip, I request you to step out and consult with the Minister of East African Community Affairs to know when the statement will be ready so that they go when we have told them when we are going to handle their issue on the Floor. You will then report back to the House.

The issue was raised by Hon. Migadde and supplemented by Hon. Kabuusu. Hon. Susan Mugabi of Buvuma had also raised the same and she is the shadow minister. Hon. Kabuusu – (*Hon. Susan Mugabi rose*) No, the rules require us to start with the ones who raised the issue.

4.41

MR MOSES KABUUSU (FDC, Kyamuswa County, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The minister’s statement, like you said, was a “short one”. (*Laughter*) For lack of better words, it was a shallow one - I am sorry,

Mr Speaker - shallow in nature because it did not address the situation as it is in our fishing water bodies.

On Lake Victoria, there is a problem between the Nile Perch fishers and the silver fishers. These ones are all licensed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Resources and Fisheries to engage in the waters. After the minister in charge of fisheries suspended or banned fishing, our fishers have been waiting since January for further guidelines and directives from the minister.

That notwithstanding, Mr Speaker, I do not know - like I said last time - whether the Minister of Fisheries is in charge or in captivity. The minister has no enforcement mechanism for all the orders and directives they make.

As per the situation, it is now the UPDF. There is a unit deployed called the "Fisheries Protection Unit" and every district has a sector command. They have deployed soldiers headed by a captain and other lower rank soldiers to implement it. The Commandant of that unit has been going to every fishing district, opening up and saying that on humanitarian grounds, "I am giving you two days. In my case, I am not a politician, but the politicians have failed to help you."

For that reason, we came here, Mr Speaker, to ask for guidance that we made a bad law. While the minister knows what is going on, on our bodies, why does she give different guidelines and the enforcement people also give different guidelines?

Finally, what should our people take? Mr Speaker, Parliament is watched by members of the public. The implementer or enforcer said, "Go and fish" but the minister says, "We have banned." What should our people take?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, this is what I got. When I was in Hoima for Princess' thanksgiving and then when I also went to Jonam for the burial of Hon. Emmanuel Ongiertho's dear wife, the issue of silverfish came up strongly and it

seems the public had gotten it that there is a blanket ban; totally no fishing of silverfish.

I do not know how that was communicated, but in the minister's statement, she says that they only stopped the "hurry-up" fishing method; I am told these are terminologies of the fishing community.

She has also said that silverfish are allowed only during the dark phase of the moon; that is 15 days per month. That is all I knew. I think that is how they have been getting it - and in only waters more than two kilometres from the shoreline.

Honourable colleagues, let us meet this Thursday in the conference room at 11 a.m. between the minister, the Commander of the Fisheries Protection Unit and the Members of Parliament from the fishing community, okay? *(Applause)*

We first go - and the representatives of the fishing - I think they have associations, groups, or a forum and we first really go deeper into this issue and we see what the minister is saying here because now it is going to be the minister's word against - number two, there is a commander who does not have access here. We will disparage her and do what, yet she cannot enter this Parliament to defend herself. We will report to this House what we shall have discussed.

The honourable minister, Balaam Baruhagara had wanted to say something - then I will just pick a few people.

4.46

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (YOUTH AND CHILDREN AFFAIRS) (Mr Balaam Baruhagara): Mr Speaker, I thank the Members of Parliament who are fighting for their people but also need to appreciate my sister, the Minister, Hon. Hellen Adoa, for the statement issued.

It is now clear - Member from Kyamuswa, you called it "a shallow statement" that it is

unparliamentary but what I need to assure you is that she has solved the problem. We can now fish in a distance of two kilometres off the shoreline and - *(Interjection)*- no, that is what shall; it is now on record.

We can fish within two kilometres for 15 days and the only method banned is the “hurry up” fishing method. So, the problem is solved. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us hear from the Shadow Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (Fisheries) and then I will allow Hon. Kabanda.

4.47

MS SUZAN MUGABI (NUP, Woman Representative, Buvuma): Thank you, Mr Speaker. As the Shadow Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (Fisheries), I can clearly state that I am disappointed with the Minister’s statement. Why?

The Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill was assented to by the President in February 2023. It is now one and a half years without the regulations being in place. Let the Minister be clear as to when these regulations will be Tabled because we are now tired of saying - Mr Speaker, we have raised this issue several times. The Rt Hon. Prime Minister has always promised to meet the Members from the fishing communities; we met once but still nothing has come out.

The confusion that has been brought into the fishing sector by both the Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (Fisheries) and the Fisheries Protection Unit (FPU) commander; we shall not tolerate it.

The Minister has clearly stated that one of the fishing methods of silverfish is the “hurry-up” method. She is even stating the depth of the water and all the gears to be used.

I want the honourable minister to help me understand under what law she is getting those guidelines yet it is the Members of Parliament

to debate the regulations before passing them. Where are you getting these regulations that you are giving to people here on the Floor?

The other issue is that our new Act is very clear. The Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF) Fishers Protection Unit is not supposed to be on the lake. We do not know - honourable minister, help us understand.

Have you failed to give a directive because they are not supposed to be on the lake, which means they are currently implementing illegal actions on the lake?

Lastly, why do we need the regulations very urgently? They will even help us to limit the importation of illegal materials or illegal fishing gear that is making our fishermen shift from one method to another.

These people are losing a lot of money because of the absence of a clear law. We need the regulations for the law to be fully operational so that it can be consulted for effective implementation.

My prayers are -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, minister, now you have become ordinary like us - *(Laughter)*

MS MUGABI: Okay. Mr Speaker, I want the honourable minister to give the timeframe within which these regulations will be tabled.

Two, which directive should the fishermen on the islands follow? You gave a directive but you are still insisting that the FPU are still on the lakes implementing the directive. We need an answer now.

Lastly, if the Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (Fisheries), Hon. Hellen Adoa, cannot table the regulations, I offer myself, as the shadow minister, to table the regulations in this parliament. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kabanda, you had wanted to -

MR KABANDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mine is a suggestion - because you have already guided us on this - you have already said that the Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (Fisheries) and the Members from the fishing community should have a meeting on Thursday.

I suggest that you also request the Minister of Defense and Veteran Affairs to be part of the meeting because the Fisheries Protection Unit does not fall under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries but under the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs. And anything to do with defence, it is the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs to answer.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, on Thursday at 11.30 a.m. in the Conference Hall we shall go deep and come back to report here.

Government Chief Whip, I need an update - but honourable minister, the issue of regulations is not for negotiation or begging. It is a requirement of the law. We need the regulations within one month *-(Applause)* - because we cannot wait all this long; I do not know what the problem is. Yes, honourable minister.

MS ADOA: Most obliged, Mr Speaker. As the minister, I cannot just bring my regulations without consulting with the stakeholders because when I bring my own regulations without consulting, for example, the man down on the ground, it will be difficult.

Since you have said that within one month from now, we want to promise that we shall bring the regulations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS ADOA: Mr Speaker, allow me to answer what they have raised.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, we are going to go into this - maybe in summary because we are going to -

MSADOA: In summary, I want my honourable colleagues here to understand and encourage the fishers out there - nobody should stop fishermen from catching silverfish from the lake in the name of “hurry-up”.

Mr Speaker, “hurry-up” was a method that was brought by our neighbours; if they put the nets around this compound, within minutes it would go up to for example, Lugogo and deplete the lake within a short time yet we have other methods that we have been using all these years -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, let us discuss this on Thursday as I guided because you now know this issue -

MS ADOA: Mr Speaker, when we were in Kyankwanzi -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: When you see me insisting, just know that I know this issue very well. I know how explosive it can be. Let us first have a meeting of minds on the same. Yes, Government Chief Whip.

4.54

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, regarding the assignment you gave me, I consulted with the Ministry of East African Community Affairs; they have asked for two weeks for them to come and update the House on the subject matter raised by Dr Opio. I wish to further undertake to also put it in writing to them, but they have undertaken that within two weeks, they will update the House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Odur, after which we will hear from Hon. Okupa, but take note that we are not reopening matters I have already ruled on.

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, this matter of the former employees of the East African Community, one time came here and there was a brief statement made by the minister, which was disputed. She had indicated that she was in touch with the claimants; our elders who are up. I remember one of the honourable

colleagues from - I think Hon. Wakikona, also gave testimony that such a meeting had not taken place.

So, as they prepare in these two weeks, would it be okay if the ministry touches base with the surviving members who are here so that they can have a discussion and by the time they come back here, they would have harmonised some of the things to avoid going back and forth?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. That would be very helpful, and I think the honourable Government Chief Whip, that is - on the same, Hon. Okupa? Okay.

MR OKUPA: I will reserve the others on the regulations of the fishing Bill.

Mr Speaker, you look at those old people there - sometime back, we had a meeting in your office where you directed that we would meet with the technical team and then with the committee. Now that we have these two weeks, as Hon. Odur has stated, can you now cause that meeting to happen between the committee - because now we have new leadership, new members of the Committee on East African Community Affairs together with these elders, beneficiaries and two of us who have been leading, including Hon. Acuti such that by the time the minister comes here, maybe we would have interacted with the minister and the Permanent Secretary?

It is painful for us to be seated here, year in and year out, seeing these elders trekking on the road, some of them have died and some of them struggle to get here without transport. Now, they have been called here but they are going back with no answer.

Mr Speaker, I appeal to you to you cause the Committee of East African Community Affairs together with these elders and the technocrats, to meet such that by the time they bring the report, most of the key issues will have been resolved.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I really appreciate your concern, Hon. Okupa, but this is an issue where I did not see much contention between what the Minister of East African Community Affairs is saying, and what the petitioners are saying. The Minister of East African Community Affairs is saying, "Look, for the ones verified, there is money. We have even put in newspapers calls for these people to bring documentation. Some of the documentations are not complete and all that..." So, it is not that there is unwillingness, no. But it seems somewhere, somehow, things are not adding up. When for example, I rule that they meet the committee, it means that the committee will also go to meet the other technical people and report a wrong process.

The easiest would be for the minister to meet the group, with the two lead colleagues who have been on this, and then we narrow down on the issues. By the time of that meeting, Hon. Okupa and Hon. Acuti, you can narrow down on the issues so that by the time we go to the minister we will know which issues we are looking at. Rt Hon. Kadaga, you said that you have the money, but you do not have the people to take the money.

I do not want to assign this issue to the committee, it will be a repetition. I do not know which report the committee will present that is different from the one they presented last time. Let us handle it with the minister. Government Chief Whip, coordinate this meeting so that the team can meet with the Minister of East African Community Affairs. Hon. Acuti -

DR OPIO: Mr Speaker, I request that, in that same meeting, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development also be present. This is because, one of the key issues is that the Ministry of East African Community Affairs has already submitted files to the internal Auditor-General under the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for verification.

It is now almost a year; the internal Auditor-General has failed to get back to the Ministry of East African Community Affairs with the

computations so that they can compile a budget and present it to the Cabinet for approval.

I request that the finance minister together with the internal Auditor-General be present in that meeting so that we can be able to get that issue addressed.

Also, the Attorney-General - because there is the East Africa Community Mediation Agreement Bill, which the minister which indicated last time that she was having challenges navigating through the processes within the Attorney-General's Office to ensure that it is tabled on the Floor. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Government Chief Whip, I think you can coordinate all this. Hon. Musasizi has always given us all the time we ask him for. I do not think that he can deny us this time. In the meantime, you can talk to the internal Auditor-General at the ministry to expedite this process in preparation for this meeting. Thank you. So, Government Chief Whip, coordinate this.

MR OBUA: Mr Speaker, the records available indicate that this matter has been around for some time. From what I found out on 27 April 2022, Dr Opio raised the same matter, which was responded to at that time by the Ministry of Public Service. I do not know under what circumstances because it should have been the Ministry of East African Community Affairs.

I am also informed that the Minister of State for East African Community Affairs was invited or summoned by the committee recently, and they also interacted over the same. I believe progress is being made. You have charged me with the responsibility of coordinating, I will coordinate Dr Opio to lead this team; first, to meet with the Minister of EAC but later, the minister as committed, should also update the House on the progress made to pay these senior citizens.

Honourable colleagues, tomorrow we shall also be like them. It is important we consider their matter and have it resolved. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item.

**MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
COMMITTEE (CENTRAL GOVERNMENT)
ON THE AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT
ON REFERRAL HOSPITALS AND
SPECIALISED HEALTH INSTITUTIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 2023**

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we are going to do 30 minutes of debate on this and then we will receive other reports because we have a lot. The report was presented last Thursday, so, if you did not read it, please do not – Clerk -

I am starting with Members who were here that day, and who waited for the reading of the report. I put down their names; they are the ones I am giving priority during this debate. Please, I have colleagues who left here at 8.45 p.m. so, it would be unfair for me not to give them priority.

I am trying to see some who are here; Hon. Francis Katabaazi, if you are a member of the committee, please –

5.04

MR FRANCIS KATABAAZI (NUP, Kalungu East County, Kalungu): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Chairperson and members of the committee for such a wonderful report. It clearly shows the variance in the Non-Tax Revenue (NTR) as in, what is submitted, and in some hospitals like, Masaka, submitting less to the Treasury compared to what they collect.

The other issue is that the medicines in the stores are always delivered very late. Something must be done about this. I wonder when they have prescribed somebody medicine and then it comes after six months, what is the intention of the suppliers - Ministry of Health needs to caution them.

The other thing I noticed in the report, which should be worked on is that of the stores being

so limited and not up to date. It should be worked on to make sure the storage facilities are worked on to have enough space for the medicines.

The staffing levels of the hospitals and the general service delivery are quite wanting. That is why some of us have had issues going there. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr Charles Ayume?

5.06

DR CHARLES AYUME (NRM, Koboko Municipality, Koboko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for their report. On the issue of Non-Tax Revenue (NTR), the ceiling set by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is low yet most of these regional hospitals and the national referral hospitals have the potential to collect above and beyond.

So, my humble request is that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development increases the targets for NTR but also allows some of that NTR to be spent at source for maintenance and motivating some of these health workers.

Mr Speaker, if the rules permitted me, I would have knelt to say that specialised services in this country cannot be free. Our neighbours rely predominantly on our services.

We shall run down our heart and cancer services if we think that in the spirit of Pan-Africanism, our health care system, especially the super specialised services, can be entirely free.

As I conclude, the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Mulago, 28 beds, 14 as he had said in his report, are working and our ICU services are Shs 2 million per week at Mulago Hospital but when you go to the private sector, it is Shs 4 million per day and sometimes members are in a queue. You are spending on private services yet you are trying to get space in Mulago. It is my humble request that we find that money - Shs 580 million - to recruit the requisite staff so that the other 14 beds can be operational.

Finally, I will insist that Masaka Regional Referral Hospital needs Shs 590 million for its ICU to be operational. If we can find that money, we will have saved lives because we know that highway is a death trap. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Jenipher Mbabazi, followed by Hon. Dr Isingoma Patrick.

5.08

MS JANEPHER MBABAZI (NRM, Woman Representative, Kagadi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the committee for the good report. My submission is in two areas. One is on National Medical Stores' (NMS) delayed delivery of drugs to hospitals. Whereas, we know that the delivery of drugs to hospitals is a very big problem in this country, we should not only look at NMS as the only problem because there are other different factors.

In this case, we noticed that some hospitals would receive drugs after six months and beyond. As the Government, we also need to check ourselves: how is this issue of release of funds to this entity? What is the process of procurement? We should not ignore the time prior to market authorisation and a chain of other factors that may cause delay.

We should not crucify NMS single-handedly, but check out the issues, like delays from national and regional approval, value assessment processes and quality of drugs. All those factors lead to the delay of drugs being delivered to hospitals.

Some of these drugs that are delivered to hospitals are no longer of quality. For example, malaria drugs. I find that people do not get cured by one dose of malaria these days. You either have to take two or three. Ministry of Health, what does this imply?

The other one is on NTR; collecting money and not remitting it to the Consolidated Fund is affecting the service delivery by these hospitals.

We also noticed that Masaka Regional Referral Hospital has three hospitals receiving money but with three accounts not remitting money to

the Consolidated Fund. We should look at the cause of delays of these drugs to hospitals by NMS - we should look at all of these factors that cause a chain of delays. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Isingoma followed by Dr Eunice Apio.

5.11

MR PATRICK ISINGOMA (Independent, Hoima East Division, Hoima City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to join my colleagues in appreciating the good job done by this committee, Hon. Kivumbi and the team, for producing a very detailed and informative report.

My attention is drawn to the utilisation of warrants. Table 3 on page 20 gives us an insight into how the money released by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was utilised by the regional referral hospitals.

Out of a total of Shs 545 billion only 95 per cent was used, that is Shs 517 billion, leaving a total of Shs 27.2 billion unutilised. This is a colossal amount of money, and I note that the cause of the underutilisation is multi-dimensional.

So many dimensions come in to inform this kind of problem. One of the major ones, especially which we are suffering with in Hoima, is the lack of enough budget provisions to accomplish established projects.

At Hoima Regional Hospital, we began a project where the Ministry of Health put aside Shs 1.15 billion to construct the Maternal and Child Health Care project.

The initial plan was for it to accommodate 120 patients in total. Later on, the Ministry of Health changed the design, and the project is now supposed to accommodate 250 people. This also has implications for the budget provisions because it meant that the foundation had to be changed.

The Shs 1.15 billion is sitting in the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs for the whole year because the foundation design was changed and now needs Shs 3.5 billion. This money is

not there in the budget. It is not even among the unfunded priorities. We are there with a big referral hospital with a huge catchment area but suffering because of this kind of imbalance.

I would like to urge the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Ministry of Health to, at least for the first time, rise to the occasion and ensure that the maternal and child health care project or complex, which they were supposed to construct at Hoima Regional Referral Hospital – this hospital is just in the centre of my constituency. I would pray that the two ministries come to our aid and handle this project as quickly as possible. Otherwise, I want to thank the committee for a job well done. I beg to move.

5.15

DR EUNICE APIO (UPC, Oyam County North, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee as well but also, note that several things are sticking out. In this case, I would like to underscore the issue of the high runaway rate of maternal mortality at Jinja Regional Referral Hospital. It sticks out because it is almost triple the national average. It is at 777 per 100,000 live births compared to 189. I am wondering what the rest of the facilities might be offering because the committee did not give us the opportunity to do a comparative analysis of maternal mortality rates.

Mr Speaker, must this continue? I know this underscores the inefficiency. I think that is the mind of the committee to kind of link the outcomes at the end of the day to the inefficiency that is happening within the facilities.

Also, they have underscored the mess in the referral system. I am wondering whether we are going to do anything at all about this. Seven hundred seventy-seven is a very bad case.

I would like to move, Mr Speaker, that we pick out this particular aspect of the committee report and find out more. What might be at the root of this very bad figure at Jinja Regional Referral Hospital?

Further, we shall find out if the situation might be any different in other regional referral

hospitals. We do not need to have mothers dying because they are bringing new life into the world. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Dr Eunice, luckily enough, the Chairperson of the Committee on Health is a member of this committee of Public Accounts Committee – Dr Ruyonga. He must have followed up on these issues.

Sectoral committees, you need to get interested in reports of accountability committees because, at the time of budgeting, these are salient issues brought up. It is very important for chairpersons of sectoral committees to pick out these issues and follow up on them. Hon. Okupa?

5.18

MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me start with the Non-Tax Revenue. When you look at the target given to these regional hospitals, you notice it is Shs 34 billion. However, the collection, which was made is Shs 28 billion. The total budget for this regional referral hospital is about Shs 1 trillion. Couldn't the Government even make this money available? It is about Shs 1 trillion for all the regional referral hospitals.

We are making our people suffer just because of pay. Some cannot afford and so, they get into problems. Can't that be collected? Even those who have met the Non-Tax Revenue targets have done it because they charge almost everything. When you go to the hospital, you find people being charged for everything.

Two, there is no uniform fees structure in the hospitals, which has also been brought out in the report. Can the Minister of Health tell us why we do not have a uniform fees structure in all these hospitals? You are leaving it to the accounting officers to determine the rate at which they charge the patients.

When you come to the issue of delayed deliveries of drugs, this is like sentencing our people to death. Look at the case of Mubende.

For six months, no drug was delivered. Look at the people who are living on ARVs, who cannot afford them, how do they survive?

Can the committee tell us what reasons were given for failure to deliver drugs on time? I do not buy the argument given by a colleague that possibly the problem is with the delays in the release of funds. Funds are released for drugs for all these regional hospitals at the same time. Why should others receive drugs and others not? That must be addressed, Mr Speaker.

There are cases like Arua. It took 46 days before the drugs were delivered. Mbale, 69 days. How would the people who cannot afford drugs survive? Look at Fort Portal; three months. How? Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development, please help our people and find out what the problem is. I do not think this was due to a delay in the release of the funds. Otherwise, why should others get on time? There must be a problem with the National Medical Stores.

As I conclude, there is the issue of a ban on the recruitment of personnel. Let the ban possibly apply to other areas but not areas that concern life. Surely, the Ministry of Public Service should make exceptions to some cases like the health sector because it is about life. If you are not healthy, you cannot do anything. You cannot vote or mobilise for your party. Why can't they consider them?

Mr Speaker, I want to appeal to the Government and especially the Ministry of Public Service to ensure the ban on recruitment of the staff of the health sector is lifted.

Also, you have seen - Dr Ayume gave us an example of the equipment that we acquired. They are going to run obsolete because we do not have the technicians. Why would we put a lot of money into acquiring all this equipment without staff to run them? Hon. Musasizi, you are a minister for finance in charge of planning. Please plan such that we can have this equipment run. Otherwise, it is going to be a very big problem and at the same time a vote of no confidence on the leadership of this country. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ngoya John Bosco, Hon. Adriko Yovan and Hon. Osoru Mourine.

5.22

MR JOHN BOSCO NGOYA (NRM, Bokora County, Napak): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to join my colleagues to thank the committee for the good job.

Moroto Regional Referral Hospital actually serves a big catchment, including parts of South Sudan and Kenya. The report indicates that there are lots of drug stock-outs and non-delivery of medical supplies to that particular facility. Also, the report notes that there is a reduction in releases to the referral hospital, particularly in Moroto.

Amidst these huge health service needs of the region, you can be able to tell why the development indices are very dire in the region. This is one reason the Ministry of Health needs to take a keen interest in what is happening in Moroto Regional Referral Hospital.

Two or three months ago, all the Karamoja leaders had an opportunity, together with the Secretary General of the NRM, to move around the hospital. You would attest to some of the reports that this particular committee has actually indicated. You realise that there is some key equipment that has not been installed. We had a scanner that had stayed outside of the building in which it is supposed to be housed, for close to about five months. Just imagine. In such a region where there are road traffic accidents, there is no scanner, and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), people have to move to Soroti and Mbale. There is a need to look at this critical facility for the region.

At the point when the Moroto Regional Referral Hospital is not providing services, St Kizito Hospital Matany has been very instrumental. This is a not-for-profit facility funded by donations from the Comboni Missionaries. When they were celebrating their 50 years, there was an appeal that they needed to be recapitalised. They asked the Government if they could be able to deal with the Shs 600 million debt that had accrued to the hospital.

Therefore, there is a need for the ministry, together with the Office of the President, to recapitalise - part of the promise they made on that day of the Golden Jubilee was that they were going to recapitalise the hospital. That facility, which is not-for-profit is struggling. We need to see how we can help them. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Adriko.

5.25

MR YOVAN ADRIKO (NRM, Vurra County, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I join honourable colleagues to congratulate this committee and thank you for this opportunity. In Arua District, we have a lot of problems in our health sector especially poor service delivery at the health centres with no legal supervision. If you go on the ground, you will know that people are suffering at the health centres.

In Arua District, Vurra Constituency specifically does not have a Health Centre IV. We have Health Centres II and III - Pondo Health Centre III, Logiri Health Centre III, Lazebu Health Centre III, Nyadri Health Centre III, and Ayaayah Health Centre III. The distance from Vurra to Arua City, where the Referral Hospital is, is very long yet we do not have means of transport. We have only one ambulance, which is at Arua City. From Vurra to Arua City; people are suffering. In case of an emergency, getting transport becomes a problem. Our people are suffering because Vurra borders Zombo. From Zombo border to Arua Referral Hospital is very far.

On the ground, there is a problem of stealing drugs by the technical staff. The Government will send the drug but after two to three days, the drugs will be over. This means there are some technical people, who are always on the ground stealing Government drugs. We are near the DRC border, and the number of people who get the services from Uganda is big. People are always lining up to get the services.

I appeal to the Government to send more drugs to Vurra Health Centres, upgrade Pondo Health Centre III to Health Centre IV, and send more staff to deliver service to our people.

Mr Speaker, we have many issues and so, I appeal to the ministry to go on the ground and address the health issues in Vurra. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Mourine Osoru.

5.27

MR MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank my honourable colleague who presented a very elaborate report. First of all, Mr Speaker, Arua Referral Hospital does not only serve the people of West Nile. Knowing that we are located at the borderline, we also do serve people across the borders; the people of DRC, including South Sudan, who get treatment from Arua Referral Hospital.

However, Mr Speaker, if it may interest the Ministry of Health, in most of the referral hospitals, take interest in labour suits. The labour suits that were constructed there have become very small. Women are giving birth on the floor because of the population. The situation at the referral hospital located in Arua City is worse because we have an influx of refugees. We cannot say that the referral is only meant for the people of Uganda, yet the refugees are also part of us.

Therefore, honourable minister, you need to plan to expand some of those labour suits, not only in Arua Referral Hospital but in all referral hospitals.

Secondly, in most of the hospital wards, we have insufficient numbers of beds. The caretakers of the patients are sleeping on the floor and the hospital verandas. What are we doing, as a country? It is very embarrassing, and because of that, somebody who is taking care of the sick one may also end up falling sick.

Therefore, I request the Government to fully functionalise the lower-level facilities. Some of these referrals could be handled at those lower facilities. If you fully functionalize them with equipment, medical supplies, and staffing, we will be good to go.

Lastly is the issue of faulty medical equipment. How do you buy equipment of that value, put it in one place, but you make it redundant? This happened in one of the places called Oli Health Centre IV in Arua City.

We know very well Arua Referral Hospital is congested, and Oli Health Centre IV was meant to decongest Arua Referral Hospital, but some of the facilities that are in Oli Health Centre IV are not working, yet we are supposed to operate from there. Are we serious?

Therefore, I would like to tell the Ministry of Health that health is an asset and so, we should not joke about with it. May you wake up, pull up your socks, and help Ugandans before anything happens to them. Thank you. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Betty Aol?

5.31

MS BETTY AOL (FDC, Woman Representative, Gulu City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is very sad when we talk about health - it is important that we improve the facilities within the country instead of focusing outside the country. Whether you are as big as what - those resources should be used in the country to benefit more people.

Gulu Regional Referral Hospital, which I visit regularly - sometimes my hands get stuck behind my back because of - first, the staffing level is just about 23 per cent. This is sad. How can I demand from nurses what to do better when they are not enough? How do I demand it? It is difficult!

Gulu Regional Referral Hospital would even attract more staffing there if only we could have considered completing the buildings, which should host up to over 50 staff. That would be

an incentive for the staff of the regional referral hospital. This building has stayed on - yet if you look at the building - I am sure - if not PAC, then the Committee on Health could have seen that it is left with a small percentage to be completed. It has been left there for about eight years without it being completed. This is very unfortunate.

The biggest problem right now is with our transport. Karuma Bridge has been closed, yet we have hospital equipment, which we are supposed to use in Gulu Regional Referral Hospital to help our people better.

There is also a CT Scan there but sometimes we have to bring our people up to Kampala because the CT Scan is not working. Why should we allow equipment that do not work to be taken to regional referral hospitals? We need to plan better to serve our people better. It is not only hospital equipment sometimes if you go to facilities like the mental health units or the mortuary, you will know that they are all wanting. We need to do better for our people; we must prioritise social services for them. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I have listened to the line of arguments and debate - you all agree with the recommendations of the committee? However, the line is now taking a sectoral committee approach. The issues we are presenting here are issues of the sectoral committee and honourable minister, they are direct issues. So, I do not know why I should disturb you by asking you to respond to those direct issues. Do you have any comments?

3 .35

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Anifa Kawooya): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The comment is to reassure these people that in the ministry we are very serious (*Laughter*). Mr Speaker, just give me five minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Oh, honourable minister, five is a lot because they are direct issues.

MS KAWOoya: Mr Speaker, okay two minutes. I take note of the observations you have made and what is in the report, that most of the issues raised here are issues of general concern. For that matter, the issues that are of general concern that have been raised, are on the Non-Tax Revenue (NTR). We agree with the report as Members and the state Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Planning, my brother and colleague, has taken note of that.

Another issue that has come up – and I agree with it - is about the late supply of drugs and other essentials. You requested that I come here and I committed and to that regard, a statement is ready to help me answer that.

Another issue that has come up is that of non-functional equipment and old ones. In this financial year, we have put the budget and the process is ongoing to install those that are new, remove those that are non-functional, and ensure that everything is done in this financial year.

There are questions again that came up - (*Interjections*) - can you listen? I am coming to you. I was on the Floor of this House and committed myself to the issues that were raised during the Gulu City sitting. The responses are ready and I will address them at the right time. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, let those responses be uploaded on our system. Honourable chairperson, did you want to –

5.37

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala): Mr Speaker, I have one big policy issue that I would like to pose to the Government. This policy issue is across all hospitals, and I would like to differ with the former chairperson of the Committee on Health. I have looked at the numbers. We are paying the price - actually, a part of the argument by the Government is that we are cost-sharing in hospitals and that they are generating significant revenue.

However, when I look at the scheme of things - how much money? The point I am making is that Uganda can afford 100 per cent free public access to government hospitals. I will give you numbers on why we should match these figures and why the hospitals should be free.

NTR collected across all the hospitals - if we were to collect 100 per cent in this audit year - was supposed to be a mere Shs 34 billion out of a budget of Shs 555 billion. In percentage terms, that is 6 per cent. The actual NTR collection was Shs 28 billion out of a total warrant of Shs 554 billion; a percentage of 5 per cent.

I put it to every head of the hospital - I asked, "If the Government matched your NTR collection, would you be able to offer free service to Ugandans? They said, "No" but that can't be unless these figures are engineered and they are hiding some other figures. Otherwise, if they are true, then we are politically carrying a huge price if government facilities are for paying - for money that you can afford to provide.

That is the point I would like to pose to the Government and if they refuse, in the next manifesto, I will advise my party to offer free services and that way, we shall match this.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, do you want to comment on that?

5.40

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC PLANNING (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On Thursday when Hon. Kivumbi presented this report, he used two terms; one was virement and the other was mischarge though he kept mixing the two.

Virement is provided for under the law while mischarge is erroneous or irregular. I sought this clarification - what we are looking for in the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and our point of concern is a mischarge. This is because when we look at the virement - as long

as it is within 10 per cent and approved by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, it is regular.

Point number two, which I would like to invite Hon. Kivumbi to look at in the future, is about procurement issues. Sometimes, the rules are overridden. We have done procurement audits in many of these entities and found gaps that I expected PAC to also find. Together, when we are doing a Treasury Memorandum, we could advise these entities on what to do.

Mr Speaker, lastly, pursuant to the requirements of the Public Finance Management Act, I affirm that we shall prepare a Treasury Memorandum in respect of this report. Thank you

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I now put the question that the report of the Public Accounts Committee (Central Government) on the Report of the Auditor-General on Referral Hospitals and Specialised Health Institutions for the year ended June 2023 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, we shall be expecting the treasury memoranda like you committed. Next item?

MOTION SEEKING LEAVE OF
PARLIAMENT TO INTRODUCE A
PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL ENTITLED
"THE FOOD AND NUTRITION BILL"

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Milton Muwuma.

5.42

MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am here to move a motion seeking leave of Parliament to introduce a private Member's Bill entitled "The Food and Nutrition Bill" under Articles 79 and 94 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995, and under rules 56 (2) and 122 of the Rules

of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda. The motion reads:

“WHEREAS Article 79 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda empowers Parliament to make laws on any matter for the peace, order, development and good governance;

AND WHEREAS Article 94 of the Constitution and Rule 121 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament recognise the right of a Member of Parliament to move a Private Member’s Bill;

AWARE that objectives 14 and 22 of the National Objectives and Direct Principles of State Policy of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda impose duties on the State to ensure that all Ugandans enjoy rights and opportunities, and access to food security, and further enjoin the State to promote food security and nutrition, and requires the State to take appropriate steps to encourage people to grow and store adequate food, establish national food reserves, and encourage and promote proper nutrition through mass education and other appropriate means in order to build a healthy State;

FURTHER AWARE that Uganda is a signatory to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which obligates state parties to recognise the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself or his family, including adequate food under Article 11 of the Convention;

COGNISANT that the Uganda Food and Nutrition Policy, 2003 aims at promoting the nutritional status of the people of Uganda through multi-sectoral and coordinated interventions that focus on food security, improved nutrition, and increased incomes, and recommends the enactment of legislation on food and nutrition in order to give the policy full effect;

NOTING that the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan (UNAP II) envisions a well-nourished healthy and productive population effectively participating in the socio-economic transformation of Uganda with a goal of

improving the nutrition status among children under five years, school-age children, adolescents, pregnant and lactating women, and other vulnerable groups by 2025;

CONCERNED that Uganda does not have a legislation on food and nutrition, yet it is imperative for the Government to set up a legal framework that will reinforce guiding principles, guidelines, regulations, and standards on food and nutrition so that the overall strategy of the policy to ensure food security and adequate nutrition for all Ugandans is achieved;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that Parliament grants me leave to introduce a Private Member’s Bill entitled, “The Food and Nutrition Bill”, a draft of which is here attached;

AND do order the publication of the said Bill in preparation for its first reading.”

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Is the motion seconded? (*Members rose*) Okay, it is seconded by Hon. Silas Aogon, Hon. Susan Abeja, Hon. Philiphs Lokwang, Hon. Flavia Kabahenda, Hon. Christine Kaaya, Hon. Agnes Taaka, Hon. Ssolo, Hon. Rose Obigah, honourable Member for Terego, Hon. Kakande, Hon. Mushemeza, Hon. Kirumira, Hon. Dr Bwanika, the honourable Member for Mukono, honourable Member for Gulu, honourable Member for Oyam, honourable Member for Kyamuswa and all colleagues. Thank you.

Honourable, in three minutes, speak to the motion. It is very direct; I give two minutes to each colleague.

MR MUWUMA: Thank you. Mr Speaker, the UBOS report, 2022 indicates clearly that 54 per cent of all adults in Uganda are stunted or have ever been stunted as a result of malnutrition and poor diets or poor feeding. We have so many cases of this nature.

In the PAC reports that we have just been considering, some of the deaths are occasioned - I should be particular - like in the Jinja Regional Referral Hospital, most of the maternal deaths result from malnutrition, mothers not feeding well, while pregnant. And this impacts the foetus and finally, the child that is born.

We have areas in Uganda - Mr Speaker, the recent reports still did indicate that Tooro, Karamoja, and Kigezi have the highest number of malnutrition and stunt cases in Uganda. It is not that these places do not have food, but what is lacking most is sensitisation, and awareness creation, whereby people do produce food, but they are not sensitised on how to use it. They are not told what to eat or how to eat it. Even post-harvest handling is not well handled.

So, we feel there is a need for us, first, to look at having nutritionists in most of the districts. Members, for your information, out of the 176 local governments, only 25 have nutritionists or nutrition officers, and these are only placed in regional referral hospitals. But at the district level, we do not have any nutritionists.

Therefore, people do produce - like we were in one of the districts in Tooro; Kamwenge, people produce a lot of food. But they eat - someone can decide to eat *matooke* from Monday to Sunday until the *matooke* is done. Then somebody again descends on cassava - this is because they lack information. So, we are saying that yes, we need to engage in nutrition to help our people know what to eat, in what quantities and at what time.

Mr Speaker, finally, because you have given me only two minutes, the issue of us having traditional granaries, stores, and food reserves is very key. During seasons of plenty, people consume in abundance without forecasting future consumption. That is why some of our regions sell off whatever they have during harvest. Then after three or two months, they are running to the Government for a bailout and handouts. This is not sustainable. That is why we are appealing to be granted leave to process this Bill that will address some of these gaps. I thank you and I beg to move, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Silas Aogon - I am starting with the seconders. If you read the Order Paper, you will notice that they are listed. We do two minutes so that other colleagues can have some time to support you as well.

5.50

MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi): Mr Speaker, I am here to stand strong and stand tall to support the mover of this very important motion seeking leave of this House. And I feel that it is very important that we grant the Member, as the House, that leave that is required.

Mr Speaker, he has spoken about nearly everything, but I want to dwell on the legal and planning frameworks. For instance, let us talk about our constitutional rights and mandates; Article 79, and Article 94, but also refer to our Rules of Procedure - rules 56, 121, 122. Or, let us talk about the NRM manifesto. When the President and NRM were campaigning for power, they did tell the people of Uganda and promised them that they would have enough food - (*Interjections*) - yes, Mr Speaker, we need to fulfil what we tell the people that we are going to provide.

We also have to look at SDG 2, which speaks to the issue of zero hunger. That is very important. We have a food policy of 2003. How can we have a policy that has been there running for all those years but we do not have a law as a follow-up? It is a major gap.

Mr Speaker, in Uganda right now, the level of stunting is terrible. Karamoja is listed as one of the areas. Tooro is listed as one of the areas. We cannot agree to continue with this - (*Interjections*) - Teso is also there. So, I am talking about something upon which I have information - refer to UBOS statistics.

Right now, in Uganda, someone has already alluded to the fact - the mover has talked about us being a signatory to most of the international conventions. We cannot relegate our duty to the people who follow up on domesticating what we have already assigned ourselves into responsibility.

Mr Speaker, this House will do Uganda a very good service by giving a gift, going towards Christmas, and that is by processing a Bill and a law to cater for food and nutrition.

Mr Speaker, I think the mover was the right person for this Bill. He deserves to be given the permission to go ahead and process it. I can tell you our life will change from today, if you granted leave to the Member. Things would change.

I thank you, Mr Speaker. We are here to listen and I know that you support this Bill and it will go through. We can do it within two months – *(Laughter)* - Yes, I know you, Mr Speaker, you are there for us and for this Bill, because you know its importance. Household heads need to take responsibility in providing food. We must have a national reserve for food. We must have food for this country. I beg to move. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Abeja -

5.54

MS SUSAN ABEJA (Independent, Woman Representative, Otuke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to begin by appreciating the mover of the motion. I am here to second the motion based on the following reasons.

In Uganda, we have agencies that support our country. One of the reasons why we are urging for this Bill, these people use their money to do their surveys in our districts. One of the reasons that touched me is when they said that Lango Subregion is not much affected. However, if you go to Lango, you cannot compare Otuke with a district like Kole and Oyam. At least for them, they have some bit of food for their people.

As for us, if our country had that money to carry enough surveys, they would equate us to Karamoja. Therefore, Otuke as a district is at the level of Karamoja, not at the level of the Lango Subregion.

Two, the OPM investment plan of 2021/2024/2025, they just wanted Shs 3.28 trillion in five years to support this programme. Since this money was not provided, the research that we have is that if you invest \$1 at the end of the day, in the end, you can harvest \$30 out of the \$1 that you have invested.

If you multiply this \$30 by 3.2, our country is losing Shs 98.4 trillion that could have been for other issues.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, but our motto for this Bill is; we need money for nutrition and we need nutrition for money. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Lokwang-Ilukol Philiphs –

5.56

MR PHILIPHS LOKWANG-ILUKOL (NRM, Napore West County, Karenga): Mr Speaker, I stand here to support the motion. When you talk about food, it is basic for all activities and all human beings. Therefore, when you talk about food, the result and effect of having good food is nutrition.

In this sense, therefore, I support the mover of this motion due to many other factors. I am sorry people have talked about Karamoja, but the problem is that when you talk about food, we should also talk about its availability. When you talk about availability, which food is available? Much of the food that people may think is available is poisonous to our people.

Therefore, once we put this law in place, it will help the nutritionists to educate and inform the community on which food is necessary. Another aspect is the costs. I want to inform all of us that when we feed our community very well, we shall reduce the cost in medical treatment. We have just been talking about our hospitals, and whatever, but when a body is well fed with clear nutritional values, then we shall not incur costs in our hospitals.

Another aspect is access. Some of us lack information on which food is necessary. How do you get it? When we talk about this, we are not necessarily talking about malnutrition.

When we talk about obesity, for example, research says women in Kampala here are more obese than whatever. That is also – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just conclude, honourable. Switch on.

MR LOKWANG-ILUKOL: Another aspect is the branding of our foods that we are taking. You will find that some of these packed foods have hidden writings and are very small. We do not tell our communities the type of food to be bought and consumed. There are many issues that we need to put, but when we put this law, it will be able to guide the producers and consumers of this food for better health. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Flavia Kabahenda -

5.59

MS FLAVIA KABAHENDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kyegegwa): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank Hon. Muwuma who presented the motion to seek leave to come with the Private Member's Bill on the Food and Nutrition Security in this country.

The international law requires that every man, woman and child alone or in any community should have adequate food and, or means of procuring adequate food. Uganda is obligated to that.

When we look at the Constitution in the Bill of rights, this country does not seem to give us the right to food. Of all the rights we have in that Constitution, we do not see the right to food. This is not very adequate for a country where we need productivity from the citizenry by having a healthy living.

I would like to thank and appreciate His Excellency the President, because he has been a champion of healthy living and eating. He always shares with us how he eats to encourage us to learn how to eat well. Mr Speaker, when you look at the way food is handled in

this country today, the State really needs a framework that will remind it to be cognisant of the fact that they have the obligation to protect people, to eat well, and to also prevent discrimination in eating.

Look at food fraud. People who label their food and give us the content in the food that is actually not right when you look at the food itself. We are looking at food abuse, when people just lay down mats and put food, when people put food wherever they see and people continue to consume food that is already contaminated by the environment where the food is. Despite the growing awareness of the importance of food, food literacy has remained the issue that affects people of all ages.

When we address food illiteracy, which is now a very big challenge, it would be a call to action for us as duty bearers to really support people to learn how to eat, how to handle food, how to avoid food abuse and avoid bad food vending and the consumer protection will be assured - (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kaaya Christine -

6.02

MS KAAYA CHRISTINE (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the mover of the motion and as well, second the motion to establish an Act.

I am very happy to have this Bill tabled because it is the right time now, we focused on the safety of food, especially from the gardens.

The Bill is proposing the establishment of granaries right from districts and at the national level. We have had many post-harvest handling losses and poor post-harvest handling to the extent that we are losing a lot of food to such losses. We have even lost market for some of our food because of poor harvest handling. I feel that when we provide for granaries, then the management of food safety is at hand.

Mr Speaker, there are a number of nutrient-dense crops. It is high time we focused on

some of these crops to improve and increase their production. So that we not only look at milk.

There are other nutrient-dense crops like oranges, fresh sweet potatoes, rich-iron beans, grain amaranth, silver fish, and soybean to promote their marketability.

Even when there is an opening in institutions, we need to balance the sharing of such nutrient-rich crops to our population without segregation.

In our education institutions, we have professional nutritionists. A course that has been there for years every year, a number of nutritionists are graduating.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just conclude.

MS KABA HENDA: However, these graduates have no placements. If we provide for such a law that establishes a slot for a nutritionist at probably every health centre IV or health centre III, we are assured of employing these youths that are professionals in nutrition. Thank you, very much and I second that the House supports us in coming up with this Bill through the private arrangement. I thank you.

6.03

MS ROSE OBIGAH (NRM, Woman Representative, Terego): Thank you very much. I stand to defend this Bill. Mr Speaker, if you see coloured food that is literally contaminated – vis-à-vis the locally produced food by our parents and ourselves.

It is made cheap and available to the communities right in the last village of Terego. Bottled drinks with very sweet names that can prompt you to take it.

At the end of the day, you are either obese or you have deficiencies. If we do not regulate these kinds of unnecessary adverts that derail people from determining to eat the right foods

—

Additionally, we have so many young girls/teenage pregnancies in our communities who think their children should be best fed on these fizzy foods. At the end of the day, we get malnourished children, and those with so many deficiencies and performance in classes and other types of work.

It is imperative upon us as a Parliament to come up, support this Bill and make sure that we pass it. Because this is where we are going to determine the future of Uganda.

For example, it is a problem for KFC to get our potatoes here from Kabale. They get their potatoes from South Africa, thinking that our potatoes in Uganda have deficiency, who tested this? There are many aflatoxins in our food.

By passing this Bill, we are going to determine the quality of food we are producing- far from suffering from losing market for our food to Kenya and the rest. Thank you, so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Naluyima-

6.07

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I second the motion because we really need to plan and strategise over matters of food and nutrition security.

When we get into the detail of this Bill, we shall all have reasons to understand more why we have to fight against malnutrition, over-nutrition and under-nutrition.

We have a reason as Ugandans and as legislators to fight and reduce the percentage from 29 per cent of children below 5 years who are malnourished right now.

Moreover, we have to ensure that we reduce and save the Shs 1.8 trillion that is lost by Uganda over malnutrition. We have to see that all of us get back to the healthy diets, not everything we consume is a healthy diet.

At times, we may have money and buy everything for our children and at times, our

children may request for what they want, but it is not exactly what they are supposed to have.

Therefore, as legislators of this country, it is our duty to ensure that the society, first of all, gets to know and changes its mind about what is nutritious. Thereafter, we also guide the country to understand better what is needed.

As research has it, 54 per cent of all adults in this country at a certain time were malnourished. We need to get to the statistics to now save the upcoming generations and have a better country. I submit, thank you.

6.09

MS SYLVIA NAYEBALE (NRM, Woman Representative, Gomba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the mover of the motion, and I second it. As we face rising health challenges like obesity, diabetes and heart diseases, improving access to nutritious meals is very crucial in our country.

If this Bill is passed, it will also help us in promoting public health, reducing the long-term health care costs and ensuring that children and adults have the resources they need; to healthier choices.

Investing in nutrition education, education assistance programmes and support for sustainable agricultural practices. It is the only way we can foster a healthier and resilient population. Therefore, I support the mover of the Bill and the Bill at large. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Okiror – We are flowing well now. No, we are procedurally moving well. Maybe only that we have had a semblance of peace for some time. It might be a cause for worry but we are moving well.

6.10

MR BOSCO OKIROR (NRM, Usuk County, Katakwi): I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to contribute to such a very important, suggested Bill.

Food provides the basis for our existence. And surely, it is very apparent and evident that what is happening now, globally, is that there is a lot of adulteration when it comes to food. Whereas food is the basis for your existence, it can also be the tool for destroying humanity.

Mr Speaker, if you went out now and looked at what is in our markets, there are drinks that have been put in the market. For example, I think there is a drink called; *Mukama Nayamba*, which scientifically has started to demonstrate that whereas the intention is that it enhances, instead it has made many people lose the power. These are not the indigenous things that we have heard. The effects are actually very apparent and very evident.

Therefore, I would like to thank my colleague, Hon. Muwuma, for coming up with this very important and I like to appeal to all of us to support him so that the House can give him leave to introduce this very fundamental Bill. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Dr Bwanika.

6.12

MR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to support the colleague.

We needed the regulation of food long ago. For us to have quality food, we need regulation. We are losing markets. I have heard honorable colleagues talk about this very sophisticated market like KFC. You cannot sell a product to KFC unless they are sure of the nutrients within that food. That is why they are importing their products from other countries.

We need to help our people regulate so that they can produce quality food so that we can access these markets. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I am supportive that the honourable colleague secures leave so that we can regulate the food industry, provide quality apart from the quantity, so that our people not only access nutrition, but they will also be able to access markets globally that are very important. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I said we are proceeding well. Hon. Ababiku?

6.14

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I support the motion because one of the problems being faced by this country is food in terms of quantity and quality.

Mr Speaker, food insecurity is one of the disasters. That is why when we are facing these challenges, even by a season, our communities become more vulnerable. I pray that this Bill addresses the food insecurity issues.

More importantly, I would like to give information that this country does not have a disaster law. Therefore, if we can have this Bill, it may temporarily address some of the challenges that this country is facing.

The Government is not giving much attention in terms of the services in relation to nutrition. That is why in our districts development partners and non-governmental organisations are doing much. It is high time we owned up our major role to ensure that our people are secured in terms of food but also its quality. Thank you so much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lyantonde?

6.15

MR ENOS ASIMWE (NRM, Kabula County, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I fully support the Bill but I am seeking clarification from the Government. They had mentioned bringing a Bill to deal with the quality of food when we were in Entebbe in our private caucus as National Resistance Movement (NRM). I am seeking this clarification from the Honorable Attorney-General, whether this Bill will be coming or whether Hon. Muwuma's Bill will cover the components of the same Bill so that we can be guided. This is because some of the Members are talking about the quality of the food and all that, like the honorable from

Kimaanya-Kabonera Division said. Therefore, I am seeking clarification from the two.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honorable, that is anticipation as per rule 80 because we do not sit in the caucus and do not know what happens there. The caucus cannot stop us from doing business here. Thank you.

Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the motion seeking leave of the House to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled, "The Food and Nutrition Bill" be approved.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Congratulations. In accordance with Article 94 (4) (d), go to the Attorney-General's office to afford you assistance. Last time I saw some Members complaining that he wants to suffocate us, but the article says, "*The office of the Attorney-General shall afford the Member moving the private member's Bill professional assistance in the drafting of the Bill.*"

Honourable colleagues, if you saw, you know the Attorney-General just writes to the President and says, "I never rendered assistance and do not know about this law" and the Bill is returned. Once it is returned, you will need two-thirds. Colleagues getting two-thirds to come here and support your Bill - so it is a matter of strategy and working together. Therefore, go to the Attorney-General and he affords you assistance and we see how best we can help each other.

Honorable colleagues, we shall receive one item and then the debate will be for tomorrow and that is item eight. Next item.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF REPORT OF
THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(CENTRAL GOVERNMENT) ON THE
REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL
ON THE JUSTICE, LAW AND ORDER
SECTOR FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30
JUNE 2023

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I hope all these reports are already uploaded. So, honorable chairperson, just go straight to the salient issues, then Members should read.

6.18

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (CENTRAL GOVERNMENT) (Ms Gorreth Namugga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am here to present a report of the Auditor-General on the sector of Justice, Law, and Order for the year ended 30 June 2023.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the report on the Table and the minutes before I go into the details of introducing myself.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, let us use 20 minutes.

MS NAMUGGA: Yes, Mr Speaker. My name is Gorreth Namugga, the deputy chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee (Central Government). Therefore, I am here to present a report of the Public Accounts Committee Report of the Auditor-General's report on the Justice, Law and Order Sector for the year ended 30 June 2023.

Mr Speaker, Article 163 of the Constitution mandates the Auditor-General to submit to Parliament an annual report of the accounts audited by him or her for the year immediately preceding.

Mr Speaker, I will directly go to the report but look into the scope. We are looking at six sectors, the Judiciary, the Uganda Police Force, the Uganda Prisons Service, Office of the Director of Public Prosecution, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Mr Speaker, as you are aware, this is a very critical sector to this country in that we cannot underestimate the importance of law and order to this country.

Mr Speaker, I will begin with the Judiciary - Vote 101. The report has been uploaded; honourable colleagues you will read. Otherwise, I want to just note that the sector received a budget of Shs 384,418,800,423 and the budget release was at 83 per cent. They received a wage at 100 per cent and the recurrent budget of 100 per cent.

Mr Speaker, on the performance of Non Tax Revenue (NTR), the entity over-performed. The Auditor-General reported that the entity had planned to collect Shs 6.3 billion and during the year, it collected Shs 9.9 billion and that was an over-performance of 157 per cent.

However, Mr Speaker, the committee recommends that the accounting officer should set realistic NTR based on the trend analysis because this over-expenditure is an indication that the NTR was underestimated.

Mr Speaker, on the performance of warrants, yes, and the entity received a budget of three warrants of Shs 348 billion, but they only utilised Shs 348 billion, giving a shortfall of Shs 24.97 billion. These are the areas that were not implemented.

The general staff salaries of staff on contract – their salaries were not enhanced. Therefore, Shs 24.4 billion was not paid because of failure to enhance salaries and some of that money was to be used for land titles. The Accounting Officer could not make full payment since the processing of the land titles was still a work in progress.

Mr Speaker, the staff were denied an increment of salary because of delay in processes by the Ministry of Public Service. The committee therefore recommends that the Accounting Officer should engage responsible officers in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to expedite the processing and acquisition of land titles for the Judiciary.

In consultation with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Minister of Public Service, the recruitment of staff should be rolled over to the next Budget.

Mr Speaker, on the implementation of outputs, I will be very brief. Most of the budget that was allocated to this ministry, most of the items were under partial implementation. Mr Speaker, this indicates that most activities were not fully implemented and this affects service delivery. For example, the Auditor-General noted that because of non-implementation of planned activities, training of 20 trainers was not conducted and 3,500 copies of the Judicial Retirement Benefit Scheme Regulations were not printed, among others, and this affected these activities.

Therefore, the committee recommends that the accounting officer should be held liable for the actions, inactions and omissions that occasioned out of failure to implement the planned activities.

Mr Speaker, I will straight away go to the most critical activities for this sector. These are delivery of services from implemented activities. You may observe on page 10 that construction of the Chief Magistrate Court at Alebtong at a cost of Shs 261 million was delayed. The reason as to why there was a delay, the accounting officer attributed it to completion of works to non-payment of certified works due to delayed release of funds.

Mr Speaker, still for item two, construction of the Chief Magistrate Court at Patongo, which was a contract price of Shs 360 million, the same was alluded to failure to release the funds in time, much as the certificates were submitted.

Therefore, the committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should ensure timely release of project funds, and the accounting officer should strengthen contract supervision to ensure that all outstanding works are fast-tracked to completion within three months of adoption of this report.

On operation of courts, the Auditor-General undertook an evaluation of the operations of 277 magistrate courts operated by the Judiciary and noted the following challenges.

(i) Operationalisation of courts. The Magisterial Areas Instrument of 2017 lists the number of courts the Judiciary is mandated to establish and operationalise under respective magisterial areas to meet the country's justice needs. As per the instrument, a total of 391 magistrate courts and grade 1 courts were to be established. However, the Auditor-General assessed that, the implementation of this directive and observed that only 192 courts had been established and operationalised to date, signifying a performance of 49 per cent

Therefore, the committee recommends that the Government should provide the necessary funding to operationalise all the planned magistrate courts.

(ii) There is a challenge of inadequate transport facilities for the magistrate courts. An analysis of the transportation facilities for the magisterial courts by the Auditor-General revealed that although 52 vehicles were procured during the Financial Year 2022/2023 at a cost of Shs 15 Billion, there was still a huge transport facility gap. Out of the 82 magisterial areas, the Auditor-General found that six magisterial areas with over 20 judicial staff had no transport facility.

Therefore, the committee recommends that the Government should provide money for procurement of additional vehicles for all magistrate courts. We should also note that there is inadequate access to the internet in these courts.

Mr Speaker, the Attorney-General reviewed the internet coverage across the different courts within the judiciary and noted that out of the 250 courts, only 101 courts, that is a percentage of 40 per cent had access to the internet. Therefore, the committee recommends that the Government should provide adequate funds to provide the internet to enhance automation of the court system.

4.6 Lastly, Mr Speaker, the electronic case management information system.

Honourable colleagues, you may realise that registration of court cases is done manually. In addition, the reason as to why it is done like this is because there is a lack of an electronic case management system.

From the observation of the auditor, the committee observed that the introduction of this system and the full automation of the process was meant to address the case backlog that had continued to bedevil the justice system. The delays therefore mean Ugandans are being denied swift dispensation of justice; therefore, there is also a possible risk of the rise in the total cost project.

There was a delay in ensuring that this system was installed. Moreover, the recommendation is that the accounting officer should expedite the installation of the computer infrastructure, and also follow up on the approval of the system and engage external stakeholders on the use of the same system. IGG should conduct an investigation to establish the causes of delay of this system.

Mr Speaker, this system was an investment of \$420 million. Therefore, the IGG should investigate the delay of this project because it is a very huge investment to this country. In Uganda shillings, it is a total of Shs 9.277 billion.

4.7 Lastly in this sector is accumulation of domestic arrears. You should note that the Auditor-General noted that management irregularly accrued domestic arrears to the tune of Shs 6.2 billion in the Financial Year 2022/2023. Moreover, you know how that affects the private sector. Therefore, the committee recommends that the Government should consider amending the relevant public finance laws and include domestic arrears as a statutory obligation and should be the first call when budgeting.

Domestic arrears are a very serious issue in the area of accountability. We are frustrating the private sector.

5.0 Uganda Police Force (Vote 144). They also received their budget at 98 per cent and I am going to straight away go to activities; management of detention facilities in the Uganda Police Force. For the others, you read for yourself.

Mr Speaker, during the Financial Year 2022/2023, Uganda Police Force received the budget of Shs 4.021 billion for management of detention facilities. The Auditor-General audited the condition of the detention facilities and noted the following:

- i. Detention of suspects beyond 48 hours. Mr Speaker, a police officer on arresting a suspect without a warrant shall produce a suspect so arrested before the magistrate's court within 48 hours, unless earlier released.

Honourable colleagues should note that it is illegal and irregular to detain suspects beyond 48 hours. Therefore, the committee recommends that the police should always produce suspects in court within the stipulated 48 hours.

The Uganda Police Force (UPF) officers in cited stations should be held personally liable for violating human rights in accordance with Section 10 of the Human Rights Enforcement Act 2019. Government should provide police with adequate resources and logistics for efficient and timely management of cases.

5.6 Management of transport facilities:

Honourable colleagues, lack of transport facilities for policing districts or divisions is also a challenge in the Uganda Police Forces. Out of the 60 policing districts that the Auditor-General selected for physical inspection 27 districts had one operational vehicle, 29 had at least 2 operational vehicles, and 4 policing districts had three operational cars, and only one policing district had four operational cars to use for the force to reach out to all corners of the district.

Mr Speaker, the accounting officer acknowledged the query and attributed it to budget constraints and the numerous requests

for police escort cars. Honourable colleagues, note this. The accounting officer acknowledged the query and attributed it to budget constraints and also numerous requests for police escort cars from Ministries, Departments, Agencies, and parastatals.

The accounting officer also stated that some vehicles were given to some politicians, leading to a strain on a limited number of police vehicles. Therefore, the committee recommends that all police patrol cars being used illegally by non-entitled officers and individuals should be immediately withdrawn. Therefore, whoever has police vehicles not entitled to them, you should return them, such that they serve the people of this country.

Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, on assessment of management of the Closed-Circuit Television (CCTVs), I request that you read that.

Police also have a challenge of accumulation of domestic arrears. I will briefly go through that. A trend analysis of the domestic arrears position of the Uganda Police Force over the past five years has shown a decreasing trend in domestic arrears. However, in the year under review, the Financial Year 2022/2023, domestic arrears increased from Shs 77.3 billion to Shs 98.81 billion, as shown in the table.

Honourable colleagues, the committee recommends that:

- i. The Government should provide money for offsetting the accumulated arrears, so that we do not frustrate the people who give services to the Government.

3.0 The Uganda Prisons Service Forces - Vote 145

Uganda Prisons also received a budget of Shs 340 billion that is 98 per cent of release of that budget. You will read that.

Congestion in prisons

Mr Speaker, Strategic Objective 1 of the Uganda Prisons Strategic Development Plan 2020-2025 aims to provide safe, secure and humane custodial services for transforming prisoners

into economically productive citizens. This was to be achieved by building more prisons to decongest the existing ones and reduce the occupancy capacity from the baseline of 293 per cent to 286 per cent.

The Auditor-General reported that despite strategic interventions of building additional prison wards at Ntungamo, Rukungiri, Nwoya, Kitalya, Sheema, Mutufu, Kyenjojo and Sironko Prisons, congestion in prisons remained a big challenge with prisoners' housing only increasing by 1 per cent over the same period of assessment.

Mr Speaker, the most affected prisons noted were: Isingiro, which had a population of 377 prisoners against a holding capacity of 47; Yumbe Prison which had 192 prisoners against a holding capacity of 25; Hoima Main Prison had 494 prisoners against a holding capacity of 80; Kibale Prison with a holding capacity of 30 had 184 prisoners and Fort Portal Main Prison, which had 1,770 prisoners, with a holding capacity of 309 prisoners.

There is congestion in prisons, honourable colleagues. Therefore, the accounting officer attributed the congestion in prisons to high prisoner population, with a growth rate of 8 per cent per annum, compared to 3 per cent growth in holding capacity. Therefore, the growth rate of prisoners is so high at 8 per cent; we should note that.

Therefore, the committee recommends that:

- i. The Government should provide adequate capital development to Uganda Prisons Services to enable the implementation of their decongestion strategies –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, honourable member.

MS NAMUGGA:

- ii. The accounting officer should, together with the wider criminal justice system, enhance efficiency for speedy dispensation.

The condition of accommodation in prisons, Mr Speaker, is also very alarming and we should take note of that.

Briefly, let us look at the Directorate of Public Prosecution

It also has challenges of arrears and understaffing. I am about to conclude.

Lastly is the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. The ministry has a challenge of management of funds of estates of the deceased. There is failure to issue Certificates of No Objection but most importantly, the issue of delay of clearance of contracts.

Mr Speaker, this is a very huge challenge, where it takes the Office of the Solicitor-General a maximum of 60 months to clear a contract. Therefore, this was a very big challenge. For example, when you look at that table, it clearly shows that most of the contracts take six months to be cleared. This leads to delay in execution of contracts.

Compensation of war debt claimants

For those who come from the northern region, you should take note of this because money was not allocated for clearance of payment of compensation to war claimants.

I conclude with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The ministry had challenges of supervision of community service orders. It also had challenges of management of trafficking of persons in the country and also lack of Government shelters for victims of trafficking in persons.

Mr Speaker, with that submission, this is a report of the Auditor-General on the sector of justice, law and order. I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well done, honourable chairperson. *(Applause)* Thank you.

MS NAMUGGA: Mr Speaker, I should say this is my maiden report. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Congratulations. Well done; you are doing very well. Honourable colleagues, please read the report and Clerk, capture the whole report on the *Hansard*

verbatim, so that we are able to follow it up very well. This will be debated tomorrow; you have time to read it.

I think we should write down names again but Hon. Gilbert Olanya will not allow it because I did not pick him. I wanted to start with him but he was not in. Hon. Kirumira also came late, but Hon. Aza, Hon. Museveni and Hon. Paparu were seated here.

Honourable colleagues, let us try it again. Have confidence in me. Hon. Paparu, coordinate writing names of Members on that side. I am again assigning Hon. Gilbert Olanya to do the job for this side. During that time, let us receive Volume 1 of government ministries. Let us also receive it the way we received this one, so that we have more time for debate tomorrow. Twenty minutes, Hon. Kivumbi.

6.40

THE CHAIRPERSON, PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (CENTRAL GOVERNMENT) (Mr Muwanga Kivumbi):

Mr Speaker, I report on behalf of the Committee on Public Accounts. I will give a summary. I believe Members will get access to the main report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The report should be uploaded.

MR MUWANGA: Yes. This report, unlike any other, is where we detailed general comments on the Auditor-General's report. It is general comments on the reporting by the Auditor-General.

The committee commends the Auditor-General for his report on the entities for the year ended 30 June 2023. The committee, however, notes the following concerns on the reporting by the Auditor-General.

Reporting on the implementation of outputs
The committee observed that for many entities, the Auditor-General did not specify the percentage amounts of outputs and activities that were partially or never implemented at all. This made it difficult for the committee

to determine how much wastage and loss were occasioned by the different accounting officers, thereby making it difficult to prescribe appropriate recommendations.

For example, under the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, the Auditor-General assessed the implementation of 10 outputs that were fully quantified, with a total of 75 activities worth Shs 11 billion. The Auditor-General did not, however, reveal how many outputs in total the entity had and the corresponding amounts.

Further, the Auditor-General noted that the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development had 21 activities that were partially implemented and 24 activities that were not implemented at all, while 30 activities remained unimplemented.

Again, the Auditor-General did not reveal how much of the partial and unimplemented activities were worth in terms of amounts, neither does he provide stern recommendations for the sake of accountability.

In most cases, the Auditor-General simply recommended that the partial and unimplemented activities be rolled over to the next financial year without holding the accounting officers liable.

The report observed the implementation of activities where abuse and mismanagement is missed to be pronounced, yet it is at the core of service delivery. This kind of reporting is, therefore, suspicious, as it makes consumers of the Auditor-General's report have doubts on the intention of the auditors.

Similarly, at the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Auditor-General assessed the implementation of 31 outputs that had been fully quantified, with a total of 81 activities worth Shs 14 billion. The Auditor-General did not specify how many outputs in total the ministry had planned to implement for the financial year in question for the reader of his report to discern his decision to assess the quantum of outputs he chose.

The Auditor-General further noted that 18 outputs with 61 activities worth Shs 10 billion were partially implemented. Out of the activities, 15 activities were partially implemented, while 21 remained unimplemented. The Auditor-General did not attribute corresponding amounts to the partial and non-implementation of activities out of the Shs 10 billion worth of outputs.

Honourable colleagues, this, therefore, means that activities worth Shs 223.9 billion were not assessed by the Auditor-General and therefore, its performance could not be determined by the committee.

Percentage of assessed sampling by the Auditor-General

During the interrogation of assessed amounts/activities of many of the entities, the committee observed that the Auditor-General's sample sizes were not representative enough of the total utilised warrants.

For example, a total amount of Shs 332.4 billion of warrants utilised, inclusive of wage, were under the Ministry of Education. The Auditor-General assessed output worth Shs 14 billion, which is only 4.6 per cent of the total amounts of warrants. You cannot form an opinion on that basis - (*Interjection*) - yes.

Mr Speaker, the main focus, when we took over this committee, was to change the quality of the report of the Auditor-General. If only we can achieve that, we will be on the first front to tackling abuse and corruption in this country.

In essence, what this means is that the Auditor-General did not assess outputs worth Shs 307 billion under the Ministry of Education and therefore, its expenditure could not be verified. Similar small samples of assessed entities' warrants were observed by the committee in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Office of the President, Ministry of Works, which were found not to be representative enough, according to the committee.

The committee is alive to the fact that within the audit programme, sampling is mainly based on the transactions representing up to 80 per cent of the value of the expenditure. This is known as the Pareto Principle of Distribution.

In this case, approximately 20 per cent of the number of transactions will represent 20 per cent of the value of all transactions. This is normally called the “80/20 per cent rule or principle”.

Therefore, the Auditor-General’s sample size of assessed output of some of the entities made it difficult for the committee to draw conclusions on the nature of transactions undertaken during the financial year in question. In summary, some of the sample sizes of the utilised warrants of selected entities are summarised in Table 13 of the main report.

Mr Speaker, we have recommended that all entities and ministries that were assessed below 30 per cent be re-audited because we cannot form an opinion for an entity that was sampled at 4 per cent, 15 per cent and 20 per cent, and the table is there.

Therefore, we are indirectly rejecting the portion of the Auditor-General’s report that does not speak to a quantifiable amount and meet the international standards of auditing. I know it is the first of its kind for a committee to take this step, but we are compelled to do so to improve the quality of auditing.

Reporting on audited accounts

The committee observed that some reports by the Auditor-General did not comprehensively address shortcomings of the audited books of accounts of entities, forcing the committee to almost start re-auditing during interrogation.

For example, the committee observed gross misrepresentation of figures, inconsistency in posting, over commitment and over expenditure by accounting officers, which were not reported by the Auditor-General. Upon interrogation, many accounting officers were found to have diverted funds from one activity to others without authorisation.

For example, on interrogation of the financial statements of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, the committee discovered that the entity had not budgeted for domestic arrears.

However, from cash flow statements on page 12 of the entity’s books of account, the Ministry of Finance had paid Shs 107 billion as domestic arrears without approval of Parliament or authorisation through even a virement.

The accounting officer informed the committee that the funds were diverted from funds allocated to undertake survey and titling of Ministry of Agriculture farmland and rehabilitate two animal holding grounds or quarantine grounds to cater for domestic arrears and entities under mechanisation.

Equally, under the Ministry of Education and Sports, the entity was found to have budgeted domestic areas worth Shs 11 billion, as per the statement of appropriation, but ended up spending Shs 28.5 billion, as per budget performance. This implies that Shs 17 billion was not planned for and they never sought permission.

Performance of Non-Tax Revenue

Mr Speaker, NTR to be collected was supposed to be Shs 1,796,000,000,000, as planned. The ministries managed to collect Shs 1,472,000,000,000, leaving a balance of Shs 324,000,000,000, representing 18.04 per cent of the approved NTR. This is a dismal performance in the face of current efforts by the Government to raise funds to finance the budget.

Failure to meet the NTR

I can leave this; that is obvious. The committee observed to that effect.

The committee recommends, therefore, that:

- i. While planning, the accounting officer should set realistic NTR targets based on trend analysis, in consultation with the Minister of Finance; and
- ii. Accounting officers should strictly plan for NTR in their budgeting process.

Implementation of quantifiable outputs

Section 13(5) of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015 states that a policy statement submitted by a Vote shall contain the annual and a three-year work plan, outputs, targets and performance indicators of work plans.

Equally, Regulation 11.3 of the PFMA, 2016 requires that a Vote should prepare work plans that indicate the output of the Vote for the financial year. The indicators are to be used to gauge the performance of the output and funds allocated to each activity.

From the report of the Auditor-General for the financial year in question, most of the ministries did not implement the outputs fully. Many accounting officers the committee interacted with did not fully comprehend the query and therefore, most of them attributed the non-implementation of output and activities to under release of funds, whereas all the funds meant for implementation of the audited activities had been fully released and spent.

Mr Speaker, when you ask some accounting officers why they did not implement some activity, they were citing the non-release of funds, yet at the audit level, the funds they talk about are funds that were released to them and they spent the money.

It should be noted that for the entities to effectively implement the strategic plan, the operational plans must be in tandem with the strategic plans in terms of objectives, performance targets, indicators and funding requirements to facilitate the achievement of strategic actions.

The table on page 18 of the main report shows the extent of implementation of outputs and activities of the few selected ministries. Here in this report, in summary, I have the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, which had 148 activities; it fully implemented 74 per cent, partially implemented 6 per cent and did not implement 20 per cent.

The Office of the President had 47 activities assessed; it fully implemented 85 per cent and

partially implemented 15 per cent. It is one of the few rare - the Office of the President that almost implemented and had zero non-implemented activities; the accounting officer there is doing a commendable job. *(Applause)*

The Ministry of Health had 226 activities; it fully implemented 20 per cent, partially implemented 25 per cent and did not implement 55 per cent of the activities.

The Ministry of Works and Transport had 105 activities, it fully implemented 55 per cent of the activities, and partially implemented 25 per cent and 20 per cent of the activities were not implemented at all despite having received the money.

The Ministry of Water and Environment had 132 activities, it fully implemented 25 per cent, partially implemented 53 per cent and the non-implemented were 20 per cent despite having received and spent the money.

That is what the implication means. The total activities that were implemented were 658, which means 45 per cent were implemented, partially implemented 25 per cent and non-implemented overall total was 30 per cent.

From the table above, it can be noted that out of the assessed 685 planned activities by the sampled ministries, only 45 per cent were fully implemented, 25 per cent were partially implemented and 30 per cent were not implemented at all.

The Ministry of Health had the highest percentage of non-implemented activities at 55 per cent followed by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Works and Transport, Ministry of Water and Environment at 20 per cent.

Overall, 55 per cent of the assessed activities were not fully implemented indicating failure to meet the service delivery targets to the intended beneficiaries for the year under review despite having received the funds for the activities.

On interrogation by the committee, many of the accounting officers did not seem to comprehend what the query on non-or partial implementation of activities required. Many suggested rolling over the affected activities to the following financial year, citing insufficient funds and yet to the contrary, most times funds were made available for their specific activities and spent, signifying the diversion of funds without authorisation.

Furthermore, the committee observed that in some cases, funds were released too late for the effective implementation of outputs and activities, thereby, affecting the absorption levels of entities.

The committee agrees with the observation of the Auditor-General that failure to provide details of quantified activities renders the assessment of performance impossible, which compromises accountability.

The committee recommends as follows:

Accounting officers should stick to the approved work plans and execute them according to their budgets.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should always release funds on time to enable effective implementation of planned activities.

The Auditor-General should improve on the reporting of the partial and non-partial implemented activities by clearly showing the percentage cost variation so that the effective accounting officers can be held liable.

Accumulation of domestic areas

The Auditor-General reported that entities had continued to accumulate domestic areas and the trend had escalated at an average of 16 per cent in the last five years despite several interventions by the Treasury.

In addition, some accounting officers were concealing domestic arrears in paying for arrears that previously were not disclosed nor budgeted for which is the diversion of funds.

In other instances, the arrears disclosed were not properly supported by evidence of goods or services.

The Auditor-General further observed that some entities had entered into multi-year commitments without parliamentary approval. Details of the analysis are shown in the table below.

Mr Speaker, the table below shows an analysis of the national debt with the payable domestic arrears highlighted for the last financial year.

I will go for it –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, three minutes.

MR MUWANGA: That means that domestic arrears by ministries mounted to Shs 10 trillion which they have not paid – *(Interjection)* - Yes, not billion.

Pension as not paid for was Shs 316 billion.

Deposits - Hon. Musasizi knows deposits - Shs 603 billion.

Total liabilities were Shs 949 trillion by the end of this financial year and therefore, honourable members, that is a sad story.

Committee observations

The accumulation of domestic arrears has adverse effects on the economy as it implies that - those who are tabled.

Mr Speaker, I have gone ahead to show entities with - the Auditor-General further noted that the persistent growth of -

Entities with gross domestic arrears

The Treasury Operations had a growth arrear by the end of the year of Shs 5,989 billion.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development had domestic arrears of Shs 976 billion.

The Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs had domestic arrears of Shs 425 billion,

the Ministry of Works and Transport, Shs 215 billion and the Ministry of Water and Environment, Shs 119 billion and Ministry of Education and Sports had Shs 127 billion.

On report one, I beg to read - but I refer you to the main report, where we have one rejected some ministries and referred for re-audit. It is in full detail.

Two, the accounting officers whom we have put- the amount of money diverted and we have recommended for possible investigation by the Inspector General of Government and the Police for prosecution. Thank you. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, this will be debated tomorrow. House adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 7.01 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 25 September 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)