



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

SECOND SESSION - 6TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Tuesday, 24 January 2023

Parliament met at 2.09 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 do not know whether the ministers think yesterday's process is still on-going. *(Laughter)* The process ended; so, they can come back. Inform your colleagues that yesterday's process ended so they can return.

However, on a very serious note, honourable colleagues, I received, with sadness, the news of the death of the Paramount Chief of the Lugbara Cultural Institution, His Highness Jason Avutia III, which occurred on Monday, 23 January 2023.

On behalf of Parliament and on my own behalf, I wish to extend our condolences to the family of the late, the council of elders of the Lugbara community and the entire Lugbara community in Uganda. May his soul rest in eternal peace. Let us stand up and observe a moment of silence in his honour.

(Members rose and observed a moment of silence.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of leaders from Bukedea District Local Government, the district of our very own Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament. These are the people who have supported her and enabled her to come here to Parliament and be our leader. I hope they will continue doing the same. They include:

1. Mr Imran Muluga – RDC
2. Ms Mary Akol – LC V Chairperson
3. Mr Showan Juma Emong – District Speaker
4. Ms Hellen Amunyo – Town Council speaker

We also have 16 LC III chairpersons from Bukedea. They can stand up for recognition. We have 22 district councillors, 33 town council councillors, the Chief Administrative Officer and the Clerk to Council. They are attending a two-day training on governance and management of local councils at Hotel Africana in line with the Ministry of Local Government. They are represented by the Rt Hon. Anita Annet Among, Hon. Bosco Ikojo and Hon. Patrick Opolot-Isiagi. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Thank you. This is your House and you are always welcome.

Honourable colleagues, the media has been awash with stories of what has been going on at Entebbe International Airport. Some of the most painful videos I saw were of people crying and Ugandans being denied chance to re-enter their country. There are others being denied chance to go for opportunities, which

they have strived to get, because someone wants something small to put in their pocket.

I also saw a very sad story in the *Daily Monitor* Newspaper of a certain national who was also allowed to exit the country, and yet he was on the blacklist - most of them are very shocking and painful stories. I am happy that the Civil Aviation Authority has admitted to most of them. However, the reports we have seen in the media are saying, "dismissed", and yet these are criminals; you dismiss them today and they go and get a job in another place, and continue with that kind of habit.

Therefore, I will need a joint statement from the Minister of Works and Transport who supervises the Civil Aviation Authority, and the Minister of Internal Affairs because most of the cases were to do with immigration officers. The Minister of Works and Transport will take the lead in presenting the statement as the overall. On Tuesday next week, this statement shall be given priority on the Order Paper so that we look into this issue.

Of course, the concern is that in other countries, the people manning immigration centres are usually the police. However, when you pick strangers from nowhere - who do not know that charging a criminal US \$5,000 and he enters into a country and bombs a school, church or public place, you end up losing much more - Government Chief Whip, please coordinate with the minister to ensure this comes to the Floor of the House next week.

The Committee on Education and Sports was given the assignment to inquire into the issues of homosexuality in schools. Honourable colleagues, I am getting painful and gruesome stories. When you talk to the doctors, you understand how deep it is. Many people are dying in silence but it seems our schools have been completely penetrated.

It also seems like recruitment centres are very open. It is extremely painful. We are completely not in charge of our children. I personally talked to one student and he told me that in one of their schools, you cannot move

around the compound at night. He is from a boys' school and it is one of the prominent boys' schools. He told me he is afraid of being grabbed and sodomised. Some of your children are suffering in silence and some of the parents are also suffering in silence.

Therefore, Committee on Education and Sports, this is a matter you have to give urgent priority. It is an issue, which we must tackle head-on, without fear of anyone because this is all we have. The moment you finish our children, then we no longer have anything.

I hope it can be done quickly so that we give it enough space on the Order Paper. Members should come in and we see how best to work with the Government and support it; whether it means putting more funding into patrolling all these entities or retooling and doing whatever we can. I do not know - but we need to do whatever we can to ensure that we save humanity and our country.

The Minister of Education and Sports was also supposed to update this House on the issue of the school fees policy, especially for private schools. Schools will be reopening very soon and so, we need this urgently so that we can guide the public on these issues.

Committee on Budget - we are going to start working on the National Budget Framework Paper by debating it here on the Floor but we need a report on the performance of the current budget; we need the year's performance.

Therefore, tomorrow, I am putting you on the Order Paper. We have very many pending issues - I do not know how we are going to discuss the budget framework paper without even knowing how the current budget is performing.

In addition, in preparation for discussion of the budget framework paper, the Committee on National Economy presented two reports on the State of Indebtedness and the State of the Economy. Therefore, you can refer back to the *Hansard* and get those two documents, as we appropriate money here and there. Those

reports will be able to guide you in your debate because we want to have a constructive debate in detail about the budget framework paper before we go to handling ministerial policy statements.

Also in the gallery this afternoon, are youth leaders from Fort Portal Tourism City, represented by Hon. Mugisa Margret Muhanga, Hon. Linda Irene and Hon. Ruhunda Alex.

They include:

1. Mr Jonathan Nyika - Youth Chairperson;
2. Ms Gorreth Karungi - Female Youth Councillor;
3. Mr Joseph Kasita - Rights Holder; and
4. Ms Brenda Kumurubuga – the Project Coordinator

They are here to observe proceedings of the House. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Thank you. Let us go to matters of national importance - reaction to my communication? Point of procedure?

Let me start with the point of procedure because it takes precedence, colleagues.

2.22

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central Bugiri): Mr Speaker, I want to thank you for your elaborate communication to this Parliament, this afternoon.

Mr Speaker, my matter refers specifically to the issue of immigration, travel documents and the Civil Aviation Authority at Entebbe.

What is happening at the airport is also happening at the immigration offices. When people apply for passports, they are told that if they want it urgently, they have to pay an additional amount of money, and Ugandans are being extorted. There is a lot of extortion and impunity happening in that department.

The procedural matter I am raising is: wouldn't it be procedurally right for you to order for a forensic audit in this department, so that we know what exactly is happening and who is

doing things with impunity? This would help us solve this problem so that Ugandans can get peace. Ugandans go through a lot of pain and suffering at this place. That is my procedural matter.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, firstly, I have requested for a statement on Tuesday.

Secondly, for a forensic audit to be done, we need to have a very strong precursor; you do not just come and say, "Do a forensic audit." We need to first give our Committee on Internal Affairs chance to look at these matters in detail.

As I told you, colleagues, committees have general powers to summon any entity on any issues within their sector. They do not need to wait for us here - every day, you wait for plenary to get assignments. The only thing is when you do it, you inform the presiding officers that we are going to do this and that, so that we are in tandem.

Therefore, Commissioner, for now, I urge the Committee on Internal Affairs to look into these issues deeply, especially now that we are going to be scrutinising the ministerial policy statements from these entities in the sector.

MS NALUYIMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Whenever we attend plenary, we are supposed to login and show attendance.

However, several times, we have come but the IT systems that we have - wouldn't it be procedurally right to have an alternative way of logging in?

I am saying this because for instance yesterday, I had to move around to log in from the other side. Today, I have moved to all the three points because this one is already malfunctioning. So, wouldn't it be procedurally right if we got another method, probably the camera person takes us continuously and later on harmonises their - it seems the ICT team is unable to ensure that the biometrics are working fully.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, these are administrative matters.

Hon. Ethel Naluyima was in my office - you were in my office 45 minutes ago; it should have been one of the issues you raised with me. However, I have taken note.

Anyhow, colleagues, for administrative issues, our chambers are open; they are not issues for primetime when we are handling public issues. Hon. Bakkabulindi -

2.27

MR CHARLES BAKKABULINDI (NRM, Workers Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. You mentioned something very touching about education - sodomy, gay activities among others. This is not something that started yesterday.

You have rightly directed the Committee on Education and Sports to do serious work on it. However, let us also go back to the causes. I would be very interested, Mr Speaker, if you also directed the Ministry of Internal Affairs to scrutinise the NGOs.

When you go to schools like Budo, you might find that a teacher is an agent of an NGO. This issue started some 15 years ago; they have really penetrated us to the extent that they have identified the good schools; mostly of single-sex - Budo, Namagunga, Gayaza then from there, they will penetrate society. Mr Speaker, this is a serious issue.

Some NGOs, since they came to Uganda, are not monitored on what brought them or how they are performing and so, they have ended up recruiting our children. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Gilbert Olanya, do you want to touch on the same before I guide?

2.28

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate you for bringing up that very important matter.

As I speak, parents are worried. What is happening to our children in schools is quite

terrible. Over the weekend, the Archbishop, His Grace Stephen Kazimba, was in my district and he emphasised the same matter.

I am happy that he praised you for the statement that you made to the western world that as a country, we do not condone gay activities. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, if it is procedurally right - you know, as we speak, the Committee on Education and Sports is quite overwhelmed. They have so many Bills and reports yet this is very urgent.

Therefore, I would like to request that if it is okay, you form an Ad hoc committee to handle that issue urgently. Let the committee invite witnesses and officials from all those big schools whose names are listed. Let the committee visit those schools so that they come up with a report to save our country. I request your guidance, Mr Speaker. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Before I guide, let us have Hon. Afidra and then UWOPA.

2.30

MR RONALD AFIDRA (NRM, Lower Madi County, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to, again, congratulate you for the global utterances on behalf of this country, more so in your communication in regard to the issue of schools.

As we talk, our children are at home and for most of us who are within towns where we have abundant use of electricity and television, this is one of the entryways for these different messages aimed at changing the fabric of our culture and tradition.

My concern is, could the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), that controls most of these television stations, bring to book these different television stations that expose our children to gay tendencies, especially using cartoons? They are actually trying to target children, who are the foundation for our future.

In some kindergarten schools, these issues are being addressed in some of their teaching documents. My concern is, can we bring this issue to the attention of UCC such that they control the exposure of our children to pornography and many such aspects?

Lastly, there is concern in Uganda about the Uganda National Examinations Board PLE results. Could the minister provide information as to when these results will be released? Parents are expectant and soon, schools are opening. As such, there will be pressure on parents to look for schools for their children.

My concern is, the more they delay without information - Because last week, they said the results would come out on Friday but they postponed it indefinitely without any further communication. Can we have clarification on that?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government Chief Whip, consult on the matter and in case you get an answer, you can – I had allowed the Chairperson, Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA) and then the chairperson, ethics forum.

2.33

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Before I comment on the issue of the LGBTQ in this country, allow me to remind the committee that last week, the presiding officer, the Rt Hon. Speaker Anita Among, indicated that tomorrow, Wednesday, the Committee on Education and Sports should bring that report. The report is in regard to the motion that I presented in this House concerning school fees; so that we can debate it alongside the statutory instruments that the Ministry of Education and Sports issued. I hope that will be done.

Secondly, it is extremely unfortunate that a godly country like Uganda can sit back and see various NGOs promoting an act that is against the order of nature.

Mr Speaker, Parliament, in its wisdom, the Ninth Parliament passed a Bill, which unfortunately, was “technically” knocked out in the courts of law. That said, we cannot sit back and watch. We have had NGOs like the Sexual Minorities Uganda, whose activities and offices were known. The NGO Board suspended the activities of this NGO. However, we have another one calling themselves a consortium of these NGOs dealing with the same activity. This is the top body.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has been following up on these matters. There is a matter in court regarding the Sexual Minorities Uganda. Mr Speaker, even courts are being threatened; the case cannot progress. This Parliament must provide leadership.

I want to thank you for your statements and I want to request colleagues that let us not shy away. It is a shame. I shared a video yesterday, and you have seen that schools in the UK are supposed to be teaching children about LGBTQ (homosexuality) - if I can make it brief. We have international schools in this country and the children that go to these international schools are our children.

Mr Speaker, are we not indirectly having this so-called relationship education introduced in our country through these international curriculums? I want to request that we have a motion before you. I beg that that motion is brought to this House, we debate it and come up with recommendations that will guide us on how we can move forward.

For humanity to go on, we cannot afford seeing children – Some of you have seen two men having children and we have seen some of them here. I have a case before me, Mr Speaker. Somebody goes and picks a girl from the village, brings her here, produces children with her and takes away the children because he is gay. The police decide to imprison this innocent mother because the mother is following up her two babies. One is four years and the other, I think, was three years. This case was reported to me last year.

The Uganda Police Force, the Judiciary and this Parliament must all stand firm against homosexuality in this country. *(Applause)* I want to call upon colleagues here - even in this Parliament, we have people who are sympathetic to these fellows. I want to warn you that I will mention you here. You have children, you have a family, and you cannot afford to destroy other people's families. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

2.38

MR JAMES NSABA BUTURO (NRM, Bufumbira County East, Kisoro): Mr Speaker, first of all, I appeal to Members to recognise your leadership in matters to do with immorality in this country. You have done exceptionally well, not only here but on the international stage. *(Applause)*

Having said that, the truth of the matter is that our country is in trouble. Foundations that make a nation strong are easily being whittled away day by day. Participants in this decline are some of our people. The truth of the matter, Mr Speaker, is that if we do not do something drastic, this country is going to be taken away from us. This country is going to be in more trouble than we have at the moment.

May I say that if we choose to be silent, the security of this country will be easily compromised. If we choose to be quiet, the stability of this country will be gravely undermined. More so, if we choose to be quiet, other nations that are better organised will take over this nation. The beginnings of a decline that will make this nation absolutely weaker than she is will be more telling than we see now.

Can I suggest, Mr Speaker that you authorise a committee to audit the state of immorality in this nation that will take account of the issues we are raising. What you see in Entebbe is happening everywhere, silently unnoticed. But the nation is gradually becoming weaker and weaker as a consequence of the decline that we see. I think that will address many issues, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank You. Colleagues, the Forum on Ethics and Integrity launched a "State of Morality Report" in Kololo where I attended, and the First Lady was the chief guest. I am reading through the rules to see a way we could find space for them because forums are not recognised under our Rules of Procedure.

Colleagues, allow me close this issue here. I will consult further to give more guidance on how best we can handle it because it is cross-cutting. We are going to consult further and see how best we can guide on this matter.

MATTERS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

2.41

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (DEFENCE) (Mr Jacob Oboth): Mr Speaker, I beg to agree with others and I am speaking as Oboth, the MP from West Budama Central. My woman MP raised the bar high and all other Members are in agreement.

The ethics forum chairperson has equally raised the bar high. If this Parliament acknowledges that what we are dealing with - the social moral issue is of grave concern - we cannot reduce ourselves to lamenters. This House is empowered to do all what it takes.

Since Hon. Sarah Opendi gave the historical background to this Parliament, I am seated next to the champion of the Ninth Parliament in this regard; who is excited and disappointed - Hon. David Bahati. We lost the battle here on the question of quorum. It was not that the content was bad. It was on a technicality that we never had quorum. Hon. Mathias Mpuuga was there and the others.

So, if it is a social moral issue, the law is there to guide because morality in any country - you may not be able to police morals but you can legislate to regulate some unwanted moral conduct, which is of public concern. I needed to be on record.

And if the forum agrees with that, it can be able to sponsor the Bill. I am not saying that as the Ministry of Defence or as Government, we are going to bring the Bill. However, if it is a concern in this House, this House is mandated, under the Constitution, to do whatever it takes to give hope to this country - *(Interjection)* I am the one to decide if I need information. *(Laughter)* Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government Chief Whip, do you have something for us in regard to the release of exams?

2.44

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. As directed by you, I consulted with the Secretary of the Uganda National Examinations Board and wish to report as follows:

1. The date and day for the release of PLE results has not yet been set.
2. The Uganda National Examinations Board is set to internally brief the mainstream Minister of Education and Sports tomorrow. It is in that meeting, according to the Secretary, where the day and date will be set for the release of PLE results, but he also stated that it will most likely be before the end of this week. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Government Chief Whip.

2.45

MR ROBERT MIGADDE (NRM, Buvuma Islands County, Buvuma): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am rising on a matter of national importance and this concerns the drug stock-outs in all health facilities in Buvuma.

We last got the second cycle from the National Drug Authority in October; and since late November, we have not had drugs, even the essential drugs like Panadol, Amoxicillin, Flagyl and so on are not available. The Committee on Health was able to visit Buvuma late October and also witnessed this

inadequacy. It visited health facilities where medical officers gave testimonies that they are only there to watch patients.

In addition to these shortages, Buvuma is unique because of its geography. So, imagine a situation where one moves from an island to a health facility on another island, and is not able to find even Panadol. Imagine a situation where a mother delivers and is only sent home without any attention, not even Flagyl. My appeal is to the Minister of Health not to give promises, but assurance that they are delivering drugs in the shortest time possible - And it should be this week. I so pray. *(A Member rose.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, you do not access the microphone without my permission. Hon. Gilbert Olanya had come to my office over the same; do you have any additional information regarding this?

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank Hon. Migadde for raising a very important concern. In my district of Amuru, since September up to now, there are no drugs in all the medical facilities.

The medical personnel currently prescribe to patients and they direct them to go and buy drugs from the clinics, and any other sources. This situation is quite alarming.

Let the Ministry of Health and the National Medical Stores help our people. Our people are surviving by the grace of God. There are no drugs and the situation is not good.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Linda, what was your issue? Is it related to this?

MS LINDA IRENE: Yes, it is related and in Fort Portal and Kabarole, the district chairperson of Kabarole is threatening to close all health centres because they are operating without drugs.

So, this is a serious issue, which is concerning the entire country and the Ministry of Health needs to do something. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Health from Fort Portal. Your Woman MP has presented a case. So, kindly-

2.50

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (PRIMARY HEALTH CARE)

(Ms Margaret Muhanga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would also like to thank honourable colleagues for raising this concern because it really concerns all of us.

However, I would like to state, first of all, that the National Medical Stores (NMS) does send messages to all of us, Members of Parliament. I would like to ask those of you who do not get these messages of deliveries in your constituencies to, kindly, give me your numbers and I give them to the NMS –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, listen to the minister. She is just introducing her answer. Honourable minister, you are protected.

MS MUHANGA: Mr Speaker, if somebody does not get these messages, I undertake to take the whole call log of Parliament so that they can get information about what has been taken to their constituency.

For Hon. Gilbert Olanya, it is not possible that the entire Amuru District has never got medicines. I can give you the breakdown. If you allow me, tomorrow, I can bring the breakdown of what has been delivered and signed for by the district.

The other issue, Mr Speaker, is that I want to concede that stock-outs in all health centres across the board, including Mulago, are endemic. One, Government hospitals are overwhelmed by the numbers. We are really overwhelmed. Last week, I was in a hospital - and just to look at the number of diabetic people who had come for medicines and the amount of money we send to these health centres, you really wonder.

As Parliament, we need to work on the health sector – to appropriate more funds,

especially for medicines and also to advocate, as Members of Parliament, for primary health care for people. Seventy five per cent of the diseases we are treating in hospitals are non-communicable, meaning we could avoid them.

We need to sensitise our people to live in cleaner environments, avoid stagnant waters in the communities and eat healthy foods such that we avoid non-communicable diseases.

The other issue I wanted to raise, Mr Speaker, to most of our Members here is that we need transparency in all we do. One day, just go to a health centre in your community and take that initiative and ask them if they have been receiving drugs or not. They will show you how much they have received, the number of people that took these drugs and how many they have treated. It is not that nobody is getting treated. It is just that we get stock-outs because of the overwhelming numbers.

I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, let us make it very easy. Honourable minister, tomorrow, I will give you space here to lay on the Table proof of supply and delivery of drugs to Buvuma, Amuru and Fort Portal because an SMS is not a drug. *(Laughter)*

What the Member was saying, honourable minister - like your own Member of Parliament has said – is that the chairperson LCV, who is on the ground, is complaining. So, honourable minister, do you think it is possible for National Medical Stores to provide you a list - because they should be having it – of delivery for the whole country and we submit it here tomorrow? Please, lay it on Table tomorrow -

Honourable colleagues, a point of clarification only applies when a Member is holding the Floor. Once you do not have a Member on the Floor, the point of clarification does not apply. I am the one holding the Floor, you cannot seek clarification from me. *(Laughter)*

Tomorrow, the minister will lay on the Table all the supplies made. Thank you. Hon. Macho?

2.54

MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia): Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of national importance for the people who seem to be voiceless.

Mr Speaker, the Uganda Police Force has a savings scheme called Exodus SACCO, which was formed to help our brothers and sisters in the police force to save. As a result, almost every police personnel was forced to save in it.

I brought here a matter last year, in October, whereby most police personnel were complaining of not accessing their savings and the Speaker, the Rt. Hon. Anita Among, directed that the Minister of Internal Affairs should bring a report concerning this money that the police officers have been denied, yet they are forced to save.

Before the report is brought, Mr Speaker, again, the same Exodus SACCO has introduced a new policy that forces every person in the police force saving with the SACCO, to save 50 per cent of their income for retirement, without the consent of the members. Moreover, most members have got loans and are not even able to save a quarter of their earnings.

Mr Speaker, owing to the pain, which the police personnel of this country are experiencing, I, therefore, request for an audit report of Exodus SACCO and pray that the forceful saving must stop -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, just wait a bit. I guided some time back on matters of national importance. These are issues for which you have all the information, which are clear and explicit.

Now, you can see the time we have. Please!

MR MACHO: Mr Speaker, I am very sorry. My sister was looking at me with a kind eye and that is why I brought that matter. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, this is a very serious matter. As I talk, we have many police officers who are stressed and some have divorced. They do not know how their children will go back to school

because already, the money has been removed from their accounts by force.

I, therefore, pray that;

1. The forceful remittances for retirement – since they are public officers and have their packages – must stop with immediate effect.
2. My request for the audit of the Exodus SACCO – that the Speaker requested for – should be brought by the Minister of Internal Affairs as quickly as possible.

The people of Bukedea, thank you for voting very well. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague. I would really be shocked if anyone can direct a 50 per cent mandatory saving of one's salary. That is criminal.

Government Chief Whip, let the Minister of Internal Affairs, tomorrow, come and respond to this issue and also lay on the Table the audit reports of Exodus SACCO. If we find that it is true, that has to stop right away. It is not sustainable.

Hon. Dr Abed Bwanika?

2.58

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance in regard to the boda boda industry and the high cost of acquiring a licence for a boda boda rider in this country.

Mr Speaker, there is a big outcry in this country. For one to access a licence to ride a boda boda, they must be in possession of an average of Shs 300,000, including Shs 135,000 for a licence. This is the same amount of money that an applicant licensee for a motor vehicle also pays.

Mr Speaker, every three months in this nation, there is an operation targeting the boda boda industry. Previously, there was an operation, which targeted and required a reflector for

every boda boda cyclist. And they bought it, including us Members of Parliament, who bought for them.

Currently, there is a new operation targeting a driver's license. When a riders license – (*Interjection*)– it is called a driver's license. If you go there, it is the same; and I am using that knowingly. It is a driver's license. When they apprehend these *boda boda* cyclists, they have to pay between Shs 100,000 and Shs 200,000 to the police to get their motorbikes back. This has crippled this industry. This industry employs most of our youth and currently, they do not have employment because of that; and it has caused insecurity.

Mr Speaker, my prayers are that the government suspends the operation requiring these licenses from the *boda boda* cyclists right now and gives them a grace period of six months for them to be able to acquire these licenses.

Secondly, Mr Speaker-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, a Member is entitled to his views here. (*Applause*)

DR BWANIKA: Mr Speaker, my second prayer –(*Interruption*)

MR CHEMASWET: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The honourable member is a doctor with a PhD, a learned doctor and legislator who understands that matters of law cannot be negotiated; issues to do with driving cannot be negotiated. Is it in order to say that riding a motorbike belongs to a poor person? Is it in order for him to allege that we should suspend the issuing of driving licenses for motorbikes? No. Are you in order, doctor –(*Laughter*)– my former political party president, are you really in order?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, for the record of Parliament, Hon. Dr Abed Bwanika is not a PhD holder; he is a veterinary doctor. So I would like to first correct you; it seems you do not know him well.

Secondly, a Member is entitled to his opinion, and that is why the Minister is supposed to respond and then as the House, we adopt a

position we believe is fairer. So, the colleague is in order. Proceed and conclude.

DR BWANIKA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. When I went to school, they taught me the difference between suspension and saying, “No license”; I would help my colleague in that area. I am calling for suspension of licencing for six months so that these *boda boda* cyclists can find time to acquire licenses.

Secondly, my prayer is that the government should review these licence fares for the *boda boda* cyclists so that the fare is reduced and made manageable for these *boda boda* cyclists in the country. I so pray.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister for Works.

3.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Mr Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, Dr Bwanika for the observations and suggestions. I know it will take a bit of time to really come and explain why the government is doing what it is doing. But in a nutshell, I want to kindly advise my honourable colleagues that let us not be populist on issues that are risky and which are meant to tame a department in our society, which has caused mayhem in Mulago Hospital.

If I took you now, Mr Speaker, to our emergency unit and you see the people who have lost limbs, thanks to these reckless *boda boda* cyclists, the majority of them are good but a group of them are reckless and we are taming the reckless ones.

Mr Speaker, I would like to bring in details and there are so many things. So, again, my emphasis is that let us separate populism from what is practically good for all of us. So, I will bring a detailed report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister, there is nothing populist about what the Member has raised. The moment you charge high fees, then *boda boda* cyclists will go underground; they will run away from

licensing. I do not agree with him on the issue of suspending and all, but the main point he has raised is: why are you charging me, the owner or driver of a commercial vehicle, the same amount as a boda boda rider?

He is saying that the most important point here is to revise the fees; make them fair so that you attract *boda boda* cyclists to pay for licenses. If you keep it high - most of them are not riding on their own. So, I think you need to pick that point of the fees being high and look at it, honourable minister.

MR ECWERU: I will bring a report here, in which we shall objectively take your guidance.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Please, do so in one week. Hon. Jesca Ababiku.

3.06

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. The matter of national importance I am raising is the increasing rate of blindness in my district, which is affecting both children and adults. My health unit and the referral hospital in charge of this matter cannot handle the magnitude. Mengo Hospital tried to help my people, and within two days of assessment, 115 People were discovered to be in an acute state. Mengo Hospital could not continue helping our people.

My prayers are that:

1. The Ministry of Health should visit Adjumani District to comprehensively establish the root causes of the increasing blindness in my district.
2. The Ministry of Health equips the health care unit in my district so that many of the people, who are now patients, can be helped rather than always referring them to regional health facilities. More disabled people are emerging in my district because of the high rate of blindness. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, we seem to be having a difficult situation in Adjumani. The colleague needs help for her people.

3.08

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (PRIMARY HEALTH CARE) (Ms Margaret Muhanga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and thank you, Hon. Jesca Ababiku, for that question. I promise to link you -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Switch on your microphone, honourable minister.

MS MUHANGA: I promise and undertake to link you with the Ministry of Health staff to move with you to Adjumani to find out the cause of this blindness. It has not been brought to my attention, but I am glad that you have raised it today. At least by next week, if you are free, they could travel with you. If you are not, they will still go and meet your personal assistant and go to all the areas you have mentioned and find out what is causing this blindness. I thank you, Mr Speaker and the Member.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ababiku is the chairperson of the sectoral committee. She is going to be busy. I hope linking up with the district health officer of Adjumani will help you much quicker.

3.10

MS SUSAN ABEJA (Independent, Woman Representative, Otuke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am rising on a matter of national importance regarding the National Agriculture Advisory Services (NAADS) provision to my district. I received a call from NAADS in August that I should write a letter requesting for sunflower and soya seeds. I wrote the letter and a copy is here. However, NAADS supplied seeds that had issues. I do not know whether the seeds were rotten or they were past season because when people planted, the seeds did not germinate.

Last season, we encountered hardships during cultivation; there was no rain in the first season.

The only hope my people had was in the second season. But now they have wasted my people's time. They did not invest anything. Right now, they do not have school fees for their children and I have two prayers:

1. To provide us with the seeds this coming season because the money was given to them. If they did not pay the supplier, where did they take the money? We want that to be clarified.
2. I also request them to compensate my farmers for the loss.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Government Chief Whip, the Minister of Agriculture moved out.

3.12

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. This is an issue that requires a response from a competent authority, which is the Ministry of Agriculture. However, I undertake, on behalf of the Frontbench, to inform the minister to either come to Parliament or link up with you and an explanatory note is offered. However, we apologise to the people of Otuke for the seeds that were supplied but could not germinate. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Government Chief Whip, the Member needs action and not an explanation. That is what she requested for. You do not need come back here. Link up with the Member and arrange a meeting with the people responsible so that this is ironed out. If the Member is dissatisfied, she will come back here.

3.13

MR EDSON RUGUMAYO (NRM, Youth Representative, Western): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I rise on a matter of national importance in regard to the regulations meant to bring into effect the provisions of the PPDA Act. Section 50(1) of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets

Act of 2003 provides for preference schemes to our locally manufactured goods and local consultants. This is intended to facilitate their development by giving them a competitive advantage in public procurements. The same section provides for reservation schemes to particular sectors of our population in the country.

In the 10th Parliament, out of your profound wisdom, you found it important to justify the need for the provisions under Section 59(b). The Act gives specific mandate to the PPDA authority to specify particular businesses or public procurement contracts that are subject to these reservation schemes. The purpose of this is to facilitate or to promote the participation of the youths, the women and persons with disabilities in public procurements.

Under the same Act, the ministry is mandated to draft these regulations and issue them. However, up to today, we are approaching midterm - the 11th Parliament - but these regulations have not been issued.

My humble prayers are that:

1. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development updates this House on the progress made in drafting these regulations;
2. That Parliament urges the Ministry of Finance to advise the ministry to make wide consultative meetings with the youth, the women and persons with disabilities because they are the intended beneficiaries of these provisions. They should consult with them so that they can make good regulations;
3. The Speaker urges the ministry to expedite the process of making these regulations so that the young people can benefit from these public procurement contracts, as a vision in the Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Act.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, since the Member has used strong language of asking the Speaker, honourable minister can you save me?

3.16

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PRIVATISATION AND INVESTMENT) (Ms Evelyn Anite):

Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, my young brother, the Member of Parliament for the young people, who is my successor in the youth fraternity, has raised very valid points. As the Minister of State for Finance, I undertake that within two weeks, I will bring an explicit update of the actions that we would have taken to ensure that the regulations are out and issued to the PPDA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Please ensure that this, indeed, is expedited. Honourable colleagues, today I took up many issues because yesterday, I did not give you any space; I wanted to ensure most of them are covered.

3.17

MS PAMELA KAMUGO (NRM, Woman Representative, Budaka): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance concerning the eviction of farmers from wetlands. As you may all be aware, there is a move by the Government to evict all farmers who are using wetlands in the country.

For this matter, I will dwell on Bukedi Subregion, particularly Namatala Wetland, on which the majority of the people of Budaka and Bugwere Subregion draw their livelihood by growing rice, watermelon, vegetables and so on. The different activities are not only sources of food, but also of income. This is used to meet their needs such as school fees for their children. Being a major livelihood source, evicting these people from the wetland is sentencing them to death because they are between a rock and a hard surface because of lack of alternative activities.

Notwithstanding Government's position regarding wetlands, I wish to pray as follows:

1. That the issue of eviction from wetlands should be handled on a case-by-case approach considering contextual issues such as Bugwere's case where people lack ample farmland and are suffering from problems of climate variations.
2. Government should introduce, train and adequately support alternative farming activities for the people currently depending on Namatala Wetland.
3. That Government halts the eviction process for some period to allow the people in Bugwere to engage in the alternative activities, especially in terms of feasibility and productivity.

Lastly, I pray that all farmers who use wetlands be compensated before *-(Interjection)-* it is my opinion. I pray that all farmers who use wetlands be compensated before any eviction takes place so that people can engage in alternative business activities. Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS KAMUGO: Mr Speaker, before I leave, protect some of us. Some colleagues have a vice; when we come and stand to represent our people, there is a way they treat us and make noise. These are our opinions. We are representatives of people; you should learn to respect us. Thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, Hon. Pamela Kamugo is raising a very important point. Whenever you are holding the Floor, you want to be listened to in silence. The best we can do is cheer a colleague to go on. For that matter, we must cheer Hon. Pamela for raising an important issue. *(Applause)* This is on our behalf. I do not see the minister here. Government Chief Whip -

MR OBUA: Mr Speaker, this matter has been one of the main subjects discussed in Cabinet, including yesterday.

First of all, yesterday His Excellency the President indicated that he will be addressing the nation on the subject matter of protecting wetlands soon. He also stated that in his address, we will implement the relevant laws on wetland protection to the dot.

Thirdly, he indicated that there would be some modest and guided exceptions in Bukedi, Busoga and Kigezi subregions. I beg to submit and report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Government Chief Whip, what I have picked from the colleague is that those who have been depending on wetlands are requesting for alternative means of survival supported by the Government. I remember the President has also mentioned this on several occasions.

Therefore, the minister responsible needs to meet with the MPs from the affected areas so that they are updated and have answers for their people. What is usually very important on such matters is consultation and information sharing. The moment you do it, representatives do not usually get problems.

I would encourage you to arrange a meeting between the minister responsible and the MPs from the affected areas for this update, but also, to look at the issue of alternative means of survival for the communities that are going to be evicted from these wetlands. LOP, you had some issues.

3.33

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga): Much obliged, Mr Speaker. My curiosity has been aroused by the rare presence of my elder brother, Hon. Oboth, the Minister of State for Defence. The Speaker is aware that you are very busy and that is why I refer to your rare availability. *(Laughter)*

On 18 January this year, the Uganda Human Rights Commission issued a statement to the effect that they have been following issues within Parliament and from my party, relating to citizens abducted, tortured and those who disappeared.

Sometime last year, Mr Speaker, at your own indulgence and consideration when we raised these matters, upon my deposit with Parliament of a list of 25 persons who have disappeared for more than a year, you ordered for an in-house understanding of the problem.

With your indulgence, you ordered the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Minister for Security and the Government Chief Whip to attend a meeting in your office.

On the fateful day, the Speaker was busy and scheduled another day. On that same day, I turned up with my team, but the Prime Minister and her team never turned up; they did not communicate, not even a message of whatever sort for my comfort and for the people I speak for.

Now that my brother, Hon. Oboth, is here - We have all been concerned about people spreading vices like homosexuality and related matters, but we do not seem to know the individuals in person. However, at least we know the commander; we know the minister commanding people who are abducting citizens. Those who drive drones draw fuel from my brother's ministry and other ministries.

Mr Speaker, now that the human rights commission is communicating that they have confirmed the seven missing persons - but they do not know about the 17; they have tried and cannot tell - they are even confirming that they actually reached out to the families of these missing persons.

Now that the Prime Minister acted so dishonourably by dodging the meeting and even failing to honour a very simple act of courtesy; to communicate to me about her disappearing act, I will show it one of these days that she does not really deserve decorum.

Mr Speaker, in this space, we live by honouring each other even when we disagree. This particular matter is very critical. I need your guidance as to whether I should cede any space and honour to the Prime Minister and her team

and my brother, Hon. Oboth; whether actually, they have discussed this and they chose to disappear and run away from a meeting, and whether she deserves my honourable space and consideration when she and her team rise up on this Floor of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, this is very critical and I hope you are not sending me to another meeting because I will not attend. Not out of disrespect for the Speaker, but out of dishonouring the people that dishonoured my team and I. Mr Speaker, I hope we get space for this more than anything else.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, LOP. Let me first help you on this. I want to formally present my apology to you; I was in the wrong. I got a medical condition which could not allow me to meet people. You know, these days, when you announce that you have a certain medical condition, even your wife can abandon you. I was in isolation.

At that time, I remember Gen. David Muhoozi was in fact the first in the meeting room. Hon. Oboth called me and later, you also called me. I made a mistake because I informed the Government Chief Whip that I was not feeling fine and therefore, the meeting could not take place. So, for all you wanted to use to ban the Prime Minister, kindly spare your young brother who has said, “Forgive me.” *(Laughter)*

I request you to find it in your heart to forgive me on that. On Tuesday, at 10 a.m., if you still trust me - I know that after all these, I might have also lost your trust - but if I still have an iota of trust, on Tuesday at 10 a.m., the team comes and we meet and we sort this issue once and for all. We will not come out of the boardroom without a solution to this issue and at 2 p.m., we will report to this House on that same day. I request you, the Leader of the Opposition. *(Applause)*

MR MPUUGA: Much obliged, Mr Speaker. I hope that when we return – because it is the Speaker’s admission, which is an act of humility and acceptable. *(Applause)*

However, in the absence of the Speaker, these are colleagues. None of them could “hazard” a message to me and I took it personal upon them.

Also, Mr Speaker, while I will honour your invitation, I need to bring it to the attention of these honourable colleagues that the abductions are still on-going. Yes, on Sunday, a taxi was stopped at Maya from Mbarara. A young man called Anthony Agaba was picked out; his whereabouts are not known to his family and close friends.

So, Hon. Oboth and your team, you are still giving out fuel for drones; you are still repairing drones to abduct citizens. That should also come to bare in that meeting to account for Anthony Agaba. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Oboth, do you want to account for Anthony Agaba? - *(Laughter)* - otherwise, I do not want you to pre-empt the meeting of Tuesday, whereby we are reporting on the Floor at 2 p.m.

No, I understand why the Leader of the Opposition was not happy. - No, Hon. Byanyima, you – Okay.

MR BYANYIMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish on behalf of this House to express my sincere appreciation to you. *(Applause)* The humility to say “Sorry,” and some funny people cannot say “Sorry”? *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, with due respect, the words, “Thank you” are not adequate enough to express my gratitude. You are a true gentleman and a Speaker. I thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, there is a consultation of three minutes, which I talked about with the Leader of the Opposition and the Government Chief Whip on a very important matter. Please do not leave here. I suspend the House for only three minutes. I had requested them earlier on. I will be back after three minutes.

(The House was suspended at 3.32 p.m.)

(On resumption at 3.36 p.m., the Deputy Speaker presiding_)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, let us resume our seats. I have colleagues who still have issues, but let us do them tomorrow. I have taken note. Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS

TAX EXPENDITURES REPORT FOR THE PERIOD JULY 2022 TO DECEMBER 2022, FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/2023

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development?

3.37

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PRIVATISATION AND INVESTMENT) (Ms Evelyn Anite): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay tax expenditures report for the period July 2022 to December 2022 for the Financial Year 2022/2023.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The report is referred to the Committee on Budget for processing.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE DELAYED PAYMENT OF CONTRACTORS HIRED BY THE UGANDA NATIONAL ROADS AUTHORITY

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson? This is a report which was presented some time back and we had some issues. So, chairperson, I do not expect you to last more than 10 minutes on this issue because you had touched most of the introductory parts. So, go straight.

3.38

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE (Mr Robert Kasolo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to lay on

the Table the minutes of the meetings. I will go straight to the issues.

This is a report of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure on the delayed payment of contractors hired by the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA). We read the introductory part. Probably, for purposes of people getting the basics, I request that I go through the introduction and then the observations and recommendations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, you have 10 minutes strictly.

MR KASOLO: Mr Speaker, on 4 May 2022, Hon. Richard Sebamala, MP Bukoto Central in Masaka District, raised a matter of national importance in regard to budget suppression, particularly in the road sector, where he stated that it had caused the accumulation of arrears to the tune of Shs 334 million per day from obligations owed to the contractors hired by UNRA –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, can we listen to the chairperson in silence.

MR KASOLO: The Speaker directed the Committee on Physical Infrastructure to investigate the matter. Rule 187(f) and Rule 189 provide for the jurisdiction and mandate of the Committee -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Chairman, on 15 September 2022, you presented this report. We found factual errors in the report you presented. Go to the part which you corrected.

MR KASOLO: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Start from observations and we conclude.

MR KASOLO: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Observations and recommendations

by 40 per cent across budget Votes.

On concerns from the House

The main concern from the House, as they were referred to the committee for scrutiny, was delayed payments to contractors leading to high interest charges to the Government.

The committee observed that;

a. There was delay to pay certificates and invoices to contractors hired by UNRA due to revenue shortfall arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused the arrears with attendant interest of Shs 235.6 million per day, contrary to Shs 334 million per day, as stated by Hon. Sebamala; from an obligation of Shs 573.3 billion, as at 11 May 2022.

b. At the end of the Financial Year 2021/22, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development had made effort to release additional Shs 688 billion for various Votes, under which the Ministry of Works and Transport received Shs 132 billion, Ministry of Water and Environment received Shs 110 billion, the Uganda National Roads Authority received Shs 352 and the Uganda Road Fund received Shs 101 billion.

Out of the additional release of Shs 688 billion, the roads subsector received Shs 586 billion.

c. The committee observed that since interim payment certificates and invoices are raised from time to time, the obligation owed to UNRA by 27 September 2022 was Shs 832 billion out of which local contract certificates and invoices amounted to Shs 115 billion.

The committee further observed that;

i. There were delays to pay outstanding certificates and invoices due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which affected revenue collection. This, consequently, led to budget suppression

ii. UNRA'S delay to pay the arrears would continue to cause the Government to incur nugatory expenditure.

iii. The non-operationalisation of the Uganda Road Fund to the second generation by the Government has been the cause of the piecemeal funding to the road sector and delayed payment to contractors.

The committee, therefore, recommends that;

a) To avoid the payment of accumulated interest, the Government should endeavour to prioritise funds meant for meeting contractual obligations because interest rates on arrears of certificates and invoices are quite high.

b) In order to curb the on-going haemorrhage of financial resources from the Government, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should endeavour to honour its commitments to clear the debts owed to contractors as a first call in the first quarter of the following financial year.

c) The Government should privatise operationalisation of the Uganda Road Fund as a second generation fund to address the issue of suppression in the funding of road maintenance.

4.2 Another stakeholder that we met was the Uganda National Association of Building and Civil Engineering Contractors (UNABCEC). They gave reasons, but the committee is also writing the observations –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Chairman, read the report. You do not present your statements.

MR KASOLO: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

i) The 40 per cent budget cut to MDAs responsible for infrastructure development significantly affected the planned output which, consequently, led to the

inefficiency and ineffectiveness.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the Government increases the funding to ministries that were affected by the 40 per cent cut in the previous year, 2021/2022, in order to cover for the deficit accrued in the infrastructure.

- ii. The committee observed that UNABCEC, being a bridge between the construction industry and the Government, has been overwhelmed by complaints from its members, accruing from delayed payments that have consequently led to hindrances by contractors to perform on-going works and other obligations.

The committee recommends that the Government clears all outstanding obligations to UNABCEC members and other contractors owed. This will also go a long way in ensuring that the good working relationship between UNABCEC and the Government is maintained.

- iii. The committee further observed that some of the UNABCEC members' accounts had been frozen by the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) due to accumulation of tax penalties as a result of delays to remit VAT with penalties and a monthly two per cent interest on tax arrears.

- iv. The committee observed that commercial banks, which are the main financiers of the construction industry, are losing confidence in Government-funded projects due to contractual breach by the Government, making the projects less competitive and very expensive. Further, the pressure from commercial banks on loans undertaken is overwhelming.

The committee recommends and urges the Government to clear the outstanding obligations owed to construction contractors.

4.3 General observations and recommendations

Need to protect local contractors

The committee appreciated the concern of UNABCEC in regard to the need to protect the local contractors. It was noted that delayed payment by the Government to local contractors had led to the collapse of many local companies.

The committee observed that the collapse - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Chairman, you switch the microphone on. You can fold the file to make it easy.

MR KASOLO: The committee observed that the collapse of the contractors derailed Uganda's journey towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 1, 8 and 9 as well as contradicting the objectives of Vision 2040 and NDP III. SDG 1 advocates for no poverty by 2030 and SDG 8 for decent work and economic growth within the same period.

The collapse of contractors leaves some of them without sources of income, indebted and their former employees jobless. This predisposes both categories of people to poverty.

The collapse of the contractors also jeopardises Uganda's realisation of SDG 9, which advocates for industrial innovation and infrastructural development by 2030. The fact is that the contractors are unable to deliver on expected contracts and infrastructural development is delayed.

The committee recommended that Uganda should at all times be seen to be committed to attaining the SDGs to which it is a signatory and achieving its objective in Vision 2040 and NDP III.

In conclusion, the committee noted that the delay in the clearance of the certificate and invoices was caused majorly by the underperformance of revenue collection resulting from the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic which led to budget suppression in various votes.

However, the Government made efforts to clear some of the obligations when the revenue performance improved. The Government is, therefore, urged always to honour its obligations in time in order to avoid accrued interest and nugatory expenditure.

The Government should also prioritise operationalisation of the Road Fund as a second-generation fund to address the issues of suppression in the funding of road maintenance.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this report be adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Chairperson of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure. It will be adopted after debate. Remain seated here because we still need you; you will respond to some issues.

Colleagues, this is a direct matter; this is a direct matter; not much. Maybe most of the issues will be for emphasis. So, let me start with Hon. Tebandeke.

3.51

MR CHARLES TEBANDEKE (NUP, Bbale County, Kayunga): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity granted. I appreciate the Chairperson of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure for the report which is well elaborated. I have also noted the enormous challenges that affected the performance of the physical infrastructure action onto our roads.

Mr Speaker, to my dismay, the committee did not note the comparison between the action taken on a number of resolutions we passed here. Also, the matters of accountability are not yet well elaborated; we admit that.

However, Mr Speaker, I remember in August last year, I raised a matter of urgent national importance over the same and over my road, the Mbale-Kayunga-Galilaya Road and the only affected area just on the portion of the road - four kilometres out of 89 kilometres that are affected was submerged by water from the tributary of River Nile and the swamp and you did direct the honourable minister –

and unfortunately he is a potential minister. I may not bring a motion to censure to him –(Laughter)- but you directed him to go and visit the area and carry out a survey on how to help the people over there.

Mr Speaker, we have lost four people on just the four-kilometre section of the road that was submerged by water.

Now, if the able Government, as you call it, cannot work on the section of only four kilometres that was affected out of the 89 kilometres where people are suffering with dust and potholes, how are we going to convince Ugandans? Much as the finances have been affected, even the minister failed to go on the ground. What are we going to tell our people?

Mr Speaker, this matter is beyond just lamenting, but I am resorting to shading tears over here; in this House. I beg that the minister today gives me a direct answer; a take-home answer to my people who have lost their dear ones - who have lost their daughters, who are failing to go and achieve any would-be services across because the water submerged the road.

Can this Government really show us mercy and give us an answer to explain to the people who are suffering, much as the finances are low. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I remember I was here and you promised – you said, “Galilaya is just on your way that you would pass by as you rush to the other side.” What happened? Do you want a Member to cry here?

3.54

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Mr Speaker, the truth is that a technical team went there. The truth also is that I wish I knew what the colleague was raising; a comprehensive report is in our office. Among the many things we have just discussed before we came here are some of those very serious commitments; how we can sequence them against the limited resources.

I undertook even to call comrade Lugoloobi who also has been - just like the colleague here - pushing for that particular section of the road. And he knows, and I can tell you I wish my colleague had just called and asked whether they had forgotten and then I would have told them how much we have moved.

We have endeavoured to move - we have so many things. It is just that they are quite a number of them that we are trying to sequence and we are trying to take advantage of the present time as we are budgeting. That is the position.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR ECWERU: But I also wanted to request, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I give you space later and you –

MR ECWERU: Mr Speaker, before you do that, I wanted to request colleagues; this thing of censure, everybody –*(Laughter)*– you know Sir, let me say this: you see, there was this kraal where everybody including herdsmen were carrying pangas and the assumption of the cows was that they were all for slaughter. And that caused the cows to make the milk to disappear and many other things also disappeared. I really wanted to advise that you allow the cows to produce their milk. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, I want to reassure you that there is no threat on ministers. It is up to you as an individual to ensure that you behave the way you are expected to behave. *(Applause)*. It is not about Cabinet; it is about the decorum of this House and it is about the individual capacity of each one of us.

Honourable minister, since you made a promise that you are going to visit Galilaya, I request you go to Galilaya. You made that promise, call on the MPs, give them a date and you visit Galilaya.

MR ECWERU: Tomorrow, Mr Speaker, I will be in Sironko, Bukwo and then Aleles, which are on the eastern leg. I have been reminded that I could go to Namutumba also, so that I complete the Mount Elgon area and Kapchorwa region. You know very well the kind of projects that are going on there and the controversy surrounding them. So, my officer requested me to go and get an on-the-spot understanding of what is going on. So, this week I do not want to deceive this House –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, it can be next week, but visit.

MR ECWERU: That can be done.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You get in touch with the minister and – *(Member rose)* - Hon. Kibalya, is that a point of procedure?

MR KIBALYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The procedural matter I am rising is that we appreciate the minister will visit those places. But, Mr Speaker, the minister can visit the place and leave promises and tell those people that we shall work on this and we shall work on that. Now the burden will fall on the MP because when they fail to deliver, the challenge would be on the MP and people will keep saying, “The Minister came and assured us...” and the opponent would say, “Your MP is not helping to deliver.”

For example, I moved with the minister for two days, day and night, in our area and people got excited. It is now two years down the road, but with nothing on the ground.

Therefore, would it not be procedurally right that when the minister visits a given area, he comes back and either gives you a copy of their action plans or something, to save the MPs in that area? Otherwise, some of us - he is there and he is one I moved with, but two years down the road, nothing is on the ground.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable, first of all, you should have appreciated the minister for coming. It is very

important; it is not an easy job. When we are here doing things - I know where we usually talk on the phone with Hon. Ecweru, you know, at 1a.m., you hear he is in areas of very difficult terrain, but visiting MPs. So, really we should appreciate him; number one, the fact that he came on the ground.

Then two, you see, when he comes, then prioritisation now becomes the main issue. It is very important that as the House, we get something we can be remembered for, clearly. And one of those things would be working on our roads, especially those rural impassable roads. I am telling you, colleagues, they would bring you back here - if your people can find ways of having their children go to school or delivering their produce to the markets and all that.

Therefore, as we go into the budgeting process/period, can we as the House, decide that we should focus on infrastructure? Okay? Work with the Government and we say, "Let us allocate more money to especially rural roads." I have seen videos from my constituency; he came though since he came, the bridge is not yet done. Okay, we are still surviving. But I am happy he came and I can refer to his visit by saying, "Hon. Ecweru you came; please, let us ensure that we get money to work on the Nchwera Bridge, connecting Ruhinda North and Ruhinda Central." Therefore, to me, he needs our support. He gives us support by coming to the constituencies. Let us give him support by allocating more money to the sector.

4.01

MR VINCENT OBONG (Independent, Lira West Division, Lira City): Yes, thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me a chance.

Let me start by first of all, thanking the chair for presenting the report. I have noticed with concern what the chairman stated in the report that Uganda, as a country, we are losing Shs 230,600,000 per day in interest.

That to me means that if we are losing that on a daily basis, it means in a month, we shall have lost Shs 7 billion. And I am only wondering if

we can advise the finance ministry to make sure that they put into the budget when the matter - or bring a supplementary budget request for us to pass so these arrears are cleared because as a country, we are losing a lot of money daily. Shs 7 billion can do very many kilometres of roads for us, which we are losing, as a country.

Secondly, the people whom we are talking about here are our own people. We are talking about local contractors and these are people who are basically employing our people, 100 per cent. They are providing our people with jobs. Now we are incapacitating them and yet we know because of the COVID-19 pandemic, they are also distressed.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, it would be imperative for us to vehemently state here that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should be guided on how we should manage the budget once passed. This is because while, year in, year out, we appropriate money to run these ministries, every ministry in this country keeps complaining about the money because it is not released by finance. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Martin Muzaale, you have a point of procedure?

MR MUZAALE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for the report presented. The report is about infrastructure, but we also have other entities where we have local contractors that have supplied. We have the UPDF; everyone is crying there. We have the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Local Government and so many other entities.

Mr Speaker, the procedural matter is whether it would not be right for us to have a report that also covers the rest of other entities for us to help all other contractors. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Muzaale. This will be covered in the report - I have said we will put it on the Order Paper tomorrow; the report of the Committee on Budget on the performance of the Budget, in

which we will have the component of arrears. Okay. And under arrears, we will be able to know that the Government has managed to settle these arrears and these others have not been settled, which would help us to know the state of indebtedness to our suppliers and contractors. Okay.

Hon. Bataringaya. Oh, wait on because I had already allowed Hon. Oguzu Lee.

4.05

MR LEE OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Mr Speaker, thank you for that strong memory. *(Laughter)* I would like to observe that we can sit here and aspire that there should be more resources going to the road sector.

However, if this Parliament is not decisive enough to address the issue of domestic resource mobilisation, then those will be very wild wishes.

We have sat in this House and passed budgets, but without putting much emphasis on how we get money. I would have loved the report on tax expenditures to be presented here because that is one of the fundamental issues that is causing leakage in revenue.

Right now, this country loses or forgoes Shs 2.8 trillion in tax exemptions that are cleared by this House. So, where do you expect the money for the roads to come from? You are paying tax for Bujagali, which is making profit. You have exempted the BIDCOs that are making billions of profits and you have given exemptions and tax incentives to companies that are foreign; the benefits not even going to the local people. So, where do these resources come from? Therefore, first, we must address the issue of resource mobilisation; we must help the Government to mobilise resources.

Mr Speaker, it will interest you to note that Uganda annually loses more than US\$500 million in illicit financial flows. And these illicit financial flows are not addressed. So, how is the House going to help the contractors to deal with issues of delayed certificate clearance?

A few days ago, we received a report from COSASE, which indicated that there is serious operational inefficiency in UNRA. We have had cases of money being diverted from one project to another without approvals. So, I would have expected that after, this process, maybe there must be a treasury memorandum, which collectively deals with all these issues.

Ideally, if it were up to me, actually UNRA would go to the Ministry of Works and Transport because they have demonstrated, based on that report, that they cannot be able to fix a number of things.

Right now to go to Arua, you have to take many hours because the segment of the road from Oloya to Pakwach is just impassable yet we worked on this road some few years ago. So, where is the quality assurance?

If you go to the many roads that UNRA has constructed, you will find that they are not even climate resilient and yet we passed a law here to ensure that every MDA must integrate climate change into their programming. All these things are not happening. I do not know if the Committee on Physical Infrastructure is really exercising its oversight role on UNRA. Why is it that these issues are occurring repeatedly?

Mr Speaker, as you rightly observed, as we get to the budget process, let us not just be good at appropriating. Let us first ask where this money is coming from. If we do not address that question, we will continue to lament here and nothing will happen. These ministers will visit and the result will be 'hot air'. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Lee Oguzu has referred to us first getting the tax expenditures report. At the beginning of this session, the minister laid on the Table the tax expenditures report covering the period of July 2022 to December 2022 and we referred it to the Committee on Budget.

However, he raises a very important point. With our tax to GDP ratio still stuck at around 13.3 per cent, we are really not doing well. If we could raise it to at least around 19 per cent, we

would be able to raise another Shs 10 trillion, which would cover most of these issues.

When you look at the kind of budget we get here - when I was reading through and looked at our discretionary budget, out of a budget of around Shs 49 trillion, the discretionary budget will be around Shs 22 to 23 trillion.

This means around Shs 18 trillion is going to debt repayment and then you have statutory expenditures. You find that we are limited in terms of resources. However, we do not want to keep reading the Book of Lamentations. Even yesterday, when he was voting, he read from the Book of Lamentations. That is how he abstained from the vote. The problem with Hon. Oguzu is, when he dreams, he submits the dreams on the Floor.

Honourable, we want to be hopeful. This House must give hope to the nation. How do we appropriate the little resources that we have? We should not lose focus on that.

4.11

MR BASIL BATARINGAYA (NRM, Kashari North County, Mbarara): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. For the record, I would like to say that I chair the Ankole caucus and the issue I am speaking about also concerns you, Mr Speaker.

During the Christmas season, I had the chance of attending functions of many Members of Parliament around the region and I was also in your constituency. I saw how bad your roads are. You might not have a chance to speak here on the Floor of Parliament because you preside over us, but your roads are also badly off. Honourable minister, please attend to the roads of our Rt Hon. Speaker. *(Laughter)*

When you talked about Galilaya, I also have a Galilaya in my area; it is the road between Mbarara and Ibanda. That Galilaya is about 29 miles from Mbarara, there are about six potholes in a space of 100 metres. Vehicles overturn there. Please, preside over UNRA which you supervise.

In addition, the road at Buzibweera–Rutooma Town Council looks like a cloth eaten by rats. These accidents on our roads are sometimes as a result of unmarked roads. Some drivers may have poor sight, but when there is a marked road, it means somebody can keep to his lane. However, you cannot mark a road that looks like a cloth eaten by a rat. I wanted to raise this.

Over the years, they should maintain and mark the roads, like they do on the Entebbe Expressway which is newly constructed, but already, they are remarking it and yet there are many unmarked roads across the country.

I also have a very major murram road from Kakiika in Mbarara to Kachwangobe on the Ruhumba–Kiruhura Road. This road has potholes; a lorry can disappear into the pothole. This road is very big; Kakiika–Kachwangobe via Mutonto-Kyenshama. The LC 3 chairpersons have constantly petitioned me, as a chairman, and I brought them to your office, Mr Speaker, when they complained about these roads.

Lastly, Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: My Chairman of the Ankole caucus, Rule 72 of our Rules of Procedure touch on the content of your submission. The subject matter we are on is very clear, if you read it on the Order Paper - it is a motion for adoption of the report of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure on the delayed payment of contractors. On your side, you do not even have a contractor. Conclude.

MR BATARINGAYA: Mr Speaker, this is what I was concluding with. I am on the Public Accounts Committee and every year, funds are returned from different MDAs to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. These funds could be the ones used to cater for some of these contractors who are not paid.

Therefore, I implore the finance ministry or this House to look into these returned funds because different MDAs return Shs 3 billion, Shs 7 billion, Shs 2 billion and so forth. When

you total up these funds, they are enormous. I think if we committed these funds, they could solve the problem of unpaid contractors. That is my prayer, Mr Speaker.

4.16

MR MAXIMUS OCHAI (NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I, first of all, thank the chairperson of the committee for the report. The report was simple and generally speaking, I found that it adequately addresses the need to prioritise payment of obligations that are currently outstanding.

However, I find space in the report that can actually improve it further and that is on the recommendation pertaining to privatisation of operationalisation of the Road Fund in Uganda.

Mr Speaker, looking back at our history, I find that this recommendation promotes inefficiency in the allocation of our public resources. You will recall that in the early 1990s, at a time when Uganda was suffering or experiencing hyperinflation, a medium term expenditure framework was invented to help link policy, plans and the budget with a view of ensuring not only macroeconomic aggregate discipline, but also allocate efficiency. Lo and behold, we realised - and sustained over a period of time - a low level of inflation.

In 2013, to help us further consolidate that achievement, we introduced the Treasury Single Account – again to ensure that we benefit from the allocative efficiency.

Now, coming back again, with an avenue of distorting what is already performing well will actually drive us back to bad public financial management.

I, therefore, recommend that we amend this recommendation to reflect prioritisation of road maintenance in our budget in the context of the medium-term expenditure framework. That way, we shall achieve not only good motorable roads, but also the macroeconomic stability that is well known for economic growth. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the amendment seconded? The amendment is not seconded. Honourable Minister?

MR ECWERU: Mr Speaker, I have listened very attentively to the comments of the honourable colleague, but it just boils down to one thing: the budget suppression has affected us.

I am happy that this report is coming at a time when we are preparing our budgets. My prayer to the House is that you put your feet down and insist that money goes to work on our roads.

I am also happy to report to you that in the Cabinet – maybe I am not the one supposed to bring it up here. However, a decision has been taken, and particularly under the guidance of His Excellency the President, that the next resource allocation should focus on road maintenance. In the words of the President, “We shall only open new critical projects as an exception.” However, we really want to first inject resources into the maintenance of roads.

I am also happy that this House, in the allocation of even the limited resources that we already have, has given UNRA some money, which it is using to offset this very huge debt – *(Interruption)*

MR SILWANY: Thank you, honourable minister, for giving way. The clarification I seek is that there are several contractors in UNRA who are demanding money. However, in peculiar cases, when you go, as a contractor, and talk to someone, you are paid - but not in normal circumstances.

Honourable Minister, is this true that for you to be paid, after doing work for this Government, you have to go and talk to someone, but the one who will not go will not be paid? They keep on holding that contractor. That is the clarification I wanted to seek from you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Solomon, is it only in UNRA or in Government?

MR SILWANY: Mr Speaker, it is everywhere. In particular, I am addressing the Minister of Works because he is the one present and we are handling contractors. However, it is everywhere and I have evidence, including messages.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, please resume the Floor.

MR ECWERU: Mr Speaker, that sounds quite unfortunate. I will compare notes with my colleague. I want to know the particular contractor who may have benefited from some kind of influence peddling – but it is not the official position.

In a nutshell, I want to say the report of the Committee on Infrastructure – first, I want to say that this Committee on Infrastructure has been very supportive to my sector; so supportive that we have sometimes visited some of the areas to seek concurrence with them. I support and thank them for the paper, and I pray that this Parliament works around the clock to operationalise some of their recommendations. I stand to supervise the implementers.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, clarification goes to the minister. I now put the question that the House adopts the report of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure, on the delayed payment of contractors hired by UNRA.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Report adopted.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, please extract the report and recommendations from the *Hansard* and pass them over to the relevant ministry for action.

Colleagues, we have a lot to do, and we have to finish it. For now – procedure, Hon. Kyooma?

MR KYOOMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is not intended to do anything against your ruling, but rather to bring it to your attention that while the report is elaborate, there are those roads, which were being worked on by

contractors, but were left incomplete.

Nevertheless, the report seems to suggest that the contractors did the work, completed and what was remaining was to be paid for their certificates.

I will state an example of the road connecting Ibanda Municipality to Ibanda North. It stretches from Bisheshe, Bigera, Rwenkobwa, Nyasimbo, Kakinga, Rushango and Kanyarugiri. It was left half-done. The trenches were dug; culverts are in the middle of the road. We have lost lives.

Wouldn't it be a matter of procedure that all these roads, which were left incomplete, be compiled – because you never know, some contractors could have been paid when actually the roads are not done? So, wouldn't it be procedurally right, that all those roads that fall in this category are compiled and the status of payments to the contractors is stated and laid before this House so that we act thereafter? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, honourable minister, I hope you have taken note. Otherwise, this is not a procedural matter. Rule 78(2) is very clear: A procedural matter should be on an issue falling within our Rules of Procedure. This does not fall anywhere, but the minister has taken note – minister, you do not need to respond.

Please take note; it is a serious concern. I know a Member took a shortcut; he passed via the kitchen to deliver what he wanted to deliver. Clerk, I will first handle item 7 before coming back to –

MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION OF
THE MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS
BILL, 2022 AS RETURNED BY HIS
EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister – colleagues, His Excellency the President, using his authority under Article 91 of the Constitution and Rule 143 of our Rules of Procedure, returned this Bill.

Therefore, the honourable minister will have to move a motion because this was a Government Bill. Clerk, you can help him.

4.27

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Mr Martin Mugarra): Thank you, Mr Speaker. A motion to move for the reconsideration of the Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022 as returned by H.E. the President.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is not “motion to move”; you beg to move that the Bill is reconsidered.

MR MUGARRA: I beg to move that the Bill be reconsidered as returned by H.E. the President.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Which Bill, honourable minister?

MR MUGARRA: The Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? It is seconded by Hon. Silwany, the Government Chief Whip, Hon. Oboth, Hon. Oguzu, Hon. Komakech and Hon. Lillian.

Honourable chairperson, this is a returned Bill. The minister had done everything, so, there is no need to speak to the motion.

4.28

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON TOURISM, TRADE AND INDUSTRY (Mr Mwine Mpaka): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the report of the Sectoral Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry on reconsideration of the Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022 as returned by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda, together with the minutes.

Report of the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry on the reconsideration of the Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022 as returned by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda.

Introduction

The Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022 was introduced on 12 July 2022, passed by Parliament on 15 September 2022 and presented to the President of the Republic of Uganda for assent in accordance with Article 91(2) of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda.

The President, however, declined to assent to the Bill and, in a letter dated 3 November 2022, returned it to Parliament for reconsideration in accordance with Article 91(3)(b) of the 1995 Constitution.

On 29 November 2022, the Speaker of Parliament referred the Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022, as returned by the President, to the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry for reconsideration, in accordance with Rule 143(1) and (2) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The committee reconsidered the Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022 taking into consideration the concerns of His Excellency the President and now seeks to report.

Mr Speaker, allow me to take you straight to page 11.

General concerns of the President in reference to the second schedule

In his letter, His Excellency the President stated that before a site is listed as a protected area by the Department of Museums and Monuments and the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, extensive consultation with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development be provided for. This consultation and coordination would enable the implementation of mineral development for industrialisation and the protection of the natural heritage.

The need to further scrutinise the second schedule to the Bill The President stated, as the sixth issue of concern, that there is need to further scrutinise the second schedule of the Bill to ensure that the proposed protected areas and sites do not affect the development

plans of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, and the Government plans as a whole are not derailed.

The committee, therefore, observes that the contradictions, misinterpretations and misleading information in the second schedule undermine the policy and principles upon which the museums and monuments legislation is premised. The Bill is premised on the principles of protection, and preservation of both the cultural and natural heritage of Uganda. It is also the observation of the committee that distortion of intangible heritage has commenced within the museums and monuments legislation itself.

The committee further observes that clause 29(5) and schedule 2 of the Bill are contradictory to the provisions of part five of the Bill. Whereas part five of the Bill envisages strict adherence to Article 26(2)(b) of the 1995 Constitution, the second schedule is declared to constitute “national heritage” protected under the Bill without verification of the process, which was followed prior to such declaration.

The committee further observes that the minister did not present any evidence to the committee to prove that the declarations made under the second schedule of the Bill were done in compliance with Article 28 of the 1995 Constitution, which provides for the right to a fair hearing, a well-protected right in the Constitution and also the cornerstone of the rule of law.

Mr Speaker, on page 16, there is also a selective and discriminatory nature in the declarations. There is also unclear criteria of the declarations of these various sites as monuments.

Committee recommendations

The committee recommends that clause 29(5) and the second schedule to the Bill be deleted to allow for further scrutiny of the schedule to provide accurate and sufficient information, and also to allow the operationalisation of section 29 of the Bill, which subjects declaration of national heritage to Article 26(b) of the 1995 Constitution.

In conclusion, the committee agrees with the recommendations of His Excellency the President that there is need for further scrutiny of the second schedule of the Bill.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the entire second schedule to the Museums and Monuments Bill be deleted and that the same is presented before Parliament by statutory instrument for approval at a time when all specific locations of protected museums, sites and monuments and their details would be provided for by the minister.

This is in line with Rule 143(4) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, which provides for any suggestion relevant to the subject matter of the amendment recommended by the President.

Conclusively, the committee recommends that the Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022, as returned by the President, be passed subject to the proposed amendments hereto attached.

I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable chairperson and committee, for doing a good job.

Honourable colleagues, this is a Bill we considered and had an extensive debate on. I do not know whether you, again, want to debate it at this stage or we go straight to the committee stage. Honourable minister, is there anything you want to say before going?

BILLS COMMITTEE STAGE

THE MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS BILL, 2022

Clause 3

4.35

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON TOURISM, TRADE AND INDUSTRY (Mr Mwine Mpaka): Clause 3: Interpretation

Clause 3 is amended by –

- (a) substituting for the definition of “mineral” the following –

“mineral” means any substance, whether in solid, liquid or gaseous form occurring naturally in or on the earth, formed by or subject to a geological process, but does not include petroleum, as defined under the Petroleum (Exploration, Development and Production) Act, 2013 or substances excluded from the definition of minerals under Article 244(5) of the Constitution;”

- (b) substituting for the definition of “mineral right” the following –

“mineral right” means “a right to prospect, explore or mine for minerals under a prospecting licence, an exploration licence, a retention licence, a large scale mining licence, a medium scale mining licence, a small scale mining licence and an artisanal mining licence;”

Justification

1. To bring the definition in compliance with the Constitution and the Mining and Minerals Act, 2022.
2. To bring the definition into compliance with the Mining and Minerals Act, 2022 by including a medium scale mining licence.

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

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 30

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I think I should make it very easy for the chairperson. There are clauses which are consequential amendments.

So, honourable chairperson, jump those which are consequential amendments and after we have completed the amendments, we will come back to them.

The reason I am insisting on it is that we have not yet made an amendment. So, you cannot make a consequential amendment before the amendment is made by the House. It is not a consequential amendment yet, in the words of our senior, Hon. Oboth. So, clause 92 is a consequential amendment.

Clause 93

MR MWINE: Application of the Mining Act, 2003. Clause 93 is amended in the headnote by substituting for the phrase “Mining Act, 2003” and wherever it appears in the Bill the phrase “Mining and Minerals Act, 2022.”

(B) By substituting for subclause (2) the following; “The holder of the mining right issued under the Mining and Minerals Act, 2022, shall exercise his or her right under the mineral rights subject to the provisions related to a protected area and the protected building”

Justification

- a) The amendment to the headnote is to bring the Museum and Monuments Bill into compliance with the Mining and Minerals Act, 2022, as assented to by the President on 28 October 2020.
- b) The substitution in C is to limit the provision to only a protected area or a protected building, as opposed to the entire Museum and Monuments Bill, and to protect natural heritage, while still restricting mineral rights to a reasonable extent. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable minister, do you have anything to say?

MR MUGARRA: No, I concede.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: This is your proposal because a proposal from the

President is your proposal. So, you do not concede. Honourable members, I now put the question that clause 93 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 93, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule II

MR MWINE: Protected Museum Sites and Monuments Schedule (2) of the Bill is deleted to provide extensive consultation with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development before a site is listed or removed as a protected area by the Department of Museum and Monuments, and the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities.

And to ensure coordination and collective responsibility of the Cabinet in the implementation of mineral development for industrialisation, and the protection of our natural heritage as requested by His Excellency the President, in his letter returning the Bill for reconsideration of Parliament, of 3 November 2022.

The requirement for Parliament's approval is to take into consideration the sixth concern of His Excellency the President, of ensuring that the proposed protected sites and areas do not affect the development plans of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, and Government plans as a whole are not derailed.

MR OGUZU: There is a very big risk in deleting that clause in that in passing that law, some areas have already been gazetted. So, we are going to open a Pandora's box, whereby it will be up to the minister to decide which area must be gazetted as a protected site.

I implore the minister to come up with the areas, which are already in this Gazette, that conflict with the mineral policy and all laws relating to mining. We would then be able to make decisions on a case-by-case basis to allow them to remove those that infringe on those rights.

Otherwise, to say we should delete that whole clause and start gazetting afresh is such a big risk. The country cannot afford to do that. I want to imagine somebody bright has been thinking over this. We may lose a lot of income. We know tourism gives us a lot of income, so, I call upon Members to pay keen attention to this. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleague, when we were processing this Bill, there were contentious issues with regard to some of the sites, which had been put in. And even after, we received some petitions from some of the kingdoms and from some of the cultural institutions and ministries.

On ministries, I was not happy because this was a Government Bill, which passed through Cabinet. So, I do not know how ministers could not see that their sites were being gazetted as national heritage sites and they could not handle it.

However, we have a cure, because even in the President's letter, he cautions us when he says, "We need wide consultations on the matter."

Instead of enacting a law which is explosive and people from the onset are rushing to court complaining, we have given the minister a window of introducing a schedule under a statutory instrument, which we can demand to be presented on the Floor, and the Minister is very eager.

This list was generated by the minister, and that is what is good about all this. So, the same minister would be tasked to immediately work on the statutory instrument.

Otherwise, we had a limitation of going for very wide consultations and going outside the timelines given to make a law. And the law takes much longer. And yet the minister has a much better window of a statutory instrument to introduce all these schedules that he would need.

Honourable colleague, I think your fears are well catered for; it is a matter of us ensuring that the minister, indeed, does his part.

MR OLANYA: I am the Leader of the Opposition today –(*Interjections*)– the acting LOP. Mr Chairman, your guidance was clear; if we leave it open without specifying the timeframe, it may create a lot of doubt for many Ugandans.

As I speak, the exploration is still going on in so many areas and we have so many areas where we do not know whether the minerals are there or not. So, I feel that the minister should be given a timeframe than leaving it open, the way it is. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Then you would be limited by rule 143(4) which does not allow you to go beyond what the President has brought out. They are our rules, but let us have trust in our ministers. It is the minister who generated this, only that the issue of wide consultation – honourable minister, would you like to reassure Members on this issue?

MR MUGARRA: Thank you. I would like to reassure Members that we just need a little bit more time and we shall have this schedule brought back through a statutory instrument.

We have most of your sites covered; we are just doing a consultation on a few other sites. I would like to reassure the House that we shall have this ready for you anytime from now - (*Interjections*) - even less than two months.

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

MR OGUZU: Mr Chairman, you have rightly guided that this amendment was informed by some petitions and other concerns, which arose because there were no wide consultations. That, therefore, means that there are areas, which have been gazetted and have issues and there are those areas over which there are no complaints.

My plea would be that we allow those areas without issues to be reviewed by the minister and brought through a statutory instrument, but those areas which do not have complaints should be able to stand.

The risk of deleting all that means we are removing everything that has been gazetted already. And anybody can now play with anything at any point. If the intent of this amendment is really to cure some specific problems, let us also address ourselves to those places, which have issues and allow the minister to go and deal with them. Otherwise, those that do not have issues must be protected and this House has the mandate to protect them right from now.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleague, on this Floor, you cannot assess 217 sites. You do not have that capacity. I have the Bill here; it is 217 sites. This is a straightforward issue. The minister can bring an instrument, but if colleagues do not want to delete it, that is your choice because rule 77 limits me; I do not want to go overboard in terms of how I can guide.

Honourable colleagues, I put the question that Schedule 2 be deleted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Schedule 2, deleted.)

Clause 30

MR MWINE MPAKA: Clause 30 is about the provisional protection of cultural and natural heritage. Clause 30 is amended in subclause 5 by deleting the phrase “as specified in Schedule 2 of the Act” and wherever the phrase appears in the Bill.

The justification is that it is a consequential amendment arising from the deletion of the Second Schedule.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 30 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Clause 30, as amended, agreed to.)

Clause 92

MR MPAKA: Clause 92 is about amendments of schedules. We propose to amend clause 92 as follows:

- a) In Subclause (1) by substituting the words, “Schedule One” with the words “The Schedule.”
- b) By deleting subclause (2).

The justification is that it is a consequential amendment arising from the deletion of the second schedule. There will only be reference to one schedule.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 92 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Clause 92, as amended, agreed to.)

Clause 95

MR MPAKA: Clause 95 is about regulations. We propose to amend clause 95 by renumbering the provisions accordingly and inserting, immediately after the word, “subclause one” the following:

1. With prejudice to subsection one, the minister shall, in consultation with the minister responsible for mineral development and with approval of Cabinet by statutory instrument, make declaration of protected heritage resources and heritage resources of significant value to Uganda.
2. The statutory instrument in subsection two shall be laid before Parliament.
3. Parliament may, by a resolution, revoke the statutory instrument or a particular provision of the statutory instrument within 30 days from the date the statutory instrument is laid.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: This is a consequential amendment because we have deleted the schedule, we must amend it to reflect the deletion. So, there is no debate on consequential amendments, colleagues.

I put the question that Clause 95 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Clause 95, as amended, agreed to.)

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Yes, honourable minister.

4.51

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Mr Martin Mugarra): I beg to move that the House do resume and the Committee of the Whole House do report thereto.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: I now put the question that the House do resume and the Committee of the Whole House reports thereto.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(The House resumed, the Deputy Speaker presiding.)

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF
THE WHOLE HOUSE

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, honourable minister.

4.53

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Mr Martin Mugarra): Mr Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of the Whole House has reconsidered the Bill entitled, “The Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022” as returned by His Excellency the President.

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

4.54

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Mr Martin Mugarra): I beg to move that the House adopts the report of the Committee of the whole House.

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

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, there is nothing because at this stage, you can only come in for recommittal. But there is nothing to recommit, honourable colleagues. Honourable, come here first, because the rules do not allow you. The rules do not give you any space at this stage, but I can hear you.

So, the issue raised by Hon. Gilbert will be catered for, acting Leader of Opposition; I just needed to ensure that we compare notes on the same.

Honourable minister, we voted on your question for the adoption of the report of the whole House. I now put the question that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Report adopted.)

BILLS
THIRD READING

THE MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS
BILL, 2022

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister -

4.57

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Mr Martin Mugarra): I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022” be read the third time and do pass into law.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I put the question that the Bill entitled, “The Museum and Monuments Bill, 2022” be read for the third time and do pass.

(Question put and agreed to.)

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED, “THE
MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS BILL,
2023”

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Congratulations, honourable minister. Congratulations, chairperson. The Bill has been passed. Hon. Gilbert had an issue and let me give him chance to speak.

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Now that we have passed the Bill, I would like to urge the minister to hurry. As we talk, the implication is quite serious because the Uganda Museum and all our natural areas have been de-gazetted. This means anybody can move and take away the land for the museum.

Therefore, the minister should hurry and gazette these places. This is a very serious implication that I wanted to raise, and I thank the Speaker for the good guidance. I urge for your quick move. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, would you like to say something?

MR MUGARRA: I would like to assure Hon. Gilbert Olanya, that we are going to do this as soon as possible. There are just a few errors that we have to correct and we shall have the schedule brought before this House. It could even be before assent, most probably. That is our commitment.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, please, there is no way you can bring a schedule before the law is assented to. Colleagues, we do not discuss a Bill that has been passed. Can we go back to the Order Paper?

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
DEFENCE AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS
ON THE ALLEGED UNFAIR AND
DISCRIMINATORY RECRUITMENT BY
THE UGANDA PEOPLES' DEFENCE
FORCES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, the Chairperson of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs assigned Hon. Kahonda to present this report, and he has informed me formally. So, let him present the report.

5.00

CPT. (RTD) DONONZIO KAHONDA (NRM, Ruhinda County South, Mitooma): Thank you, Mr Speaker - *[Member rose]*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: How do you raise procedure on a report which is not yet presented? Okay. You have seen, colleagues - If I had Hon. Olanya as the LOP -

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The report was here for quite long and very many things have been overtaken by events. When we raised problems concerning recruitment - the other lot are already done with their training.

Mr Speaker, I would like to seek your guidance. Would it be procedurally okay to continue with this report when many things have been overtaken by events and the boys that we were fighting for - I do not see the importance of this report, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, this is anticipation under rule 80. I do not know what is in the report - I do not know whether the chairperson and the committee have covered all those aspects; so, my hands are tied. Let us first receive the report

then at debate level, you can raise all these issues. Otherwise, rule 80 on anticipation does not allow us to provoke a matter that is going to be tabled on the Floor. Thank you.

CPT. (RTD) KAHONDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on the alleged unfair and discriminatory recruitment by the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces.

I beg to lay the minutes of the committee, the list of the recruits, particularly those who were recruited from Tororo, the advert, copies of their National Identity Cards, and copies of the LC recommendations together with recommendations from the GISOs. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let the record capture them.

CPT. (RTD) KAHONDA: Mr Speaker, at the First Sitting of the First Meeting of the Second Session of the 11th Parliament of Uganda held on Wednesday, 6 July 2022, an urgent question was raised by Hon. Sarah Ochieng Opendi, the District Woman Representative for Tororo on alleged irregularities in the recruitment exercise by the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces characterised by-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, let the record capture Hon. Sarah Achieng Opendi not Ochieng.

CPT. (RTD) KAHONDA: I beg your pardon, Mr Speaker. It is Hon. Sarah Achieng Opendi, District Woman Representative, Tororo District. ... characterised by undue infringement and quota allotments of some districts in favour of recruits from other districts, in breach of Article 210(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995. The Rt Hon. Speaker directed the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs to brief the House on the matter.

Subsequently, on the Eighth Sitting of the First Meeting of the Second Session of the 11th Parliament of Uganda held on Thursday, 11 July 2022, a statement was presented by the Minister of State for Defence, Hon. Oboth,

on the alleged unfair and discriminatory recruitment by the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces.

The Rt Hon. Speaker referred the matter to the Committee of Defence and Internal Affairs for consideration and report back to Parliament. The committee considered the issues and hereby reports.

Background

In 2004, the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs undertook a comprehensive programme to transform the UPDF into a modern, professional and accountable force, subordinate to civilian authority. Part of this is recruiting Ugandans who meet the standards prescribed in the UPDF or the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces Act, 2005, sections 51 and 52; details of who qualifies.

Methodology

The committee held meetings with the following: the Minister of State for Veteran Affairs and officials from the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces, Hon. Sarah Opendi, the District Woman Representative for Tororo District, Hon. Evelyn Chemutai, and the District Woman Representative of Bukwo District. The committee also received submissions from Hon. Faith Nakut, District Woman Representative of Napak District.

Queries raised by Parliament

Tororo District

Allegations raised by Hon. Sarah Achieng Opendi, the District Woman Representative for Tororo District was that people from elsewhere were recruited from Tororo and people from Tororo did not benefit from their quota. It was also alleged that the local leaders were not allowed to verify the list of recruits; RDCs and LCs were not given a copy of the recruits for reference.

Nebbi District

It was alleged that out of the 57 slots allocated, only 11 were from the district.

Lira District

The allegations were that in Lira District, most applicants were dropped for reportedly being HIV positive.

The committee interacted with Hon. Sarah Achieng Opendi and Hon. Evelyn Chemutai and received written submissions from Hon. Faith Nakut.

UPDF recruitment procedures

The Minister of Defence and Internal Affairs and the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces carried out a national recruitment exercise from 18 June to 4 July. The recruitment coverage was for all Ugandan nationals and was based on a quota system. LCI chairpersons provided documents to the applicants to prove that one has no criminal liability and the National ID proved one's nationality and presumes all biometrics and other details are with NIRA.

At the recruitment centres, the RDCs, RCCs or GISOs signed on the dispatch forms before departure of the candidates to training schools. However, not everybody who came met the criteria to be recruited, as there were various tests undertaken to eliminate some people because of limited slots.

The committee was informed that the UPDF followed the process of recruitment. The criteria for being an eligible applicant were:

- a) Be a citizen of Uganda; you would prove this with the national ID.
- b) Adult male or female (18 to 30 years of age).
- c) Uganda Certificate of Education or its equivalent certificate or qualifications or any of the above.

- d) Be healthy and willing to undergo medical and physical tests.
- e) Have no criminal record and this proof of good citizenship was LCI and DISO signatures and recommendations.

The quotas were distributed as follows:

- a) 8,400 were shared nationwide based on the district population size.
- b) 1,000 were mechanics and drivers.
- c) 600 were scientists qualifying to join the Air force.
- d) 100 Medical personnel
- e) 100 brass band musicians
- f) 50 specialised sportsmen and ladies

The committee findings

The committee observed that the recruitment covered 146 districts and the recruitment plan covered 134 districts. The 12 districts were accommodated within their former districts, since their district headquarters were not yet established. Quotas allocated to each district were based on the Uganda Bureau of Statistics population data of 2020.

On this note, districts like Mitooma, Sheema, Rubirizi, Bushenyi and Buhweju had their recruitment centre at Bushenyi District Headquarters, which was their mother district as well as Greater Mbarara of Rwampara, Isingiro, Ibanda and Mbarara City and Mbarara District as well.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the recruitments were done on zonal levels. For instance, the UPDF recruited a total of 163 people from the districts of Nebbi, Zombo and Pakwach. Here the recruitment centre was in Nebbi.

All those that attended were recommended by LCIs and DISOs. Nebbi District was a recruitment centre hosting the other two districts. Despite their quota being 57 for Nebbi District alone, 163 recruits were recruited at the zone. While recruitment is not based on tribe, most of the recruits that came from Nebbi were the Alur, as per their identity cards.

The committee was informed that a total of 195 people were recruited from Tororo District and most of their documents were verified by LCI chairpersons of various villages of applicants to ensure that they had no criminal record - and not necessarily to prove their ethnicity, tribe or place of abode. Attached are the copies of IDs and letters of recommendation; letters from LCs and recommendations by GISOs as well. However, this was misunderstood to mean proof of nationality.

The committee recommends that LCs and the general public should be sensitised on recruitment procedures and guidelines, in accordance with the UPDF Act of 2005.

Advertisements should be clear, easy to understand and should be published in all local newspapers and local radios for wider coverage.

There were alarming numbers of forged academic documents and the Uganda national identity cards. Recruits who did not have national IDs, but had already applied were not allowed to use their national identification numbers because it was difficult to attach the face to the NIN. Verification of all other documents required more time and finances, which had its own limitations.

The recruitment period should be long enough to allow time to verify all the required documents by the relevant Government institutions and agencies. The national identification numbers should be allowed as long as their genuineness can be verified.

The recruitment process should be financed to undertake most of the required activities to avoid haphazard work.

The recruitment was done for all Ugandans, as long as they had national identity cards and their LCI or GISO or DISO confirmed that they had the required documents verified by LCIs, DISOs, GISOs, as proof of no criminal record.

The committee recommends that there should always be proper scrutiny or vetting of these

documents presented by LCI chairpersons or GISOs and DISOs.

During the recruitment exercise, affirmative action was put into consideration and 30 per cent of the recruits were women. Mr Speaker, I beg to report that 2,651 females/ladies were recruited into the UPDF during that exercise –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that part of the report, honourable?

CPT. (RTD) KAHONDA: No, I was just giving the justification –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please limit yourself to the report.

CPT. (RTD) KAHONDA: Much obliged, Mr Speaker.

Recruits filled medical forms which provided parameters considered on medical grounds. Applicants with medical issues were not recruited countrywide. The army had lost a number of its members on medical grounds and others frequently fell sick, resulting in huge medical bills to the ministry. Thus, there is a need to have mentally and physically healthy personnel that can serve the purpose.

Thorough medical examinations are done to avoid compensation at retirement where retirees claim to have got health issues while at work. This has equally cost the ministry huge sums of money in compensating them.

It was noted that the check-ups take a lot of time due to the limited number of personnel to undertake the exercise, coupled with huge numbers of recruits. This usually takes a lot of time and results in further complaints from recruits. The Ministry of Defence, however, raised the concern that the money for re-training is limited and hence they find it difficult to hire other medical personnel that they are able to pay.

The committee recommends that for the recruitment exercise to be managed effectively and efficiently, there is need for financial

support to enable them hire expert personnel to beef up the UPDF medical officers.

It was alleged that there was a lot of falsification of medical results to eliminate the recruits. This allegation was widely brought to the attention of the committee by the Members of Parliament.

The committee recommends that hard copies of the medical results should be issued to the individuals undergoing medical tests as evidence of their health status to avoid result falsification and copies be sent to the recruitment centres. This should be done in such a way that the results can be proved to confirm authenticity.

It was also noted that the medical check-ups were conducted in an open place without organised structures and a conducive atmosphere. This violates the people's right to privacy.

The committee recommends that the medical check-ups should be carried out in an organised place where the activity can be done systematically with reasonable medical infrastructure in place.

Alternatively, designated government hospitals and medical centres should be utilised for the check-ups.

Some recruits were disqualified for having scars, tattoos, cultural body marks and gaps in the teeth. This is because earlier experiences showed claims for compensation for having such marks purportedly acquired after joining the service. This has cost a lot of money for compensation, but also they incur costs and time defending themselves when taken to court.

While recruiting, the UPDF should put into consideration some cultural norms that people are subjected to while still young, which leave them with permanent marks on their bodies to avoid issues of discrimination. Such people can be taken through the signature of forms that indicate their status at entry into the forces.

There were several allegations of extortion and bribery during the recruitment exercise. However, the committee was informed that investigations were on-going to identify culprits.

However, it was also noted that there were indisciplined soldiers who purportedly turned themselves into recruitment officers, whereas they were not, and extorted money from the vulnerable recruits, parents and guardians.

The committee was informed that some soldiers and officers who took part in the malpractice had been arrested and prosecution was due while others were at large and security was on track to get them arrested.

The committee recommends that the public should be encouraged to report cases of bribery and extortion, with evidence, so that prosecution can be conclusive.

The committee further recommends that the recruitment officers should be given tags for clear identification during the recruitment process.

Sensitisation before and during recruitment period should be intensified to avoid such scenarios.

General challenges during the recruitment exercise

The committee was informed that the UPDF faced the following challenges;

a) LC recommendations

It was difficult to prove the authenticity of the LC recommendations since they could not easily reach out to all LCs and they trusted the work of the GISOs and the DISOs.

b) Forgeries

There were many forgeries of documents by applicants, which takes a lot of time and procedures to verify. These include academic certificates, national identity cards, driving

permits and letters of recommendations. This delays the whole process and is time consuming.

c) Influence peddling

There were a lot of influence peddling by politicians and soldiers of higher ranks and this affected the recruitment process. They usually mount a lot of pressure on the recruitment officers and this distracts the officers undertaking the work. The “big people” in this country should give space to the recruitment process to follow the well-stipulated procedures and guidelines.

d) High turn up of recruits

There was an overwhelming turn up of participants and the numbers exceeded the available slots and quarters. This led to many people being disqualified, leading to many complaints and an uncalled for allegations. For instance, positions that were meant for the senior four applicants did not stop university graduates from applying, irrespective of clear guidelines. This is, however, attributed to the unemployment wave in the country.

In conclusion, the exercise was conducted within the law and the high turn up of Ugandans was a clear indicator that the youth want to serve this country. Despite the isolated incidences of extortion, bribery and political influence, the recruitment exercise process was successfully done.

There is a need to tighten up the loose ends in the recruitment exercise in future to avoid such complaints.

Mr Speaker, I beg to report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well done, honourable member. Honourable minister, I think it would be better for you to come in at the end after listening to all concerns – or you have some highlights that you would want to give to guide the debate. Let me first allow the petitioner.

5.23

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for finally bringing this report. However, justice delayed is justice denied.

I presented this as a matter of national importance on the 6th of July. This report is now being presented on the 24th of January, over six months after the exercise, yet this was an urgent matter.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, the issue that I presented has been overtaken by events. However, I am glad that the report brought out the issues that I did raise. The issue of extortion has not been denied.

The second issue – Mr Speaker, for me, I have never interfered with any recruitment in my district. I often tell my people, who approach me for support, that all the people that turn up for that exercise are my voters, so, go and ensure that you meet the requirements and if you are lucky, you will be taken.

However, this time, the complaints came from the leaders who were present at the recruitment exercise - the leaders themselves – that the person who was supposed to be in charge of the exercise did not allow any of the leaders to look at the final list that he generated.

The leaders even asked to verify those purported letters from the local council chairpersons, but they were not allowed to look at them. That was the gist of the matter and that is why I had to raise it here.

Fortunately, we had a roads committee meeting just around the same time and the minister for defence was there. Most of the LCs, after this matter was aired on radio, denied ever recommending those people although they were being mentioned as having recommended.

What has not been denied is that there were letters of recommendation that were forged. It is possible that the LC letters, purportedly recommending some of these people, could

have been printed from Nasser Road. After all, we do not know the signatures of all our LC 1 chairpersons.

We do not have many of these complaints when the police or prisons are recruiting. There was even a young man who emerged, I think he was the third - you know, they make them run. This person ran and finished third, but he was not on the list. He had all the requirements.

He was told to board and follow them, I think to Pallisa or somewhere there. That is where he, finally, got recruited. The lists you are seeing here, the 195 people, they could have been people who followed them to the other side. However, because they have the national ID reading “Tororo” now they are saying they are from Tororo.

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Therefore, Mr Speaker, moving forward, when we bring such petitions here, they should be time-bound and handled immediately so that justice is dispensed. Now seven months down the road.

These are all Ugandans. Let them complete, but the next time the UPDF is recruiting, allow the local leaders, who know who the LCs I are and who may have some information, to guide.

The Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF) Act, section 3 states very clearly that there shall be an armed force known as the Uganda People’s Defence Forces. And this shall be nonpartisan and national in character.

The word “national in character” is the reason why they give every district a particular number so that the UPDF is “national in character” and does not belong to one particular group. When you leave an officer to particularly handle this exercise and finally, people run, then he generates the list and nobody looks at that list; we are being told that GISOs have signed. But under what circumstances did they sign this?

There is corruption in this country. The report talks about extortion; it talks about corruption. Mr Speaker, while the committee was supposed to meet the district officials from

Tororo, he did not do that. While the committee stated that there were officers who took part in the malpractice and have been arrested for extortion, their names are not mentioned. Why are you hiding this information if it is correct and it was provided by the UPDF?

I am happy that this has come out, but I am not wholly happy because the report has come seven months after I raised this matter which was an urgent matter. The clerks should support the presiding officers. When a presiding officer says this is an urgent matter, please remind the presiding officers; they have so many issues they are dealing with.

There are so many Members of Parliament; 529 Members of Parliament that go to the presiding officers. So, they are bound to forget and they cannot follow up on everything. So, it's my appeal to the clerks to support the presiding officers.

I have other issues, Mr Speaker, still with the Committee on Defence. I hope that the issue of vehicle tracking is also brought here urgently. That was an urgent matter. It is over seven months and the committee still has it.

We have rules and we cannot be calling the frontbench to come and tell us about the actions taken on the reports of this House when our own committees are not following our own rules. Mr Speaker, I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I hope next time, we do better because Hon. Opendi is raising substantive issues. I urge you, colleagues, that whenever you have such urgent matters, you can always rise up on matters of procedure because we have timelines attached on how long committees can take to process business. That would help us.

The positive bit of it is that that specific exercise has been overtaken by events. The UPDF is recruiting all the time; I hope we learn from this; even the UPDF learns from this. On the issue of forged local council letters, we appropriated a lot of money to the Ministry of Local Government to procure stamps for

all LC 1 chairpersons centrally that do have security features.

Now, the UPDF is able to verify forged letters. If the stamps on the letters are forged, the UPDF has the capacity to verify all these forged letters.

Honourable minister, do you want us to first debate or there is something you feel is urgent here? Let us first debate. I will start with MPs who have not spoken since we came here. Let us use reasonable time so that we give other Members a chance.

5.31

MR GEORGE BHOKA (NRM, Obongi County, Obongi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the chairperson together with the Members of the committee for the report that has brought out very pertinent issues.

My first observation is on the district and regional quota system. That in principle is okay, but in practice, there are small districts and small regions that have a complaint that the quota system seems not to be working for them.

Secondly, it is related to the reported overwhelming number of young people intending to join the Force, which the report alluded to as interest to serve their country. But I want to disagree with the report. This is a manifestation of the level of unemployment for the young people that we need to look into. The youth of this country are looking at joining the Forces as the only way of getting employed. So, we must address the issue of youth unemployment.

Last, but not least, Mr Speaker, is the issue of affirmative action for marginalised and minority communities that we need to take into consideration when recruiting.

Finally, I want to appeal to the location of the recruitment sites. We did allude to the fact that many of these youths who intend to join the forces are not employed. Therefore, they do not –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, honourable member.

MR BHOKA: - travel to the regional headquarters where these recruitments are. The plight of the youth of Obongi is that instead of telling them to go to Arua, Moyo and Adjumani to be recruited in the forces, can the recruitment be taken nearer to them? Many of the districts could not fill their quota because of the access factor. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, I hope you took up your numbers.

5.34

MR MOSES ALEPER (NRM, Chekwii County Kadam, Nakapiripirit): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before I go to the issues concerning my region, I want to say that when this issue came up, we were promised that the exercise would stop until these issues are sorted out; that is the message I took to my people.

Actually, since this recruitment has taken place, I will be deemed not to have represented my people effectively because that is the message I took to my people that the recruitment had been stopped and we had been assured of that until these issues are sorted out.

But now, I have just been told that this has taken place. I do not know what to tell my people. Now, the issue is this; in my district of Nakapiripirit, characteristically for all the Forces, call it UPDF, call it the Uganda Police Force and call it Uganda Prisons Services, we barely get a person from the district. What happens is that the recruiting officers come with their relatives to the recruitment centre and they are the ones who are taken up. They make our sons and daughters run around, then they take these other people. That is the most painful thing.

The last recruitment when we raised the issue, there were no people from Nakapiripirit District. But there were "Ojambos", there were "Muhumuzas" and many other tribes in that place.-(*Interjections*) - in fact, most of them could have even come from your district. So,

what I am trying to say is, much as there is – prosperity that should actually take place.

Mr Speaker, what should I tell the Karimojongs? That actually Karamoja again has been left behind?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Oboth will give you an answer before we leave.

5.36

MR GOLI OGWAL (NRM, Dokolo North County, Dokolo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Thank you for the report, Chairperson.

Justice was denied, but the good thing is we are agreeing on the way forward now. The way forward is to involve the local persons who appreciate and know the people who are being recruited. I, for one, would want to be involved in the recommendation so that we see that the people of Dokolo are recruited in Dokolo and not in Lira as was mentioned by my colleague. That is my request. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, we can use the district quota system where the list of the selected candidates is sent to the district for verification.

The district would then have a system of verifying all these people when there are complaints. This is because if you told me that someone comes from Rwakarungi or Nyamiyaga Village in Bitereko Subcounty and you are lying, other people will provide correct information to confirm whether you come from that area or not.

Otherwise, I am also just dying quietly here because the complaints were very many. However, Hon. Oboth being my senior and he is the one who gives me security, I feared asking him.

5.38

MR SOLOMON ALINGA (NRM, T'oo County, Bukwo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for that wise guidance that everything should be prepared based on the quota system because if this committee had gone to Bukwo, which is

one of the hard-to-reach areas - almost five of our children succeeded and in the papers, it was indicative in the quota that was allocated to us. However, our people are suffering silently and it is across the entire security system not only the UPDF, but in the police and prisons.

It is my submission that all these institutions are regulated in such a way that all the districts benefit based on their quota. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Even prisons where you bring the best runners and police are usually Kween, Bukwo, Kapchorwa -

MR ALINGA: Those were not considered. In fact, there are some who even ran faster, but were dismissed.

5.39

MR JOEL LEKU (NRM, Terego West County, Terego): Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is true that when the recruitment exercise is done by the armed forces, one of the aspects they look at is the medical examination, especially regarding HIV-positive Ugandans. However, for example for the UPDF, sometimes you notice that they go to recruit people for their brass band and/or mechanics, and they don't pick those who are HIV positive, yet those two aspects are driven by talent and passion. What does somebody who has HIV/AIDS have to do with this?

And that aside, the training alone - we should tailor the training for these specific people because the recruitment is specifically for brass band and/or mechanics. What other more training does somebody like this need?

The armed forces need to look at the parameters; we are actually disadvantaging our own people who are HIV positive, yet, the campaign target for HIV is now very clear - 90 per cent should know their HIV status, 90 per cent should be able to take their drugs and 90 per cent should be suppressed. So, these people are equally like us who are HIV negative. I ask the minister to review this policy -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, can you bring us results to be sure - *(Laughter)*

MR ALINGA: Mr Speaker, if all the Members were asked to bring their results, I think I would be the most negative. Anyhow, my point is that let us review the recruitment parameter so that even those who are HIV - *(Member time out.)*

5.41

MS VICKY AWAS (NRM, Woman Representative, Nabilatuk): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to present some issues regarding the recruitment exercise. You know very well Karamoja is much affected in terms of employment. There are very many Karimojongs who are senior four and six dropouts, who are idle. However, when it comes to recruitment into prisons, the army and/or police, there are lots of mix-ups; there is bias; and people are not given the opportunity to even verify who recommended who.

In my district, during recruitment into the army, only three people were taken out of 57, yet, you find Karamoja in general being treated as an entry point for people to be recruited, leaving the Karimojongs out of the recruitment exercise.

Limited numbers are allowed. Some districts even get nothing. Some people extort money from others in order to get employed there.

My appeal to the army and other armed forces is: please, next time you are recruiting, consider Karamoja given the state the people there live in; there are no jobs and these are the only institutions they can go to work. Senior four leavers are idle; they will end up going to raid, instead of being employed in the armed forces.

So, kindly, consider Karamoja in the next recruitment and treat this as a learning exercise. These are the things that have been taking place and we have nothing much to do about them. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

5.43

MS AGNES ACIBU (NRM, Woman Representative, Nebbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for having given me this opportunity. I thank the honourable minister, for giving us the report. Above all, I thank Hon. Sarah Opendi, for having brought this problem before us.

One of the MPs who comes from one of the districts in greater Nebbi, that is Packwach District - by God's grace on recruitment day, I was there. For the greater Nebbi, the centre for recruitment was at Nebbi.

However, I can say that the recruitment exercise left a lot to be desired. If the recruitment exercise was being done on a quota basis, there would be no reason for somebody to travel all the way from Arua or Madi-Okollo to Nebbi. And when you looked at their size, you would notice that these weren't people from greater Nebbi.

Out of the 57 slots that were for Nebbi, and you heard in the report, only 11 were taken. And if I hadn't been there, I believe Nebbi would have got only two or three.

What was surprising is that even the district authorities were not allowed to move closer to the recruitment officers. I had to introduce myself as an MP to be allowed to see justice prevail in the district.

The situation was really pathetic, yet, Government's agenda was to ensure people from every district had the chance to join UPDF - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, conclude your statement, honourable member.

MS ACIBU: Therefore, I am advising that as we lead, let us know we are representing somebody on earth and that is our Lord. So, whatever we do, let it please our God so that humanity can also take advantage of the services, which we are rendered to do. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Oguzu, you had a procedural matter.

MR OGUZU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a procedural issue. A lot of flaws have been identified in this recruitment process, including people dying during recruitment because emergency care is not usually provided.

We have the UPDF representatives here. Wouldn't it be right that you allow them some time to give us insight into the operations so that we get to appreciate how these things happen. Maybe, they can inform us and before we adopt the report, we move from an informed point of view.

There are people who have benefited from illegalities and we may need to hear from them on what has been done. All this information is sitting with the representatives of the UPDF. Therefore, I would like to invite you to allow some time for the UPDF to give us their technical input. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, I invite a Member if they stand up. As such, I think you are urging the UPDF to stand up, not me directing people to stand up.

Please, colleagues are here as Members of Parliament and they can only contribute when they feel that they are ready to contribute on a subject matter.

5.47

MS AGNES AMEEDE (Independent, Woman Representative, Butebo): Thank you, Mr Speaker and thank you to the committee. This report is timely because this is an institution that we are trying to improve and, colleagues, I would like you to consider this issue with utmost seriousness.

Reflecting on the recruitment in my district, I was very pained. I went to the recruitment centre for the first time, as a result of the outcry of my constituents about the problems that go on at the recruitment centre.

The committee is shy to have stated the stark issues as they happened and it is absurd because the root cause of failed states starts from wrong recruitment. Looking at developed countries, it is such a pride to be in the US army. How does that happen? Because of institutional establishment during recruitment.

I would, therefore, beg the minister that before they handle the next recruitment, can we agree on streamlined procedures? I would like the ministry to streamline recruitment. The issue of vetting is very pertinent. Can this vetting take some period of time through the district – *(Member timed out.)*— Mr Speaker, kindly, give me a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, conclude, honourable.

MS AMEEDÉ: - Through the district committee and probably, give a slot to the Members of Parliament to endorse on these forms. Let UPDF get a finished product of who has been shortlisted in a particular district from where they have a pool of people to select from. Otherwise, that is the root cause of problems such as armed robberies and desertion.

The other issue I would like to bring to your notice is the issue of medical. Can this medical period also be extended? This will prevent loss of lives. In Butebo, we have lost people during training and another recruit died in Mayuge during the running process. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable. Hon. Abeja.

5.51

MS SUSAN ABEJA (Independent, Woman Representative, Otuke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the committee for the report they have given us. My issue touches something, which is very rare and this goes to our minister. There is the issue of missing teeth; gaps in the mouths of people from northern Uganda, which is brought about by not drinking milk. It is my humble appeal that this be removed from the conditions of recruiting soldiers otherwise people from northern Uganda will never be recruited.

Most of our children lose their teeth even before the age that you think they should lose them. That should not be a reason to be considered for denial. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, wait a bit. You mean they are denying people an opportunity because of a gap in the teeth? Are we being recruited to go and bite? If I have fed, whether I have two or three teeth that have enabled me to crush enough food to make me majestic - Am I being recruited to go and bite people or do you have a smiling competition under UPDF so that at the time of smiling, those ones with no teeth will not smile very well? Hon. Chemonges, tell us how you would be denied an opportunity. *(Laughter)*

5.52

MR WILLIAM CHEMONGES (NRM, Kween County, Kween): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to first of all thank Hon. Sarah for raising this very important issue in the House. I want to also thank the committee for the report.

I have listened to all our colleagues and it is quite painful, even to me, because we have a very serious unemployment problem in our country, more especially among the youth and disadvantaged children who are from less well to do families. These are the ones who are always fighting to join the Police Force, UPDF or the Uganda Wildlife Authority. This scenario is not only happening in the UPDF; let us just use this report, but this issue is general. It is happening in the Police Force, in Prisons and even in these student loan schemes that support students to go to the university.

I even came to you one time, Mr Speaker. Even when the country has decided to sponsor 600 students, you find one district gets only one slot while another one takes almost 50. We do not know the criteria used.

Finally, I have been researching since yesterday when I saw this issue on the Order Paper. Take for example Police –*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Switch on and conclude, honourable. Switch on the microphone.

MR CHEMONGES: I have tried to research on the side of Police. Regarding the recruitment of assistant superintendents of police, in the entire Sebei region, from Kween I think we only have one. My colleague from Bukwo, do you even have one? I do not know. You may not have. But when you look at the people on the list, they are very many so sometimes we feel left out.

My prayer, Mr Speaker, is that we should have a committee to handle this investigation comprehensively in all the sectors and agencies that I have mentioned. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me your time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Katusabe?

5.55

MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I have been here patiently listening.

Mr Speaker, I really want to thank the UPDF and I am honoured that my elder brother is the army commander, but that is not really the point. Honourable minister, we have to applaud you; you are doing a great job.

Mr Speaker, I want to put something right; that signing up for duty as a serviceman or servicewoman is the greatest honour you can ever get. Serving your country as a military officer or police officer is the highest honour anybody can get. I really want to disagree with those who imagine signing up for a duty in the UPDF is a way of looking for a job. When a man or woman is in that uniform, they deserve honour, respect and dignity.

However, my point, *-(Interjection)-* yes. And that is the reason why I do not belong to that world that imagines when you see an officer in that office or in their uniform; you treat them to imagine they are inclined politically. But this

is the point that I really want to draw to the attention of the Minister. Honourable minister, so I have seen recommendations from GISOs and RDC- *(Member timed out.)*

MR KATUSABE: In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I come from Kasese. It is extremely difficult for anybody from the Opposition to get a recommendation from the RDC and the GISO because we know the brand and class of RDCs and GISOs, with due respect.

I would rather that the recruitment focus upon the LC system because as much as LC chairpersons are politically inclined, in terms of service, they serve the entire community. So I do not want to see the UPDF, the national army, having people that have just a specific political orientation or inclination. The UPDF is a national army; the people that come from the Opposition and are willing to serve their country as servicemen and servicewomen should be given equal opportunity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR KATUSABE: But as long as - Mr Speaker, very finally, for as long as we continue focusing on the recommendations and no need down to RDCs and GISOs, we will continue having a wrong system in terms of politics. And I would like the Opposition people that belong to different political groupings to also sign up for duty to serve the country. Much appreciated, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kayondo, before you come, let me first clear the front bench where Hon. Nangoli has gotten a slot.

5.59

MR GERALD NANGOLI (NRM, Elgon North County, Bulambuli): Thank you Mr Speaker and I also thank the committee for this great report. However, there are many things that the committee has left out. I was there personally during recruitment, but it was horrible, especially on the side of the RDC and the DISO who had recommended people for recruitment; they were sent away.

Actually, on the recruitment day, a private officer in the UPDF is more powerful than the RDC and DISO. When you get to the gate and they have given the names - I do not know why they always engage them to recommend - because on the recruitment, their recommendations become useless. They do not consider them anymore.

People who stamp on the recommendations wait for the applicants at the entry point to the recruitment centres. And they are guided by the security officers on what to do. They do not even look at these national IDs because they come afterwards. Actually, they get them along the way at different centres, but at the recruitment centres, there are certain criteria they use that we do not know.

Personally, I was a victim. I recommended three people who are medical doctors, but none of them was considered and yet they are professional doctors. One was working in Kapchorwa, but she was not considered and I got *-(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, Hon. Nangoli, conclude your *-(Laughter)*

MR NANGOLI: He is my good friend, but next time, I will not give you because I see you spoil my things. I will discipline you next time. Mr Speaker, with your wise guidance, I would request that in future, let us change the way of doing these things because if we allow the private guards who are allowing in people to take charge of the recruitment process, then what is the use of Members of Parliament - because they should involve leaders and all stakeholders must be involved, right from the GISOs, the chairpersons LCIII and LCII plus the district stakeholders; RDCs and DISOs.

However, if you use these people; they recommend and then when the applicants get to the recruitment centre, they are not considered. They use their own ways of recruitment, then it becomes useless. For us as Members of Parliament, I request that next time we are involved in recruitment. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, I would like to caution you that we do not get involved in the recruitment process. Then now whom would they run to if we are the ones recruiting? And then we are accused of recruiting our supporters. What we need is a transparent process; I believe a process can be transparent without involvement of Members of Parliament and then we are able to do our oversight. Okay.

Therefore, I would not want to be involved at all. Hon. Kayondo then Hon. Paparu. Okay. Oh, we have UPDF among the people concluding; please let us do it quickly, colleagues. We are not sleeping here.

6.03

MR FRED KAYONDO (DP, Mukono County South, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. When you see a rat running towards fire, then you know that what is chasing it is hotter than fire. When we see graduates going to compete for positions with senior four leavers, it is something that is alarming and we should be worried, as a country.

Mr Speaker we need to go back to the drawing board and plan for our people; a graduate competing with senior four leavers is something we should not laugh at.

I saw people being eliminated because of their HIV status. That is a sign of backwardness. It is promotion of stigma. HIV victims shouldn't be eliminated. That is promotion of stigma. If the UPDF is professional, it should look into that. We have fought HIV; we have ARVs that can eliminate HIV load up to the level of no detection. If people are eliminated because of their HIV status, that should not be heard of in a professional army.

Mr Speaker *-(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, honourable member.

MR KAYONDO: Mr Speaker, change of names does not mean nationality. I have heard people and interacted with somebody with the

name “Fred Kayondo”, but cannot construct a sentence in Luganda. But because you want to say it is national, you bring “Opolot” who cannot speak Ateso, simply because you want to make the army national. You bring in somebody called “Ekanya”, but he cannot speak Jopadhola.

Mr Speaker, let us be fair in this; because they want to claim that it is a national army, they have gone on to name people names from different areas, yet these people have never belonged to those areas. Let us be clear. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, you picked your positions; you will be following each other. Let it run naturally.

6.05

MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Gone are the days when people joined the forces because of passion and love to serve the profession. It is very unfortunate that we are now looking at this as an opportunity for jobs. And if the recruitment process is not managed well, it will compromise the quality of the people we are going to have in the forces. This is because people are now going there, not because of the interest in or passion for that profession, but because they want to have jobs. If we mismanage the processes, then, we are going to add more salt to the injury that we already have.

We talked about the challenges in the recommendations by the LC I chairpersons. Mr Speaker, you said that the Ministry of Local Government was allocated money to buy stamps for LC I chairpersons. Many of those stamps have dried up and many of the LCs 1 have gone back to using timber cuttings. That explains why verification of those stamps becomes very difficult because they can be cut and used anytime.

I am surprised that LC I chairpersons can be used for recommendations, but not the LC III and LC IV chairpersons. We know the RDCs and RCCs are there, but some of these people

serve for only a year and are transferred to another place. How do they know the people within these districts?

I know the political leaders - I agree with you, I do not want to be directly involved in the recruitment process because: who will play the oversight role and pick these issues? However, the LC III and LC IV chairpersons will make sure that their people are picked. So, let us look into this and use this report to improve the next recruitment. Thank you.

6.08

MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the report. I suggest that the slots, which were for each of the districts, are not lost – that is to say, in the next recruitment, if Pakwach was supposed to have 57 slots and our leaders have verified that we got 10 only, I want us to say that we still have 47 slots. So, when the next slots come and we are again talking about 50 slots, we have to add the 47 so that Pakwach gets 97. That is my suggestion.

We are all consoling ourselves that there is another round. I want to believe this round, which has passed, should not be lost. That means there should be further investigation to confirm. If Nebbi, for instance, has said that there were 11 recruits and they were supposed to be 57, it means the 46 may have come from somewhere else. Those slots have to be brought back and investigations done. Eventually, when it is confirmed that the others did not come from Nebbi, then, the UPDF will know where to take them, but make sure that those slots come back.

I would like to confirm that if you go further to investigate, you will confirm that people were brought by other people. You will find that in one family, where someone was an army officer, there are now 10 others – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Ongiertho. That is a very important point. Honourable minister, we should take note of

that. If Nebbi was initially allotted 50 slots and only 10 were filled up, then, in the next round... I wonder how you can say that you have given Mitooma 57 slots and we have failed to get 57 people, when I had over 200 people complaining that they were left out. It becomes really difficult. We hope that it will be better next time.

6.10

MR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I happen to have closely monitored the recruitment process in Kole District and there were two key observations.

Whereas the report stated that the age was between 18 and 30, when the majority of my people reached the recruitment centre, they were told that they were stopping at the age of 25. Therefore, they were cut off.

Secondly, the RDC was also present and identified several people who she had not given recommendation letters and were from outside the district, yet they had been allowed to be counted. At the end of the day, we did not get that quota of 57 slots.

My recommendations, therefore, are that:

1. The minister should lay on Table a list of everyone who was recruited in every district. My constituency has the largest number of people, but only six were recruited. We need to see that list so that we can implement what has been proposed to know where the gap is.
2. Whenever you go for an interview, there is always documentation. Even when you fail, they give you reasons why you failed. I propose that a small note should be issued to indicate the reasons why one failed the recruitment exercise. For example, it can be that "you failed the marathon" or you "failed this particular test". However, as it is right now, many of them left and were just told: "You have not qualified." Even somebody who came with just a shaving bump, in my constituency, was told he did

not qualify – someone with just a small rash was disqualified.

I recommend that we implement those proposals. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: To come from my area, for instance – a subcounty like Kiyaga – to Bushenyi and back, you use around Shs 30,000. That is if you are going to recruit from Bushenyi. Honourable minister, maybe, you have to rethink and see the preliminary tests that can be done at district or subcounty level for people who would qualify.

Most people felt that you were looking for excuses to eliminate them rather than reasons to recruit them. People got that negative attitude from the exercise. This shows that people love the UPDF – they would want to be part of the UPDF, but the moment people feel that those who have gone through are privileged, then, it becomes totally difficult. You will find someone complaining about Shs 30,000. Some people also said that they were beaten during the running test. *(Laughter)*

6.14

MR JOAB BUSINGE (FDC, Masindi Municipality, Masindi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I would also like to thank the petitioner for bringing this irregularity to the limelight. This committee report tried to smear the reality on the ground, but it is not a true reflection -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It tried to depict; it cannot smear.

MR BUSINGE: No, it is just a smear. It is not true. They had to report –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, do you disagree with the findings?

MR BUSINGE: I disagree with the findings. The fact is that this recruitment had a lot of irregularities. First of all, the UPDF is trying very hard to professionalise itself, but the recruitment is not professional. They come to recruit and, that day, they move away with

the new recruits. Many times, I have seen in Masindi that the new recruits are carried or dispatched at night – maybe it is a professional standard. They never leave the recruitment centre during daytime.

This time round, I was at the recruitment centre. I saw what was happening and how they gave flimsy excuses to eliminate the people. Even the next morning, a young girl rushed to my home – because at night, they started replacing the successful people with others.

Therefore, they selected the team and grouped them somewhere – those who thought they were successful – but at night, they came with vehicles and kept on pushing and replacing people. This young girl was also left out.

Mr Speaker, I would like to recommend that for this recruitment to be serious, professional and official, when they select a team, let the CAO remain with the list of those that have been dispatched so that we can verify in case of any complaint. Otherwise, the leaders who are there during the day, go satisfied that the process has been fair and yet at the end, people come out crying that they were replaced.

Finally, I want to speak about the issue of the LCs. This influence peddling begins right from the LCs. I want to agree that most of those people who were taken had relatives already in the UPDF.

You know, these LC chairpersons are not firm enough. They are influenced by these officers to recommend their people. They come with valid recommendation letters from the LCs not that they are forged because many of them cannot assert their authority as LCs. After all, a small appreciation motivates them to stamp the recommendation letter.

Mr Speaker, I also agree - but what is important is that at dispatch, let the CAO remain with a list of those who have succeeded. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable.

6.17

MR CHRISTOPHER KOMAKECH (Independent, Aruu County, Pader): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank Hon. Sarah Opendi for bringing forth this petition. In a special way, I want to thank the UPDF.

To be factual, when I was growing up, our parents never wanted us to join UPDF. Even relatives along the way, when you joined UPDF, they would look at you as a loser. I am happy that today graduates are joining UPDF. I want to thank the UPDF for raising the bar high; thank you so much and continue with that.

I do not have kind words for our committee unless they amend a line. In one of their lines, they came up with a finding that it is not true that the recruitment was done in former districts - Pader's former district is Kitgum. The recruitment was done in Gulu. From Pader to Gulu, one has to travel over 100 kilometres.

The advert was aired at night by the LC V asking strong youthful people to go and apply for the recruitment. How would such a poor region manage to travel 100 kilometres from Pader to Gulu yet we have a whole Division –*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, honourable.

MR KOMAKECH: Now, it is turning into a brigade; the youth are so frustrated. The committee should have done justice to report the right thing.

Secondly, I do not agree with the committee when it says more funds should be allocated to UPDF, yet the Ministry of Defence is actually taking the biggest share of the budget. How can they come and tell us that the UPDF that we know of, that has the best medical personnel in the country, to prove that Uganda is setting up a hospital for East African military in Mbuya. However, we are saying Uganda as a country cannot deploy medical security personnel all over the country.

Mr Speaker, my recommendation would be that for the quota system to work, there should be one overall recruitment. When there is recruitment in the central region, by the time they reach the northern region, there is a report that they already have the numbers they want, so do whatever it takes to make sure you get the few that are left there; Pader did not get a slot.

Mr Speaker, I request-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But if they have said we need this number from each district, how can they say, by the time we reached recruitment in Northern Uganda, we had already gotten the number; I thought there was a very clear quota.

MR KOMAKECH: Mr Speaker, that is where the quota system fails. I can assure you on record, and I challenge the minister - Pader District has never gotten the 57 slots.

Then there is another bias they play. Before UPDF advertised, Uganda Prisons had advertised. We organised, and facilitated the youths to go and even tested for HIV. The surprising bit is that when they went to Uganda Prisons, they tested negative, now when they came to UPDF, they were told that they were positive and the results were not there.

This Government invests a lot of money in patriotism. We are putting in a lot of money for Ugandans to love their country. Again, we are the same people teaching Ugandans to hate their country.

With that, I beg, Mr Speaker, the next time there is recruitment, let it be a one-off announcement and then it is done widely so that Pader gets its 57 slot. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. But honourable, these are operational matters and especially to do with security. We give them leverage to do their things, but what we are demanding is transparency.

We should focus - the issue of Hon. Sarah raised was on transparency. Otherwise, we do

not go deep into how they operate. However, be transparent whichever way you operate.

6.23

MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke): Mr Speaker, my concern is about the indisciplined soldiers who took part in the malpractice.

I recommended that the minister brings the list of these soldiers. You might find out that these are not corporals, but senior officers. They should be named and shamed, because they are tarnishing UPDF. You might also find out that these soldiers are the ones abducting Ugandans and torturing political prisoners. Our NUP supporters are in Kitalya because of these indisciplined soldiers. Therefore, the minister should lay on the Table the list of the soldiers who took part in the malpractice.

Secondly, the ministry should publicise the recruitment centres; Ugandans are not aware of these centres. I am specifically talking about the recruitment centres because they are not known. They have to be publicised so that Ugandans know where to go when the time of recruitment has come.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But Hon. Allan, they put announcements. That is how all these colleagues have been able to know. However, the minister should, indeed, clarify on the recruitment centre.

6.25

MR RONALD BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division East, Kampala City): Mr Speaker, we are dealing with a very difficult matter. Particularly when it comes to Kampala, where we have a multicultural setting, it is quite difficult.

There is no clear framework for someone to become a resident in any area. Tomorrow, I can go to Tororo, become a resident, and therefore get a letter from the LC asserting that I am a resident. Therefore, it is hard for us to disprove these letters from the LCs.

When I was a mayor, I used to conduct interviews myself, and I found out that they had

just come for a day or two. Therefore, we must set clear criteria on who actually qualifies. Can someone come from Tororo to Kampala, my constituency, and in two days they claim they are residents? There is no clear framework on that and so, it is not easy.

Secondly, the local councils that are mandated to recommend our people have no say. They only benefit from such recommendations. *(Applause)* Therefore, unless we address the issue of facilitating local councils for the great work they do, we shall always have such scenarios.

Mr Speaker, on the 13th of November 2021, over 2,000 UPDF *–(Member timed out.)* I beg for a little more time. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, conclude.

MR BALIMWEZO: Over 2,000 UPDF officers went to Somalia for peacekeeping and returned on the 30th Day of November last year, but they have never received their pay. Not even a penny. They served for a full year without pay. Some of them have died.

I want the minister to tell us if it is the UN that pays. Why are these people not paid? For example, a one Muhammad Ali died, but the family has never received his pay. So, these are the questions I want to ask the minister. Thank you.

6.28

MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere): Thank you, Mr Speaker. From the onset, let me thank the two ministers who are here; the Minister of State for Defence and the Minister of State for Veteran Affairs because when I called them on the issue of malpractice, they were spot on; they addressed them. I want to thank them for that.

I would like to encourage colleagues to sometimes not wait until things are out of hand. These are our colleagues and they should be able to help us when these issues arise.

Mr Speaker, the way the clan system is in Teso – if you are *Ikaribwok* or *Ilalei*, you are

recognised in terms of either being a famous clan or a clan of warriors. So, when Members here talk about some families having army men or corruption that is where it all comes from. Sometimes it is because of the arrangement. I come from a military family and I am the only one who did not join the armed forces. We had four army officers and policemen, right from World War time.

Therefore, it is not necessarily correct that because a certain family has more people in the armed forces because the family has an army general there, no. Possibly, it could have been how that family is arranged in the clan system. Of course, there could be some exceptions, but that must also be considered.

The issue of corruption, I think is what brings all this confusion and if we don't address it, then this problem will continue.

On the quota system, I need the minister to help me because our Constitution is very clear about the army being national in character. It doesn't say that army recruitment should be based on the quota system.

If I lived and grew up in Fort Portal and my name is Okupa. I could be rejected because I could have appeared in the list for Kabarole District. So, how do you handle such cases? Let us not make this recruitment tribal, but national in character and transparency is what is paramount. It must be national in character. Those who are involved must ensure that it is national in character.

I would also like to know from the chairperson of the committee, did you look at the list of the recruits? I remember in the last Parliament, Mr Speaker, you were here when similar issues about recruitment into the Uganda Police Force emerged. We did realise that one sub-county had 21 ASPs on the list.

So, I do not know whether you had the chance to look at the list and got to know where this came from. I am saying this because we should debate with facts for us to measure ourselves in the next recruitment, on whether we have made an improvement or not.

In this case, we would be able to know, for example, that out of these people who have come from Soroti District, how many were from Soroti and how many were not? From the Karamoja region, how many were from this region and how many were not. That way, we would be able to have that statistical analysis to help us do better in the next recruitment.

Anyhow, I hope the ministers are taking up these things. The Committee on Defence and Veteran Affairs must continuously engage the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, the Uganda People's Defence Forces, the Uganda Police Force and the Uganda Prisons Services whenever the recruitment takes place. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

6.31

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The majority of our young people look at this recruitment as an opportunity for them to be employed, but most importantly as an opportunity to serve their country.

I want it to be on record that as opposed to some submissions before, in this country, we still have young people who are extremely patriotic and so, they do not only look at this as an opportunity to get jobs.

I also, of course, take the opportunity to salute many of our young people who turn up in big numbers for these recruitments to defend the territorial integrity of Uganda.

Mr Speaker, this is an indication that this House needs to continue discussing the matter of youth unemployment because it's a crisis of the contemporary youth of our time.

Three quick points:

First, I totally and vehemently support the proposal of us not losing any allocations to any of the sectors because for example, Lira District in itself lost 196 slots in the last recruitment.

Secondly, some of our young people have reported the element of vindication when

they report any complaints. We request that a complaint desk, perhaps manned by senior officers, be set up.

Third, the tremendous interest of our youth in turning up for this recruitment shows you how much our young people want to serve. It should push the Government to introduce a National Youth Service Scheme as a way of addressing the matter of mindset and ideological need to promote national development. We have seen this happen in other countries and I believe that this compulsory programme can work. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. No, Hon. Okwalinga, you refused to stand up when I was picking Members from that side.

6.34

MS PHYLLIS CHEMUTAI (NRM, Woman Representative, Kapchorwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the report and also thank the petitioner, Hon. Sarah Opendi, for coming up with this very important issue.

I want to talk about only one thing, which I realised during this recruitment exercise. There was an element of extortion. This was confessed by the parents whose children were recruited. They had to pay some money. Some paid between Shs 2 million and Shs 3 million. They had to do that because they were desperate to get jobs for their children.

All these observations that we are making are due to corruption. The recruitment officials are corrupt because they accept to get money from people.

I call upon Government to ensure that the recruitment exercise is free and fair for all Ugandans. The people who are taken up for the jobs should be the ones who have performed well and everybody should know that the ones who have been recruited have performed - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, please.

MS PHYLLIS CHEMUTAI: Not those who have paid money. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The way Hon. Phyllis Chemutai is speaking, you can just hear from her heart directly. Her people presented the issue of corruption clearly; junior officers on the ground - Honourable minister, it is very important to take note and ensure that this does not happen -

6.37

MS CLARE MUGUMYA (NRM, Woman Representative, Isingiro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would also like to add my voice to that of my colleagues and thank the petitioner for having raised those very pertinent issues. I also thank the committee for being responsive to the issues that were raised by the petitioner.

However, I am saddened by the conclusion in the statement that our youth are turning up in large numbers to join the UPDF because of their love to serve this country. I think that is not true at all because during that time, I got so many people calling me and asking me to support them; to lobby for them to ensure that they join. Because all of them are my voters, I tried to refrain myself from participating and encouraged them to go and participate.

However, I would like to assure the House that these people were going there out of desperation, looking for survival, looking for ways of getting employment. When these people go for recruitment into the UPDF, they have very high expectations and when they do not realise them, probably it could even be a security threat. Somebody has gone to look for employment expecting to earn a certain amount of money, expecting to find good working conditions and when their expectations are not fulfilled, I think it becomes a problem.

Thank you to those who were recruiting; you were recruiting at regional level, but some of these regions are formed of more than 15 districts. Some of these places are very hard to reach and it was a problem for some people to move from their districts to those centres.

I recommend that next time, we divide those huge regions into two or three so that people are able to access the recruitment centres.

In addition, the exercise was very tedious; I do not know whether it was by design, but when people saw the conditions in the papers, they failed to show up because they felt that probably they might not make it. UPDF, please try to make the process attractive so that we get many people turning up to enlist.

Lastly, the presenter tried to mention some gender sensitive data; mentioning a number of women that were recruited, but because it was not in the report, he was not allowed to give full information about that.

This report would help us to know how many women were recruited and from which districts so that next time, we are able to know the participation of women and men. If we were given a quota of about 50 per cent and they took about five, next time, honourable minister, let us ensure that if you are giving us 50 per cent again, the other 50 per cent opportunity that we missed should also be considered. Thank you.

6.40

MR SIMON PETER OPOLOT (NRM, Kanyum County, Kumi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am a member of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs. There is something that has just come up and I propose that this could be included because ideas tend to keep on coming up so, if it is beneficial, it is not good to sit on it, waiting for a future opportunity.

Looking at the challenges, I tend to put myself in the shoes of those who are recruiting. You want 57 recruits and 2,000 have turned up. Out of the 2,000 possibly 1,000 have the basic necessities. What do you do?

Before the recruitment next year, let us tell those who feel they have the qualifications and the talent to join the forces to come up now and lists can be generated early enough. This can be given to Intelligence to vet early enough

and then we can say, we can now take only 57, but we are going to sequence this list over time. That will give hope to the 1,000 who had the best qualifications that this year they have taken 57, but perhaps in the following year, I will also benefit in the next sequence. Thank you.

6.42

BRIG. GEN. CHARITY BAINABABO (UPDF Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the petitioner and the committee for the report. We appreciate all the objective submissions and for the subjective ones, certainly, we do not take them. These will help us to do better as we go on.

I would like to emphasise that while we want a disciplined force, we the Members of Parliament are the ones who are doing influence peddling. As such, we also need to look at the way we do our things. We get calls from colleagues, for example, someone saying, this child is of my very good supporter, please get him promoted, please, get him recruited.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, do not reveal our names.

BRIG. GEN. BAINABABO: I will not. And you ask, is someone being your supporter one of the parameters for recruitment? Certainly not.

While we blame the LCs of being corrupt in those areas, we also need to do a soul search somewhere because we have all participated in this influence peddling.

Elimination will continue because when we go out to recruit 3000, we cannot take 4000 because the budget only allows for us to recruit that specific number, but for all the objective submissions that you have given us, we will use them to make better as we go forward. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Brig. Gen. Charity, we shall continue lobbying you because you also lobby us to support UPDF. That is why we love you. When we are in the

corridors, in the canteen, we are lucky to have you.

I do not know whether you were waiting for Hon. Oguzu Lee to go out -

6.44

MAJ. GEN. SAM KAVUMA (UPDF Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate all the Members who have contributed and those who raised these matters. We take whatever has been raised positively and I believe that the minister has prepared enough to respond to all the issues that have been raised. I would like to thank the committee for their findings.

However, UPDF has not just existed today; UPDF has been in existence and it has been recruiting. If I may refer to myself, I was recruited in 1981, but that was not by quota system. It was by other arrangements – (*Laughter*)– but since then, UPDF has existed and has been recruiting.

And Members who are raising these issues have also been in existence. For example, Hon. Sarah has been a Member of Parliament for quite some time; she has been a minister. Even those who are in Parliament for the first time have been in local councils; some have been RDCs, others have been LCV Chairmen, others have been LCIIIs or even LCIs supervising these recruitments. So, I wanted to know whether – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, switch on.

MAJ. GEN. KAVUMA: I wanted to know whether the problem just came in the last recruitment - because that is what has been referred to, so that we know and follow up to know those who were involved in the last recruitment, so that we see where, maybe, some people went wrong.

Many things have been raised; some are saying those with HIV should be recruited. Others are saying our 57 – I wanted to clarify on one point about the quotas.

First of all, it is what we want as UPDF that determines the number. If, for example, we want to recruit 3,000, these 3,000 are going to be divided by each district, but not on equal numbers. The other determinant is the population in that district.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think, General, the MPs were fighting for the quotas you allocated them.

MAJ. GEN. KAVUMA: To be recruited from there? So, I think that one – if it happened only last time, then it is a matter of transparency and I think the minister will respond and we are ready to really improve where things are not going right. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a question you asked the House. I will ask the petitioner to respond on our behalf because it was general, coming from Members.

MS OPENDI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was very specific that we have had recruitments for the UPDF, but the outcry of the corruption in the last recruitment is the reason why I brought the matter here. I have never got leaders and the population rising up against the recruitment as it was this time. There was no transparency and, therefore, that prompted me to bring it here. So, please, pick these as issues raised by me, coming from my people who cannot come to speak here. I hope you take them and improve next time.

MAJ. GEN. KAVUMA: Well appreciated, honourable Member. We shall really find out what happened. Thank you. I beg to rest my case.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can see how I am in a dilemma – a General accesses a microphone without permission of a civilian. *(Laughter)* I have nowhere I can run to for his arrest. *(Laughter)* Well done, Hon. Kavuma; and it is good you have participated as UPDF Members. Acting Leader of the Opposition -

6.49

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I begin by urging the UPDF to maintain their professionalism. As I speak now, Ugandan soldiers are respected in the whole of Africa. I remember when we visited the UPDF in the Central Africa Republic, we went to Somalia – our UPDF are very professional.

These other minor issues of corruption during recruitment – those are the things that will tarnish our name for no good reason. So, let us maintain that professionalism.

Mr Speaker, transparency is very important. The truth of the matter is that in the last election, there was no transparency in the recruitment.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It was recruitment, not election. You only think in terms of elections? *(Laughter)*

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I withdraw the word election; I replace it with recruitment. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, in the last recruitment, there was no transparency, but I would like to thank the UPDF representative for admitting what went wrong. This is a learning time and in the next recruitment, let us try to be very transparent. Let the representations be quite equal.

The recruitment centres – Mr Speaker, that time they claimed that because of COVID-19, that is why the recruitment centres were quite far away. At this time, out of 134 districts, let the recruitment be done from the specific district. In my district Amuru, let them come there and recruit so that we know how many shall be recruited from my district. Let them traverse all the districts in this country.

As I wind up, Mr Speaker, with due respect from our brothers from Karamoja - you know it is good that the recruitment and training be done equally. But in other regions and parts of the country, the trainings are done right from childhood. For example, in Karamoja, once

you are born, you are trained on how to use guns, how to fight and how to do many things.

Mr Speaker, you will guide if they really still need the training that is being done countrywide. *(Laughter)*

They are here and will attest to that - and guns are part of their lives. So, I really feel they should give chance to other regions where they have never held guns and they do not know what happens as far as guns are concerned.

And finally, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order from Abim.

MS OKORI-MOE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I know in Karamoja we have 11 tribes. One of the tribes is Ethur, the Acholi-Labwor of Abim. Is it in order for the honourable Member to misinform this House and the country that the Karimojong train children from childhood on handling the gun and yet we know right now there is disarmament to rid the region of guns. Is he in order to misinform and even to paint a bad picture of a good person like me? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You know I took it on a light note, but you know issues of tribes, especially where there has been contention between the two tribes - Hon. Gilbert Olanya has come on the Floor several times to complain about the Karimojong. So, they might not take it lightly the way some of us can take it on a light note. So, Hon. Gilbert, you need to withdraw that statement, my brother, for the sake of sanity.

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. On that note, I withdraw that particular part. I know –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, do not try to justify everything. Conclude.

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Finally, I would like to urge UPDF representatives who are here and the minister to audit the past exercise. It is very important to understand what went wrong and what

happened at what point. So, you try to audit how the exercise went so that next time the same mistake is not repeated.

Otherwise, thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank you for giving honourable members ample time for good participation at this particular time.

Being the acting LOP, I think I have done my part well. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Congratulations on your appointment as acting LOP. I hope you are ready to hand over power. Honourable minister? The chairperson will come after because he will respond to all issues, including those by the minister.

6.56

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (DEFENCE) (Mr Jacob Oboth): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank Members, including the acting LOP, for all the suggestions and proposals you have made. You have been very passionate about the recruitment process of the UPDF. We have taken note of the many concerns, especially some of the areas that you have proposed for reforms.

I am here in Parliament with the chief of training, Brig. Gen. Matthew Gureme, who is on the Technical Bench, and we have been taking note. The committee handled most of the things stated here, but you emphasised them.

I would like to correct the record that this matter has not been overtaken by events. The issue of recruitment is not a one-time thing. This is going to be recurrent and, so, we are benefiting from the wealth of knowledge that has been shared here. However, I want to state it on record that those who have been apprehended - we shared the list with the committee. It is not a secret that there are some rotten eggs or tomatoes amidst the great, patriotic and nationalistic UPDF soldiers.

Therefore, I want to let you know that a few isolated cases of extortion were reported, investigated and the culprits apprehended.

Nonetheless, you should not ignore the finding of the fact that some of the people who allegedly solicit bribes and extort money from the *wanainchi* could actually be officers who are not assigned that job.

We are making proposals and want to engage Parliament and local governments in the next recruitments. We can involve Members of Parliament in information sharing so that we engage you first, for like a week before, so that you get the basic requirements that we need and relay them to the *wanainchi* – I am not sure that the Members of Parliament will be glad to be nominating and endorsing forms.

For the specific responses, it could take a little longer to respond to each one of you, but, generally, I found them very useful for our own reforms and improvement. The UPDF is a national party – (*Laughter*) - the national party is NRM, but the UPDF is a national army and it must serve all shades.

Interestingly, when they are recruiting – where the confusion is – they use the data of 14 August 2014: the national population statistics. Some districts' data have changed. I believe that next time we shall do better. However, we are mandated and whatever we did, we did it according to the law despite a few challenges.

Thank you very much for your kind attention and the recommendations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. That is very important and what we need is improvement so that next time, we can do better. You can count on our support. This is part of oversight – when MPs see a problem, instead of it exploding, they bring it here, we inform you and then you go and do better.

Honourable chairperson, conclude. You do not need to respond to specific issues.

MR MUGABE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to use this opportunity to thank honourable members for the comments,

additions and subtractions to our report. We take all the comments in good faith.

Mr Speaker, regarding the distance, time and probably the cost involved – for these recruits to move to the recruitment centres – I implore the UPDF to adopt the system being used by the Uganda Police Force.

The Uganda Police Force now sends out an advert. When they advertise, the DPC and the security team work and put up a shortlist and send it to the headquarters where they vet, verify the national identity cards and the shortlisted ones are again sent back to the districts for scrutiny and then they are called for recruitment. Probably, if that system is adopted, it can try to solve this matter.

Mr Speaker, I implore Members that when we are making our submissions, we should make them based on the facts. Take an example of one of the Members raising an issue on recruitment, like in Pader, where the chairman LC V just woke up in the evening of the D-Day and informed people that all the able-bodied youth should now move to Gulu for recruitment.

Mr Speaker, one of the documents presented and laid on Table was the advert which was sent almost a month before recruitment. Pader was part of the document, whereby they were supposed to report to Gulu as a recruitment centre. The centre also served Kitgum, Pader, Gulu and other districts. Therefore, we also need to get these facts when we are submitting.

Lastly, we emphasised the issue of budget and it was to allow the UPDF ample time to go through these recruitment processes. Otherwise, the funds allocated for that particular exercise is not enough to facilitate them to take time to verify, vet and also create more recruitment teams to reach out to those districts. So, if funds are appropriated, probably, they will send out more teams to reach out to our districts for better processes.

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank Members, particularly members of the committee, for this report. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, you remember the honourable colleague from Sebei when I asked: “The good runners...” – you know, the people who give us medals – “... you mean you were not even given any priority?”

Yes, the Government Chief Whip has some information he would want to give to the House and then I put a question.

7.04

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Denis Obua): Mr Speaker, permit me to thank you, the acting Leader of the Opposition, my brother, Hon. Olanya, and all the Members who have stayed up to now.

With your permission, I would like to do two things: one, if it pleases you, to read a three-paragraph letter and; two, later lay it on the Table.

This letter is from the office of the Minister of Education and Sports – and you know that I served as state minister in charge of sports.

“31 August 2021 - and addressed to all LC V chairpersons, central, western, eastern and northern region.

Presidential directive on excelling sportsmen and women with Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE)

As you may recall, on 13 August 2021, the President of the Republic of Uganda hosted a state reception for the triumphant contingent Team Uganda that represented our country at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds.

During this event, the President directed that excelling sportsmen and women with Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) be identified, recruited into Uganda’s armed forces, and given ample time to train in order to represent the country in different sports disciplines, while they simultaneously earn a living (and participate in sports).

The purpose of this letter, therefore, is to communicate this Presidential Directive and request the office of the Minister of State for sports to accordingly coordinate the implementation of this task.

Yours sincerely,

Janet K. Museveni

First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports”

The letter is copied to Her Excellency, the Vice-President, the Speaker of Parliament, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Presidency.

Honourable members, there exists a standing presidential directive on excelling sportsmen and women who would wish to join the different armed forces; the UPDF, the Uganda Police Force, Uganda Prisons, and Uganda Wildlife Authority. As you know, a number of our excelling athletes come from these four groups. Kiplimo belongs to the Uganda Wildlife Authority and Cheptegei is an officer in the Uganda Police Force.

Therefore, let us take advantage of this, but we are looking at excelling, not those playing in the Juri League in Alebtong district. I beg to report and also lay on Table for the record to capture this. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Government Chief Whip. The problem is the one to whom the letter was addressed. The letter is addressed to all local council five chairpersons, but as you have seen, their role is almost not there in the recruitment process. It would be good if you can pass it on formally to the UPDF so that they know that they have considered these people. *(Applause)*

MR OBOTH: That is actually a special slot so they do not need to worry about that. It is from the Government side. If there is any person recommended by the LC5 from the Opposition side and he is excelling, as indicated, there would be no hindrance with the –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, we have not seen the role in the recruitment

process. What we are talking about is when you are communicating to them about the upcoming recruitment, you can inform them. If you have sports people that have excelled, please -

MR OBUA: I make that undertaking that from today onwards, as *–(Interjection)–* even that one? Hon. Okupa likes amending things from the other side.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on alleged unfair and discriminatory recruitment by the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I would like to thank you for today. I came knowing we would finish by around 5.30 p.m., but your commitment has made me push harder so that we accomplish a bigger part of the Order Paper. We are trying to map out all this business so that we have enough time for the budget framework paper, where I have to urge you to go and research. When you come here, I will give you enough time to make submissions.

With the National Budget Framework Paper, please, do not come here to list what your constituency has not got. Let us be nationalistic in our arguments and presentations. Come here as a Member of Parliament of Uganda, not only for Mitooma or Kasilo, but go beyond the horizon and analyse the budget. You do not need to analyse the whole budget; you might have a sector that you are interested in and want to see how best that sector can benefit.

Nonetheless, Hon. Oguzu Lee challenged us. We usually put the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on pressure claiming they have not given certain sectors money. Can we also come up with proposals on revenue generation? Saying,

“give this project money” is very easy, but what do you want *Mzee* Kasaija to give out? If we are to continue sharing poverty, then, we shall continue having very many issues.

Therefore, let us be honest in our discussions; look at the state of our economy and how we can improve revenue generation so that we can have a much more constructive debate, when we come to the National Budget Framework Paper. I adjourn the House to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 7.11 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 25 January 2023 at 2.00 p.m.)