



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION - FIRST MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 8 JULY 2026



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FIRST SESSION - 7TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Wednesday, 8 July 2026

Parliament met at 2.18 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS

The oaths were administered to:

1. Ms Idah Nabayiga

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, when did we start clapping in Parliament? You know how we do it. Honourable, kindly sign the oaths.

Congratulations. I was with you in the 10th Parliament and you are back. You know the procedures of this House. I want to give you a copy of the Rules of Procedure and the Constitution, and I wish you all the best. *(Applause)*

At the right time, I am going to ask the Government Chief Whip to designate you to the relevant committees. Government Chief Whip, if you are ready today, you – Okay, anytime. You might be having some other – usually there are some changes you may want to make. Once both sides have concluded, they can always bring in those changes.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister and honourable members, I welcome you to today's sitting. As I was about to come to this House, Hon. Mapenduzi gave me very sad news that last night, a bus belonging to OPIT Travellers Company, traveling from Kampala to Gulu, had a head-on collision with an Actros trailer at Bobi at around 9.30 p.m.

According to preliminary reports from Gulu police, 15 people have been confirmed dead and 24 sustained injuries. I know the Rt Hon. Prime Minister usually intervenes, and the Government knows what to do.

Road safety is a very big issue. We have lost colleagues here before; we have lost relatives; we have lost our constituents; many people. It is an issue to which all of us need to come and put our hands together to see how best we can promote road safety.

In the meantime, honourable colleagues, I request that we stand up and observe a minute of silence for the victims.

(Members observed a moment of silence.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, our system for clocking in is working. We are now taking cognisance of your presence in the House. Please, do not enter the House without registering. The systems are near the door and you know the repercussions

of missing the House 15 times without the permission of the presiding officer.

Hon. Zaake wants to hear it properly. If you miss the House 15 times, you risk losing your seat if you do it without the permission of the presiding officer.

For those who are not able to come here physically, our rules provide for virtual attendance of the House. For whoever attends virtually, we capture it in the records of Parliament. Therefore, if you are not able to attend here, please attend virtually, and the rules that apply to physical attendance apply to virtual attendance.

During the induction, colleagues were asking me about procedures and all that. We always send logins every day, and this is a secure login because we do not want strangers to attend the House.

Secondly, you must be dressed formally. I do not want you to attend the session when you are digging or you are in a car travelling. Ensure that you have a stable internet connection and you are in a room alone because we do not want strangers to tag on and attend the House. You are submitting and your child also submits, saying: "Oh, daddy, also say this," and it goes on the *Hansard* - We want to be very clear on that. However, we would encourage you, as much as possible, to attend physically.

Tomorrow, we shall have Prime Minister's Time. There are many questions that I received today, but most of them are not of an urgent nature, but should instead be addressed to the Prime Minister. Please, take those questions to the Government Chief Whip in the Leader of Government Business' offices, and they will be recorded.

The Prime Minister always has questions for written responses and questions which come from you, Members, directly for oral answers. Therefore, if I do not pick you today, please bear with me. Tomorrow is your day. We usually save Thursdays to accommodate as many questions as possible.

Hon. Isingoma, I saw your question, and I will give you space tomorrow. Prime Minister, I am sending some of the questions to your office so that you prepare the responses early.

Honourable colleagues, for now, that is it. (*Members rose*) Matters of national importance or reactions to my communication? I will allow two people; one here and another one there. I will allow Hon. Samuel Opio Acuti and Hon. Joseph Ssewungu. I also need a lady. Let me do this: Hon. Ssewungu, Hon. Amaniyo, the District Woman Representative, Mukono, and Hon. Linos. These are for responses to my communication. For matters of national importance, I have the names.

I know Hon. Mujungu, but I need the ones whom I do not know. Sorry, Hon. Mujungu. I will give you an opportunity; do not mind. I already have the list of Members for matters of national importance.

Hon. Opio, was it a reaction to my communication? Hon. Mujungu, was it on my communication? Then, we will have Hon. Otingiw and Hon. Pacuto. Let us use one minute each. (*Members rose*) No, the ones I have picked are already enough to react to my communication.

Hon. Ssewungu, was it a reaction to my communication?

2.31

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu County West, Kalungu): Thank you. Mr Speaker, on road accidents, the Ministry of Works and Transport must come out and correct the errors on the roads.

On Masaka Road, Sinotrucks have the biggest hooting on the roads, and many people have died because of the hooting. There are rules governing the use of vehicles.

Secondly, what type of roads do we have, Honourable Minister for Transport? We cannot have roads without the infrastructure – no painting, no road signs! How do we run a country where you tarmac roads and they remain dusty?

Sincerely, Mr Speaker, the issue of Sino trucks – I was a young man during the late President Idi Amin’s time; I was in primary school. Lorries were not travelling at night. Sino trucks are causing – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, honourable member.

MR SSEWUNGU: Sino trucks are causing a lot of accidents on the roads.

Secondly, one time these buses had speed governors. However, these days they no longer have speed governors. A lot of work is done by you, but it is not satisfactory. Honourable Minister, I saw you in the field, and I am happy with that. This is the beginning of your work. The issue of people dying because of road accidents must be resolved.

Mr Speaker, motorcycles – boda bodas – have stronger lights than vehicles at night. All those are imported by the Government, and you sanction them. If not so, why are you not arresting those who bring them into the country?

How do you have a motorcycle on the road and it gives flashes at night, which stop other people from seeing? At the end of the day, people die. Here we are mourning 15 people who perished. If you take the record of the people who die every day on our roads, it is very painful, and something must be done by the Government.

Mr Speaker - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, in the VIP gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation from the NRM Secretariat. They include Hon. Dr Rosemary Nansubuga Seninde – Director, Mobilisation. *(Applause)*

Our guests, here we do not clap. *(Laughter)* I request the Clerk to always brief our guests before they enter the gallery. They were about to say “NRM Oyee!” and the Prime Minister would jump and join right away. *(Laughter)* I know her. I do not want us to take that route.

We also have:

1. Hon. Jacqueline Kyatuheire – Deputy National Treasurer
2. Hon. Ambassador James Kinobe – Commissioner, NRM Electoral Commission
3. Hon. Emmanuel Dombo – Director, Information and Publicity

They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me, once again, in welcoming them. *(Applause)* We are always happy to see our former colleagues who come to - from here, they advise us and we always love it.

Honourable colleagues, also in the VIP gallery this afternoon, we have our sister, Hon. Christine Kaaya Nakimwero, the former District Woman Member of Parliament for Kiboga. She has come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming her. *(Applause)*

Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation from Kalangala District.

They include:

1. Mr Sande Gerald Kayita – Chairperson, NRM Kalangala;
2. Ms Noeline Nalongo – the mother to our sister, the Woman Member of Parliament;
3. Mr Moses Kazibwe – Chairperson, Butumiral Kachanga;
4. Adrian Kavuma – the husband to Hon. Aidah. Now, he is an MP by association, not by accessing the emoluments; *(Laughter)*
5. Hon. Peruth Nabasirye – LC5 councillor;
6. His Worship Dodovic Kiberu – Mayor, Kalangala;
7. Ms Harriet Namisango – GISO;
8. Hon. Charles Kalemba – LC 3 Chairperson, Bubeike; and
9. Hon. Teddy Nalukwago – LC.1 Chairperson, Kibanga;

They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Willy Lugoloobi of Bujumba County and Hon. Carolyn Nanyondo of Kyamuswa County, Kalangala District.

They have also come to observe the proceedings of this House as their Woman MP is sworn in. Please, join me once again, honourable colleagues, in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Yes, Member for Kiryandongo?

2.37

MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In October 2025, we experienced a very terrible head-on collision accident in Kiryandongo District, which involved buses and about 64 passengers perished.

The President of the Republic of Uganda made a commitment to compensate the deceased families and those who got injured – Shs 5 million for the dead and Shs 1 million for the injured. However, until today, we have not received anything and the families of those who perished continue to engage the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) for the compensation. Maybe the Prime Minister could help us take on this?

Finally, on the issue of accidents, I would also like to implore – *(Member timed out.)*

MR NGOMPEK: It is a very important point –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, you have switched on the microphone without my permission. You see, when it is off, you sit. Kindly take your seat, honourable. I have now allowed you to go on. *(Laughter)*

MR NGOMPEK: Thank you. I would like to implore the Minister of Works and Transport to establish a hospital where each driver that is going to renew their driving permit is tested, as a must. When we go to the driving permit offices, they just issue these permits.

Most of these drivers are DMC: “Drivers in dangerous condition.” So if they test us and then we qualify for renewal of permits, I think this will help reduce the rate of accidents. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, honourable colleagues, apart from specific matters like the one raised of the contributions, I wouldn’t call it compensation. I would just say contribution towards either medical or burial expenses. For the rest, if they are not very direct, I would like them to be directed to the responsible committee.

That is why we have committee leaders here, and I implore them to be observant. This will help you when you are doing your work. Otherwise, not everything will be responded to. The Prime Minister will respond at once. Hon. Pacuto -

2.40

MS JANE AVUR PACUTO (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Allow me to congratulate you on that high office that you have retained and allow me to also congratulate my fellow fisherwoman, Hon. Aida. Welcome back to the House.

I would like to thank you for highlighting the issue of accidents. Many times, these accidents are caused by stationary vehicles. My passionate appeal to the Minister of Works and Transport is for a system and mechanism whereby any truck or vehicle with mechanical issues that cannot be moved or repaired within a day should have access to a parking yard on the highways where these are - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, Conclude.

MS PACUTO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. These vehicles can then be towed and parked so that the owners come and repair them. We are losing very productive Ugandans that could really contribute to the development of this country because of such careless, reckless and unmanaged situations. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Asinansi, was it in my communication? Okay.

2.41

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO (PFF, Woman Representative, Hoima City): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. In the 11th Parliament, we resolved that the Government, through the Ministry of Works and Transport, reinstate the use of speed governors. I wanted the Minister of Works and Transport to update this House on how far they have gone in implementing that resolution.

As our dear sister has said, we also resolved that if a car gets a mechanical problem, the owner, at his or her cost, should work together with the police so that it is towed away. I would also like the Minister of Works and Transport to update us on how far they have gone. The Prime Minister is here, and she was part of that meeting together with the Uganda Police and other officers from the Ministry of Works and Transport.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I had picked Hon. Opio Acuti.

2.42

MR SAMUEL OPIO ACUTI (NRM, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On the issue of road accidents, I recall that in the last Parliament, we came up with a committee under the Office of the Speaker which came up with clear resolutions and action items. I would appeal that those action items be retrieved so that the Ministry of Works and Transport and the necessary agencies can follow up.

Related to that, on that Gulu highway where the accident took place, there is a section from Kamdini proceeding to Lira up to Soroti. That road is under construction and is being finalised. Unfortunately, where the bends are and where you have the trading centres, the road markings allow for overtaking. I have raised this issue several times, even to the contractor, but they have not taken action. Two weeks ago, we had an accident there, and we are going to continue having more accidents if that is not addressed.

There is a need for the Minister of Works and Transport to urgently intervene. Last week, the police also raised the same complaint

concerning misleading road signs by the contractor on the road. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay. Hon. Isaac.

2.44

MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Alluding to some of the submissions of our honourable colleagues, for the entire stretch along the northern route going all the way to Gulu, the biggest accidents right now are due to potholes which are not being filled by the Ministry of Works and Transport.

We have a high volume of passengers now travelling at night, and because of little lighting along the road, these buses do not see some of these potholes. That is how they end up swerving towards another vehicle, and we get head-on collisions.

Can we have those potholes actually filled to make sure that the road is safe?

I would also like to inform the Minister of Works and Transport that we are still getting accidents and deaths along the Jukia road. We passed a loan of \$20 million for works to begin on the Nebbi-Goli Road; the 16 kilometers. Nothing is happening on the ground. What are you going to do? Lastly, Rt Hon. Speaker, you remember in the 11th - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Isaac. Hon. Minister for Works and Transport.

2.45

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Mr Fred Byamukama): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I agree with what my honourable colleagues are saying. In some of these accidents, our own relatives are victims, and those who survive are in Mulago.

However, for this very accident which I have just mentioned, the preliminary report shows that the cause of the accident was speeding. However, I have noted the advice given to us by honourable colleagues.

I request for a period of at least two weeks in which I will bring a statement to this House showing the comprehensive plan on which we are working together with the Department of Traffic of the Uganda Police and other stakeholders who support us in road safety, so that you can advise us further on that plan. If it is good, we can go ahead and implement, but if you need us to change, we shall change. Then we bring it - (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, two things. One, colleagues have alluded to the resolutions of this House and, you know, when the House makes resolutions, action is taken. So, I will ask the Clerk to once again avail you with a copy of those resolutions, as you have just been appointed, so that you can show us the action you have taken or plan to take on them.

Secondly, with regard to the statement you are to bring here in two weeks, I would propose that you take it to the Committee on Physical Infrastructure so that, together with your technical staff, you go through it comprehensively and if the committee deems it necessary to report here, it will report.

However, the report is usually brought here for resolutions. If it is not for resolutions then the committee would just help you to enrich, and then you keep engaging with us here. I think that would - but there were specific questions which the Members raised. Very specific, which were not general, and which needed quick action from you as a minister.

I expected you to respond to Hon. Opio on overtaking lanes in the busy trading centres where they are working on the road. Then there is the issue raised by Hon. Isaac on the loan for Goli, which we passed - I think Hon. Linos' issue as well. There is one for the Prime Minister from Hon. Linos.

MR BYAMUKAMA: Mr Speaker, on the issue of the road signs, we mentioned it even in the last Parliament that we were working out a plan.

The road signs we have been very attractive; they are metallic and are so attractive to our people. We are working on a plan to bring ones that are not attractive, such that they can last long on the road. Most of them use the poles, and where we put the signs, they take and sell them as scrap.

Mr Speaker, you arrest people, but the next day, they come back. However, we are working out a plan where we can have those ones which are not attractive so that they can last longer. We remain committed to doing that.

On the issue of bringing back the speed governors, I have noted it with concern. We are going to go back and sit down with our people to see how best we can bring it up to save our people.

On the Nebbi-Goli Road, we are working to ensure that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development finalises with the contractor, and very soon, the contractor will report on the site once he finalises everything with the finance ministry. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Clerk, I request that you forward a copy of this component of the *Hansard* to the minister on the specific issues that Members have raised. The minister is able, and I know how he works. He will quickly move into action.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

2.49

THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I have two questions. One is on the issue of testing our drivers before they are recommended to have a renewed license to drive on our roads.

Mr Speaker, I have been sharing with the former Minister of Health, and she has told me that the facilities to check all our drivers are in our national and regional referral hospitals. That is where they can check you for non-communicable diseases such as hypertension

and diabetes. They can also check your eyes to see whether your eyesight is okay because there are those drivers who cannot see during the night. Therefore, let us advise our communities to take advantage of the already existing facilities in our regional referral hospitals.

Secondly, on the Kampala-Gulu Highway where we lost 64 lives, I request my brother to provide me with a list of the deceased, the next of kin, their contacts, the districts where they come from, and the villages where they were buried. Then, we shall take it to the President. Our President is a parent, and he will definitely support those families with Shs 5 million, and Shs 1 million for those who went for treatment. However, for those that sought treatment, we will need evidence to see they were treated in the hospitals. Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Matters of national importance. Hon. Naturinda Eliab? Colleagues, I have your names here so you do not need to stand up.

2.52

MR ELIAB NATURINDA (NRM, Ndorwa County West, Kabale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have an issue of the Kabale-Lake Bunyonyi Road. Last year, the Government of the Republic of Uganda launched that road, and it was meant to promote tourism and business around Kabale. Unfortunately, the contractor, Samcrete Egypt Engineers and Contractors, has abandoned the site. He has actually removed all the materials, and we are wondering. The people of Kabale, especially those who are involved in the tourism sector, are worried. Businesses are down, and even the production levels have gone down.

Mr Speaker, I would like to request the honourable Minister of Works and Transport to intervene. The man - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I am the one who launched that road on behalf of the President. What has happened? Even the contractor brought equipment. Did he take them away after?

2.53

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Mr Fred Byamukama): Mr Speaker, I know the Kabale-Lake Bunyonyi Road. The contractor is Temu Contractors, and they were also going to work on the Mgahinga Road; those are tourism roads. As I speak, we are considering terminating the contract of that contractor on grounds that he had no capacity.

Mr Speaker, my technical people informed me that this is a loan. When taking a loan, it should be competitive bidding. They had written to the bank that we should not have a contract with this person when they anticipated that the person did not have capacity but the bank refused. Instead the bank accepted and said, "Let us take this person". Actually, we have received information that even the bank itself is under investigation.

Mr Speaker, our officers raised a red flag but the bank went ahead to procure this contractor. Otherwise, we are taking it up and within a few weeks, we shall have terminated that contract and we will get a new contractor on board.

This morning, we met the African Development Bank people -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please go ahead. I am the one who allowed you.

MR FRED BYAMUKAMA: I have also been consulting the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and we are working out a plan. The minister has given instructions, and we are saying, as we bring the plan to terminate, that we should also bring a plan to get a new contractor immediately. We shall resolve that mess. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Asha Mafabi? A point of clarification is raised by a Member holding the Floor and I do not have any. Hon. Nsamba has a point of procedure. Hon. Mafabi, you can sit.

MR NSAMBA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. There are so many projects of this nature that the minister has talked about that are

being abandoned. These people get contracts; they are paid a big chunk of the money, and they take off. It is a very big problem.

Mr Speaker, before he runs to terminate that one, can we, as Parliament, ask the minister to come with all abandoned projects to this House so that Parliament and Ugandans are informed, and decisions are taken with our information, so we know what to do when we are appropriate?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, Parliament does not have anything to do with terminating contracts. That is not our job. Honourable, since we have just instituted committees, what I expect each committee to do is to invite the sectors that are responsible for updates on what is going on in their sectors. *(Applause)* From there, they will take on this job because we assigned them. For example, the Committee on National Economy, I expect it, together with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, to come and give an update on all loans we have approved and those we have not yet concluded. Then we will take it on from there.

Also, the Committee on Physical Infrastructure - I saw in the newspapers that the minister had summoned some contractors. Now, the committee should summon the minister to tell them what the contractors told him. Okay? That way, we are going to work together and make good progress. Otherwise, Minister Byamukama is very proactive if we support him.

Honourable colleagues, if you know of abandoned projects in your areas, inform him. I am sure he will take action.

2.58

MS ASHA MAFABI (NRM, Woman Representative, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join everyone else in congratulating you on retaining your seat. It is my first time, so I am nervous. Please forgive me.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is your maiden speech, and you are protected. *(Laughter)*

MS MAFABI: Thank you. Mr Speaker, unfortunately, Sironko, among other districts in the Elgon region, has faced landslide problems every single year. Sironko has lost people, cattle, and arable land annually because of landslides. I raise this as a matter of national importance because we have 1,645 victims who have not been relocated, yet the cracks that were formed are expanding. We are expecting El Niño rains, and the science is that the rain sips and further drags the soil - *(Member timed out.)* May I continue? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Maiden speech.

MS MAFABI: Thank you so much, I am humbled. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we are grateful for all the efforts by the Government, but we request that the relocation process be expedited because we are at risk. This information is from the district officers. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Congratulations, Hon. Mafabi, on your maiden speech. *(Laughter)* Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

2.59

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, in 2023, I remember we all agreed; both the Government and Parliament, that the way forward for our people who live in the enclaves of Mount Elgon; those risky areas, is that they should be relocated to safer places. We have so far relocated 1,200 people. We all agreed to give these people two acres of land and Shs 100,000 so that they can relocate to safer places.

Mr Speaker, getting a big chunk of land in Mount Elgon is next to impossible. We bought some land last year around Kween, and we relocated people there. On Monday, we have a Cabinet sitting and a Cabinet paper is ready for discussion so that we can change the approach. We want to give our people money for two acres, so they can look around their areas of origin.

I am being sincere with you, as the Government, that whatever piece of land you get, there are encumbrances. We are really struggling because of that. We have Shs 56 billion to help those people, and the way forward is to allow us to give them money for two acres for them to look for their own land, and another Shs 10 million. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, it is important to come and brief the House after you have confirmed it in Cabinet. I do not want people to take it from here that the Prime Minister-

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, this one is not yet approved by Cabinet.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, but Hon. Musila John seems to have a question for you; something urgent regarding that. You know a Rasta man cannot miss.

MR MUSILA: Rastafari, thank you. *(Laughter)* Mr Speaker, I agree partly with my sister, the Rt Hon. Prime Minister. For the little you have done, we have a bulk of work to do. I visited Bulambuli just a week ago and saw the squalid conditions in which our people live. Not even an African dog can live like that in tents, separated, especially the Internally Displaced People of 2024.

Mr Speaker, they eat one meal per day; they are in permanent fasting. Muslims can fast for only 30 days, but these have fasted for more than two years. Families are separated; men in their tent, women in their tent, and conjugal rights suspended for over two years. You can imagine, Mr Speaker. *(Laughter)* Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, you recall that in 2024, we had landslides that claimed a lot of lives in Buginyanya, Bulambuli District. We put those people in a camp, and the Government was supporting them in the camps until February this year.

We decided to decommission these camps because whenever we would take food, people from the mountains would come and take all the food. It was very difficult for us, as the Office of the Prime Minister. We decided to get land - those were the people we gave land first. When these ones were given land, others brought themselves in the tents waiting for food.

In February, we decommissioned Bunambutye settlement area and we are trying to relocate those people so that they can get permanent homes and help themselves. Those who are there could be our people who run away from Mbale town, and we are no longer giving them food because we decommissioned that settlement area.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I see honourable colleagues from the sub-region eager to ask more questions. I request that you hold a meeting with the MPs from the sub-region.

Tomorrow at 10 a.m., the Prime Minister has committed to meet with MPs from the Sebei sub-region. No, tomorrow we have the Business Committee. How about the next day, Rt Hon. Prime Minister; on Friday? Please arrange and communicate to them. The Government Chief Whip can coordinate for you the team so that you discuss these issues in a meeting. Otherwise, we cannot allow only Members from one sub-region to discuss an issue, yet we cannot conclude on it. Hon. Victor Kalenzi?

3.06

DR VICTOR KALENZI (NRM, Bunyangabu County, Bunyangabu): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I rise to raise a matter of national importance in Bunyangabu. We have a very big problem, and I do not know if we can call it an outbreak of cancer. Two weeks ago, I lost my son, and I thank the Members who came to condole with me. In the same week, we buried over 12 people who also died of cancer. We have two sub-counties of Kiyombya and Rwimi, where people are still drinking crater lake water.

There is a river called Ntabago. If you sip water from that river, your teeth become rusty immediately. People in those areas are still taking bilharzia tablets monthly. These bilharzia tablets are given according to the size and height of the people. So, tall people like some of the Members you were referring to yesterday would be taking about 10 tablets, and shorter ones like me would take about four or five tablets. I imagine that the water that is actually causing bilharzia could be the same water that is causing cancer.

One, I pray that the Ministry of Health intervenes and finds out because we have 49 people on palliative care in Bunyangabu. They are waiting for the day of death. Many people are going to hospitals when it is too late; when cancer is at stage four. I am praying that the Ministry of Health intervenes.

I also ask that clean water is provided as a matter of emergency, especially in the areas of Kiyombya, Rwimi and Kabonero sub-counties because we suspect that the water there has dangerous minerals that could be causing cancer and bilharzia. I pray that the responsible ministries intervene.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister? Of course, the Prime Minister can always assign any minister.

3.08

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Dr Jane Aceng): Mr Speaker, we have taken note of the issue. I will inform the Ministry of Health to institute an investigation into what is in the lakes and the two rivers of Ntabago and Rukongo. They will inform us of their findings. Thank you.

For the water source, we shall inform the Ministry of Water and Environment. The minister is here; she can give them water immediately. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable colleagues, do not mind. Let us first do the investigation and know whether the problem is from the water and give feedback. Hon. Nambooze?

3.09

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE (NUP, Mukono Municipality, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. There are disturbing reports in the press and on social media that there is a possible diversion of money up to the tune of Shs 51 billion - \$14 million to be specific - that was meant for the servicing of loans but ended up in private accounts in foreign countries.

The reports show that His Excellency the President directed the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Henry Musasizi, to account for the diverted money, specifically \$6 million that was earmarked for the World Bank and \$8 million earmarked for the African Development Bank, respectively.

If it is true that money that was supposed to be paid to MJS International Limited in London, UK, and Roadway Company Limited in Japan ended up on private accounts that were closed immediately the money was deposited and withdrawn, that becomes a very grave and important matter to this country.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I would like, as a matter of national importance, to pray that the status of this matter be given to this Parliament and that a general report is made comprehensively about the servicing of debts. This is because, Mr Speaker – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Nambooze. Let us have the honourable Minister of Finance, and then I will guide after.

3.11

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The matter Hon. Nambooze is raising is a matter which has been with us for quite some time.

The investigative agencies, including the Auditor-General's office, CIID, our own ministry and also the Financial Intelligence Authority have been involved. The matter is before court, and some people were arrested,

taken to Luzira and they are out on bail. Their matter is still in court. I cannot say much because it amounts to *sub judice*.

When this matter was brought to the attention of the President, he was concerned that if it is true, why have we taken so long to recover the money? He requested for the report. We are working on the report. For now, what we can say is that we shall report back to him. The rest is *sub judice*; I cannot comment on that.

Mr Speaker, I do not know how our letters get leaked on social media, and some of the people were wondering –(Interruption)

MR DAN ATWIJUKIRE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The powers to determine *sub judice* or not, when we are in the House, resides with the presiding officer, who is the Speaker. You could first guide us on whether discussing the matter amounts to *sub judice* or not, as that would give us a proper direction on how we proceed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the minister is giving his opinion. If I find that the matter is *sub judice*, I will agree with him. If I do not find it to be *sub judice*, I will tell him. So, I am waiting for him to conclude and then I give my guidance.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, in conclusion, when this matter went on social media, some of our friends, whom we compete with in politics, wanted to take it to another direction. I want the public to know that I report immediately to the President.

In doing so - because of the nature of my assignment now - I have a directive from the President almost every day. When you see the President writing to me, he is doing so to me as a Minister of Finance. It is not that I am involved or anything, but every other day, I get instructions from the President.

Therefore, the public should not get worried when they see the President writing to me. They come to me every day and I am privileged to get them every day because of the nature of my position.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, this is a matter which was raised by His Excellency the President to the minister. This is a communication within the Executive and it was calling for action. I would feel uncomfortable for us to demand that they report here when there is someone who instituted an investigation and said, "Report to me." He is the overall authority; he is the Fountain of Honour in the country.

Honourable minister, go ahead and report where you are supposed to report. However, Hon. Nambooze has raised an issue on the other loans. That is now the duty of the Committee on National Economy. Honourable colleagues, we are arranging an induction for committees so that we take you through your roles, work and what we expect of you.

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you. Mr Speaker, the Public Finance Management Act mandates me to report on the performance of loans. This report normally comes before the Budget. By the end of February, I am supposed to report to the House on the performance of loans. This report goes to the Committee on National Economy, which scrutinises it and brings it back to the House for debate. I thought Hon. Nambooze knows this because she has been here with us for quite some time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, regarding loans for works, I had already guided when the Minister of Works and Transport was on the Floor. Let the Committee on National Economy start its work - Hon. Pacuto and your team. I trust that she knows all these processes. Please, start your work so that we do not spend much time. Otherwise, thank you, Hon. Nambooze.

Hon. Isingoma on procedure? Honourable colleagues, it is coming to 3.30 p.m., yet we are still rotating.

MR ISINGOMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am rising under Rule 88 of the Rules of Procedure. I would like to request you to guide us as to whether you think Hon. Musila is properly dressed in this House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not seen Hon. Musila. When you see him around, tell him to put on a tie and then he can enter the House. *(Laughter)*

Honourable colleagues, when you wear a Kaunda suit, do not put on a shirt. However, when you wear a shirt and there is a collar out, you are supposed to put on a tie. Hon. Musila had moved out. When you see him, ask him to put on a tie before he comes back to the House. *(Laughter)*

3.20

MR JULIUS NAKIYI (NRM, Budadiri County East, Sironko): I have already informed the Minister of Works and Transport about Nalugugu Bridge that connects Mbale, Sironko, Bulambuli, Sebei up to Suam Border Point. Floods washed away this bridge last year and up to now, it has not been reconstructed.

They created a diversion for cars. There are big Tororo Cement trucks that have so far killed 11 people, as at 30th June 2026. People are always dying from the same spot because when the trucks come from different directions at the same time, they crush people in the small section of the diversion.

Minister of Works and Transport, when are you finishing the construction of this bridge? Floods are going to wash away the temporary one. In our area, we know that we are going to have floods every year. It is only a matter of time. When the floods come, they will wash away even the other one you have put.

3.21

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Mr Fred Byamukama): Mr Speaker, the contractor for that bridge, Abubaker and our in-house design team are working to finalise the design so that we can start the construction. That is for the long term.

I am going to whip my people to speed up the design so that we start on the bridge. For now, I will get in touch with Hon. Nakiyi to see how we can improve and widen the bypass so that it stops killing our people. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Benard Otim?

3.21

MR BERNARD OTIM (NRM, Maruzi North County, Apac): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This being my maiden speech when you are chairing, allow me to congratulate you.

I rise to raise two matters of urgent national importance. I will use one minute to raise them - *(Interjections)* - so I raise one? Okay. Now, I have to choose. I have already briefed the Minister of Works and Transport about them.

His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda blessed the people of Teso, Lango and Acholi with restocking. This money was paid out to them. There is, however, a disturbing report on the ground.

Nine people were compensated in each parish. However, a new report shows that out of the nine, only five people hail from a particular parish. Four are reportedly fictitious persons who have been put there by parish development committees, parish chiefs, and people at the sub-county.

A rough estimate of the parishes in Lango, Teso and Acholi amounts to 1,863. If, in each payment, five or three people are paid fictitiously, the Government will lose up to Shs 27 billion. I pray that the Prime Minister's office and the Minister of Local Government should urgently audit this matter because we are already losing money.

Secondly, Members of Parliament coming from Teso, Lango and Acholi should be allowed to verify beneficiaries before they are paid since all the questions are coming back to Members of Parliament. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you want to go into verification of beneficiaries, honourable member? Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

2.24

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, last year the President directed my office to take charge of the cattle restocking exercise that had stalled for quite some time. Shs 80 billion that had been budgeted under the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs was brought to the Office of the Prime Minister. We decided to take the Parish Development Model approach. We agreed, in Cabinet, that we start with elderly people because these are the ones who actually suffered from the problem.

We divided the parishes and requested the Minister, Office of the President (Security), through the structures they have, to screen the lists. They would bring the screened lists to the Ministry of Local Government, which transferred the same to my office. Those are the people who were paid through Pearl Bank.

Therefore, it is disturbing because we thought things were moving on well. We have just started this project and it will take place for the next seven years. I request the Member to give us a list of paid beneficiaries that they think are not genuine.

They gave us this money in May, and we caused a meeting of the former Members of Parliament to expedite the process so that this money can be utilised. By June 12th, 99.5 per cent of this money had been given to the elderly people across the sub-regions of Teso, Lango and Acholi.

I wish we could get those claims in writing so that it helps us institute an audit on the lists that were given to us. We already have a list. The Second Deputy Prime Minister and I had a meeting on this matter yesterday. We did not receive this –

We request the lists of the beneficiaries that they think have issues so that we can institute an audit to get a clear picture of what really transpired.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, have you held a meeting with the Members from the regions that are going to be compensated for them to be brought on board?

MS NABBANJA: Not with the new Members, but we did with the old ones four times.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I request that you do so with the new ones so that, beyond Hon. Bernard Otim, others can bring the information.

MS NABBANJA: Yes, maybe for the record of Parliament, each household that is affected is getting Shs 5 million.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, please follow up on that. It helps us on the Floor not to repeat the issue. Finally, the rest I will do tomorrow because I want us to go to the agenda. Tomorrow, you will have a lot of time. Honourable member from Kiryandongo, we have agreed to tomorrow. Hon. Ayoo Phoebe, you can talk from there; they can give you a microphone.

3.28

MS PHOEBE AYOO (NRM, Woman Representative, Gulu): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity for the first time. Allow me to join the rest in congratulating you upon retaining your seat to steer this august House. I rise on a matter of unpaid honoraria to the councillors of lower local governments.

In Gulu District, the 172 sub-county councillors have accumulated unpaid honoraria for over 36 months. I am aware that this issue is not only affecting Gulu District Local Government, but it cuts across other local governments in the country.

The Local Government Act charges these councillors with monitoring service delivery in subcounties and therefore, these are our foot soldiers. The unpaid honoraria are grossly affecting governance at the sub-county level yet this is the point where the citizens of Uganda get services. In Gulu District, this is causing unrest. In less than a fortnight, the 172 members -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, conclude. You have added yourself time. What are your prayers?

MS AYOO: ... have camped at the office of the district chairman twice. My prayers are:

1. That the Minister of Local Government reports to this House the state of this payment and comes with a statement over the same to calm the unrest in the affected local governments;
2. I pray that the Ministry of Local Government works to settle the arrears for the councillors of the lower local government in the affected districts; and
3. Finally, I pray that the Ministry of Local Government, together with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, ensure that the - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister for Local Government? Honourable Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development? The Prime Minister is guiding on who should answer.

3.32

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Henry Musasizi):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. The issue of honoraria for councillors in lower local governments has been with us for some time. Previously, one of the reasons why it was happening was that some of the lower local governments were established and not coded immediately. What did we do? We asked local governments to provide the status.

Mr Speaker, I wish to get more information from the colleague raising it because we receive all updated information from councillors, save for the few outstanding ones which have been a challenge to determine.

However, I would like to ask the honourable member who has raised the matter to link up with me. If there is any other Member who has outstanding honoraria in local governments, let me get all the information, facts, and figures,

then we settle it. We shall sit with the colleagues and their Chief Administration Officers (CAOs) together with my budget directorate and settle the matter once and for all so that I do not have to come here every week to respond to these obvious matters.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development, do you think it would work better if, for example, the Minister of Local Government writes to all CAOs who have pending payments for councillors and he compiles and then they submit to you? This is instead of each Member coming to look for the minister - No, I am saying that the Minister of Local Government writes to all CAOs, compiles, and submits to Finance. Wouldn't that work better, honourable minister?

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, I see your reasoning, and I buy into it. It is not good to disturb colleagues with responsibilities which are - because we have the accounting officers at station and sometimes, why we are saying provide information is that the accounting officers know the reason why, but they do not want to disclose it to us, the representatives of the people. Therefore, let the CAOs write to the accounting officer. Let the Minister of Local Government coordinate all these outstanding matters, and then we handle them.

If they take long, in September when I go to the field for budget conferences, I will settle them wherever they exist.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Next item? Honourable colleagues, as we move to the next item, in the VIP gallery this afternoon we have NRM flag bearers for the East African Legislative Assembly. They include Mr Bangumya Fred Rwakaizi and Madam Stella Kiryowa. They have come to observe proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Next Item?

STATEMENT BY A MINISTER ON THE
REPATRIATION OF UGANDANS FROM
SOUTH AFRICA

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs?

3.36

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr Kyeyune Kasolo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. Yesterday, 7th July 2026, at the 6th sitting of the 1st meeting of the 1st session of the 12th Parliament, during the reactions to the Rt Hon. Speaker's communication, the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Joel Ssenyonyi, made a follow-up on the matter of the repatriation process of Ugandans from South Africa. Mr Speaker, you guided that I present a comprehensive statement on the matter to this House. I, therefore, beg to proceed.

Mr Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to update this august House on the measures undertaken by the Government of Uganda in response to the recent attacks against foreign nationals in the Republic of South Africa and the evacuation of our citizens, whose safety was at risk.

Honourable colleagues, in mid-June 2026, vigilante pressure groups, principally the March and March group, issued a self-imposed deadline of 30th June, demanding that all undocumented foreign nationals leave South Africa. This ultimatum regrettably contributed to the attacks against foreign nationals and damage to businesses owned by migrants from across the African continent.

I wish to place on record our profound appreciation to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda for his timely directive that arrangements be made to evacuate our citizens whose safety had been jeopardised. Pursuant to that directive, the Rt Hon. Prime Minister coordinated my ministry, the Ministry of Works and Transport, the Chief of Defence Forces, Uganda Airlines, Uganda High Commission in Pretoria, and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

as well as the leadership of the Ugandan community in South Africa.

I am happy to report that, as of Tuesday, 7 July 2026, a total of 880 Ugandans had been repatriated back home –(Applause)– and we will continue to coordinate emergency support. The next phase of the emergency airlift includes one additional flight expected today, Wednesday, 8 July 2026, at 6.00 p.m. It is expected to carry an additional 250 evacuees. Accordingly, by the end of today, we expect to have successfully evacuated 1,130 Ugandan citizens from South Africa.

Mr Speaker, the phenomenon of xenophobic violence in South Africa is not new. Since the early 1990s and more visibly from 2008 onwards, the country has experienced periodic outbreaks, targeting foreign nationals, often in communities grappling with severe unemployment, poverty, inequality, pressure on public services and competition for informal trading spaces and employment opportunities.

These underlying pressures, coupled with reports that several evacuees had lived in the country for many years without documentation, underscored the need for urgent, coordinated and decisive action by the State.

Mr Speaker, no grievance, however deeply felt, can ever justify violence against fellow Africans. Where criminality is alleged, it must be addressed through lawful and orderly processes and must never be attributed collectively to any nationality or group of people.

Acts of xenophobia erode social cohesion, undermine public order and offend the principles of human dignity, justice, peaceful coexistence and, most importantly, Pan-African solidarity.

Uganda and South Africa enjoy warm, historic and mutually beneficial bilateral relations, strengthened through trade, investment, education, tourism, defence cooperation and people-to-people exchanges. It is, therefore, imperative that these incidents be addressed

firmly, lawfully and constructively, without diminishing the enduring friendship, mutual respect and cooperation that exist between the two countries.

My ministry continues to engage our South African counterparts through established diplomatic channels to ensure the safety and welfare of our citizens. We note, with appreciation, the assurances given by the authorities in Pretoria regarding the protection of our legally documented persons with their property within their jurisdiction, as well as their commitment to investigate incidents of violence and ensure that those responsible are held accountable in accordance with the law.

These events also remind us of the need to intensify state-led interventions aimed at addressing unemployment and expanding opportunities for our people, including programmes such as the Parish Development Model and other wealth creation programmes, so that Ugandans are increasingly able to pursue dignified and sustainable livelihoods at home.

On behalf of the Government of Uganda, I extend my deepest condolences to the families of the three Ugandan nationals who lost their lives. I also extend heartfelt sympathies to all affected persons and reassure Ugandans in South Africa that their safety, dignity and welfare remain our priority.

Our High Commission continues to monitor developments closely, engage the Ugandan community and liaise with the competent South African authorities to provide consular assistance.

Our citizens are encouraged to remain vigilant, avoid areas of unrest, comply with the laws of the host country and maintain regular contact with our High Commission.

Honourable colleagues, as we reflect on these regrettable events, Uganda remains steadfast in its conviction that peaceful and harmonious coexistence among the people of Africa is both possible and necessary for our shared prosperity.

Uganda remains the leading refugee-hosting country in Africa and continues to pursue an open and progressive refugee policy grounded in solidarity, compassion and shared responsibility. Our national experience demonstrates that diversity, when embraced, can be a source of strength.

We shall, therefore, continue to champion peaceful coexistence, lawful immigration and the protection of human dignity, while working with our partners to ensure that the rights and safety of our citizens abroad are upheld.

Mr Speaker, I beg to submit. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister, for this update. For the record, like I said yesterday, in addition to the LOP, you had contacted me a day before saying that you had a statement ready to update the House. So, thank you for being foresighted in such a manner.

We have the shadow Minister of Foreign Affairs. I will give her three minutes, if she has anything that she would want to say regarding the matter, on the side of the Opposition.

Hon. Joan Aloba?

3.47

THE SHADOW MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Ms Joan Aloba): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Thank you, honourable minister, for this information. And I want to thank the Government for what it has done so far in bringing back our people from South Africa to Uganda.

Mr Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that today we address an issue that goes beyond diplomacy. And it is an issue of human dignity, African solidarity and our responsibility as a nation to protect the lives and welfare of Ugandans within and outside the country.

Honourable minister, you have tried to elaborate some of the things but you need to come out strongly on our diplomatic relations with the Republic of South Africa until there is

credible evidence that it is safe for the people of Uganda to travel.

Many questions are coming in, and some people are already scheduled to travel. What assurance do you give Ugandans who have that inevitable program to get to South Africa and ensure their safety?

Honourable minister, we also need to understand that many of the families in Uganda of the people who have been repatriated are making several calls and wondering why they are not able to see their people. In essence, many of the people who have been brought back, or all, if I am not mistaken, are being taken to Kyankwanzi.

May we know why these people have been kept at Kyankwanzi since they were repatriated? Because the families are in wonderland, what their family members are doing in Kyankwanzi.

We may have to know whether all are cadres or it is training for the NRM leadership, so we get to tell the public what is happening in Kyankwanzi.

You also need to come out very strongly on the total loss to Ugandans to be compensated. If we remember very well, when there was an issue in South Sudan, the Ugandans who lost their properties and everything were compensated by the Government of Uganda. You need to come out very strongly: the compensation schedule - what compensation are you going to give to these people that you have brought back? Many of these people had businesses in South Africa. Bringing them back to stay at home, we need to know how we are going to manage the people who have come back because they have left their businesses there.

Honourable minister, you are also aware that most of our borrowing is from MTN and Stanbic Bank, which are South African companies. We are all aware that Stanbic Bank repatriates over Shs 6 trillion.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Shadow Minister, please don't take that line. I

just want to guide, okay? Yeah, let us be patriotic leaders. Let us not - please. I am the one seated here and have guided, okay? These are private companies; let us not start this here on the Floor of Parliament. It is not good for this country.

I would request you, my sister, Hon. Joan Aloba, okay? Kindly continue.

MS JOAN ACOM: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the guidance. But I only wanted to find out if we intend to have any other sources of borrowing, if anything goes wrong between South Africa and Uganda. Thank you for the guidance.

I also want the minister to come out strongly: have the governments of Uganda, particularly Kampala, and Pretoria been in any discussions to ensure the control and restoration of the security of persons and property of Ugandans?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. These are very critical issues raised by the shadow minister.

MR HARUNA KASOLO: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and I thank the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs for raising these pertinent issues.

Mr Speaker, about Kyankwanzi – (*Interjection*)
- Yes, because she raised -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, don't respond to people from the side. Remain on the script.

MR HARUNA KASOLO: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the protection. Because the Member said that people went to Kyankwanzi and their relatives cannot access them. So, this is the point I am making.

Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, when the first group arrived at Entebbe, they indeed requested to have a meeting with the President. Yes, and I informed the President, and he accepted. However, you know we have been bringing these people in bits. So we agreed

with them that we need to have one holding ground so that they go there.

However, as we continue talking to them, because you see, these people have been traumatised. And now talking to them is like therapy. *(Applause)* And I tell you, they are very appreciative, to the extent that even those who came back on their own are now requesting to be put on the list to access Kyankwanzi.

This is a very good achievement, and indeed, they are very happy with this arrangement.

Mr Speaker, the shadow minister also raised issues regarding these companies that are here. You know, honourable colleagues, Ugandans -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, she did not. It is you raising it.

MR HARUNA KASOLO: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Another issue concerns those who have already scheduled travel to South Africa. Let them continue with their travel.

This problem - yes, these attacks are on those African nationals that are in South Africa undocumented or illegally, but it does not mean that there is a ban. And by the way, Members, I need to inform you that this is not authorised by the Government of South Africa. The Government of South Africa is not behind this.

Yes. I therefore implore all those who had scheduled travel to South Africa to continue their travel.

Mr Speaker, the Shadow Minister raised the concern that we should continue with engagements. Yes, actually we are continuing with diplomatic engagements. And very soon I will be travelling to South Africa for more engagements. How I wish that even the shadow minister could accompany me to South Africa for further engagements. Thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, honourable colleagues. Diplomacy is not conducted on emotions. In this House, we never open much debate on issues of diplomacy because we know how delicate they are.

However, I saw Hon. John Musila saying he had lost a child. Honourable, I would like to give you an opportunity. You are the only one I am going to allow on this. I request you, honourable, not to let emotions get the better of you and to allow the diplomatic route to take its course. You know we talked yesterday.

3.58

MR JOHN MUSILA (NRM, Bubulo East County, Namisindwa): Most obliged. Thank you, Mr Speaker. In line with what has happened to our dear Africans, sons and daughters, and in line with our Constitution, especially Objective XXVIII, with our international relations and the Government in power, one of the four principles concerns Pan-Africanism.

We do understand, Mr Speaker, that our brothers in South Africa ought to have understood this. I want, in good measure, to thank the honourable minister, and especially for what the Government has done on evacuations from South Africa. I have my own residents, over 50 of them already in Kyankwanzi undergoing psychosocial support, which is okay on the Government's side. *(Applause)*

Equally, honourable minister, this is not xenophobia. This is not Afrophobia. It is negrophobia, "Negro". They hate only blacks. You have been in South Africa, Mr Speaker; in all these places. You are aware there are some illegals who are White, Arab, and Indian. They are going for anybody with Rasta skin like mine. That cannot be tolerated certainly.

However, we also want to say to you - at an appropriate time, of course, I will lay on the Table one of the deceased who was murdered by these vigilantes. Parliament can see, and it is not good. Even when somebody has gone there illegally, there are processes; there are international protocols towards that. Mr Speaker, you know it.

I want to request that I lay on the Table - display it for the press to see – (*Interjections*) He is called Nansiima Ronald, son of Fred Lwandanye from my constituency; actually, my home area. He is dead.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank the Government for evacuating the body and the support to the family. Thank you so much. We must give credit where it is due.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, I wish to say one or two things in one minute. The first is that our Government should link up with other regional bodies. Where is the African Union (AU)? Where is the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the East African Community? They are quiet; completely quiet. This is why some of us have gone solo out there.

Lastly, we need these returnees to be psycho-managed because most of them have been investors in South Africa. In Pretoria, we have a young man from Entebbe who has a school with over 10,000 students. I have visited there and he employs 950 South Africans. He is an investor. You should know today that among those who have returned, forced by these vigilantes, are investors. I want the minister to investigate. Not all of them are illegal. No, that is not the case. That would be underscoring the whole thing. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Marshall Alenyo, your issue is also about the same. I remembered it when you came to my office. However, did people die or did they return?

Honourable members, these colleagues came to my office on this matter.

4.02

MR MARSHALL ALENYO (Independent, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. It is slightly the same. I spent my life fighting with the African National Congress (ANC) when we were at the university with those of the late Noble Mayombo. Hon.

Wanyoto will remember it. We used to feed the ANC guerrillas who used to come from Algeria and from those training camps. This is not the South Africa we expected.

Mr Speaker, that said, we now have a group called the March & March p. We need to designate it as a terror group against all the Africans in the whole continent because this March & March group is only targeting Africans.

On the issue of the evacuation of Africans from South Africa. The name of Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, the Commander of the Defence Forces (CDF), has not come out properly. This operation was single-handedly sanctioned by the CDF, Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba. I want this House to applaud the patriotic effort of Gen. Muhoozi, who single-handedly went for our people in South Africa. (*Applause*) I thought to put that in order. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I picked one Member from NRM, one from the Opposition, and one from the Independents. Thank you, honourable minister. Keep us updated. Next item?

I would like to guide the Clerk that the Rt Hon. Prime Minister will be going for – (*Rt Hon. Nabbanja rose*) - Rt Hon. Prime Minister, allow me to make my communication. Allow the Speaker to guide.

The Rt Hon. Prime Minister has a meeting with Karamoja, and we have been pestering her to work on that issue. So, I want us to first sort out item number six. As you come, make the clarification you wanted to make, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF
PARLIAMENT TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA,
YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI, FOR THE
CLEAR AND PRECISE EXPOSITION OF
GOVERNMENT POLICY CONTAINED IN
THE STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS
TO PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA ON 14TH
JUNE 2026

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of Procedure by Hon. Namboozie. There is a procedural matter, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Mr Speaker, may it be understood that I do not intend to stop people from appreciating the President. However, the procedural matter I want to raise - I was here when this type of motion came up.

This started as a motion from the backbenchers, Mr Speaker, who would have interfaced with the President and then moved to thank him. However, the direction it is taking now, to be a motion moved by the Prime Minister, who is the Leader of Government Business, is as if the President, after giving the State-of-the-Nation Address, has, through his Prime Minister, brought it here as a Business of Government to thank himself.

Mr Speaker, I recall one time when the President of Uganda was addressing people and said, "I hate people who thank me for performing my duty because that is my role."

Addressing the nation in the State-of-the-Nation Address is an obligation imposed by the Constitution. How would it appear that now this is a motion of Government coming from the Leader of Government Business? I want you, Mr Speaker, to understand my concern. This was a motion for back-benchers, not Government business. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, honourable colleagues, unfortunately, the rules do not provide anywhere that it is gazetted as a motion for either a back-bencher or the Front Bench. Now, the person who will move the

motion is a woman member of Parliament for Kakumiro District and the Prime Minister.

Number two, this motion usually comes from the Government side. Now, it is not my duty to appoint who will move the motion. The moment the Government side writes that this is the one who shall move the motion, whether it is a back-bencher, I do that.

After this motion is moved, honourable colleagues, I am going to call the Leader of the Opposition under Rule 55 of the Rules of Procedure to make his response as well. After he has made the response, since the two are debated together, I will give you time starting next Tuesday to read and prepare.

This is a motion in which we would like each of you who wants to speak to speak. Based on our projection, it will take two to four weeks to debate the State-of-the-Nation Address so you can speak without interruption.

I wanted to give much more guidance after all this, but let me take this opportunity. I request that those who want to speak register with your whips. Why? When I get the list, I can easily follow up.

Honourable colleagues, I have already started to receive notes from some of you that you are annoyed because I have not picked you. *(Laughter)* We have just started. I am going to buy for you Panadol because you are going to get annoyed and burst if you came with that kind of - you get it - not a note from Hon. Ofwono Opondo. *(Laughter)*

I have just received a note from someone. We have just started. Tighten your belts; you will stand up 10 times, and I will not pick you if it is not your turn. But also, you can stand up, and I immediately pick you depending on the matter.

Honourable colleagues, let me tell you this: I have to be as fair as possible. I use one principle: I cannot give one Member another opportunity to speak before others have spoken. Let us try to be accommodative. It is a tricky situation for me too. I wish I had more

time, or ten microphones, so I could pick ten of you at the same time. I would have done that.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, the woman member of Parliament for Kakumiro District.

4.11

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I move under Rule 58 of our Rules of Procedure to move a motion for a resolution of Parliament to express gratitude to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, for the clear and precise exposition of Government policy contained in the State-of-the-Nation Address to the Parliament of Uganda on 4 June 2026.

“WHEREAS Article 101(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995, requires the President to deliver to Parliament an address on the State-of-the-Nation at the beginning of each session of Parliament;

AND WHEREAS on 4 June 2026, His Excellency the President, in compliance with Article 101(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, delivered the State-of-the-Nation Address to Parliament at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds;

AWARE THAT in the State-of-the-Nation Address, His Excellency the President gave clear guidance on key anchors to the country’s economic progress for this term of Government, including “no more sleep”, “zero tolerance to corruption” and “no more politeness to non-performers”;

NOTING THAT His Excellency the President emphasised that despite a few challenges, Uganda’s economy has expanded 17-fold over the last 40 years of recovery, expansion, diversification, value-addition, entering the knowledge economy and transformation as reflected in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rise from \$3.9 billion in 1986 to now \$ 69.3 billion by the forex exchange method or to \$ 197.1 billion by the PPP method, and the GDP per Capita has risen to \$1,278 while the

threshold for lower middle-income status is \$1,136;

FURTHER NOTING THAT His Excellency the President noted that household poverty has declined from 56.4 per cent in 1992 to now 16.1 per cent, life expectancy from 43 years to now 68 years, and the infant mortality from 122 per 1,000 born alive to now 36 per 1,000 born alive;

AWARE THAT His Excellency the President stated that the peace, law and order maintained by the various law enforcement agencies provide supportive infrastructure necessary for the country’s development, with economic growth currently projected at 6.4 per cent and GDP expected to grow by 10 per cent in the 2027/2028 Financial Year, increasing the size of the economy to \$ 80 billion;

APPRECIATING the President’s reassurance to the nation that most of the essential factors for wealth creation and all the necessary requirements for building a prosperous Uganda are in place, including the good constructed road network, the revamping of the Meter Gauge Railway and the building of the Standard Gauge Railway as well as establishment of pipelines for crude petroleum products;

FURTHER APPRECIATING THAT His Excellency the President informed the nation that the citizens to effectively participate in both the vertical and horizontal integration of the national economy and to achieve massive production and job creation, the citizens must join the money economy and transit from the traditional pre-capitalist subsistence systems of working; utilising the Government established four-acre wealth generation model and access Government funding through the Operation Wealth Creation, the Parish Development Model, and the NAADS among others.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by this Parliament, that Parliament expresses gratitude to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda for his concise exposition of the State of the Nation’s address delivered to

Parliament of Uganda at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds, Kampala, on 4 June 2026.

Number two, that Parliament commits itself to promoting the great ideas, values, and qualities advanced by the “No More Sleep” philosophy of His Excellency the President.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Is the motion seconded? *(Members rose)* It is seconded by Hon. Gabriel Lokiru, Hon. Anthony Akol, and Hon. Silas Aogon. I see all representatives of the UPDF, Hon. Simon Peter Okwalinga, Hon. Henry Musasizi, Rt Hon. Crispus Kiyonga; from what I see, it is seconded by 95 per cent of this House. *(Applause)*

I must mention Hon. Mary Kutesa and Hon. Makumbi Henry. They are seconding the motion.

Now, this is a very clear motion. Perhaps what we can do to save time, Rt Hon is to have your seconders come in. Then for these critical issues, I will give you an opportunity at the conclusion of the motion. You justify, you go out, and you leave us with the motion.

I would like you to use two minutes, because I can see the justification is too long. We can have it on record, but you summarise, okay?

MS NABBANJA: Yes. Mr Speaker, this is my justification. The motion is to appreciate His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda, Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, for his clear, firm and inspiring exposition of Government policy during the State of the Nation address delivered on 4 June 2026 at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds.

Mr Speaker, with the overwhelming renewed mandate, I repeat this: the overwhelming renewed mandate from the people of Uganda who elected him in January 2026. The President reminded us of his declaration during the presidential inauguration that this is *Kisanja* “No More Sleep”. He emphasised that

laziness and corruption among leaders will not be tolerated. To me, this is very important.

He also emphasised that Uganda’s economic transformation has not been accidental or by chance, but a deliberate journey spanning over six decades.

His Excellency noted that they started small with minimal resources to educate communities to abandon nomadism and engage in more productive farming. This has yielded distinctive economic growth and financial freedom that continues into the next generation. He demonstrated this with live testimonies of transformed families in the cattle corridor.

Mr Speaker, let me give a synopsis of this transformation. For example, one, milk production in Uganda is 5.4 billion litres, up from 200 million litres per annum in 1986. Coffee, from 2 million bags to 9.3 million bags of 60 kilograms. Currently, Uganda is the leading producer and exporter of coffee in Africa.

Cement production rose from 4,900 metric tonnes to 7 million metric tonnes today.

Maize rose from 200,000 metric tonnes to 5 million metric tonnes now. Banana production rose from 6,660,000 metric tonnes to 11 million metric tonnes now. Cassava from 3.5 million to 4.5 million metric tonnes. Sugar from 152 million metric tonnes to 700 metric tonnes. Electricity generation from 60 megawatts to 2,998 megawatts. Mr Speaker, Government is aiming at 50,000 megawatts from hydro, solar, gas, wind, nuclear and geothermal.

Uganda moved from merely importing condensed milk, butter, cheese, yoghurt, and powdered milk to now also exporting these products. To me, this is very important for members to note. This earns Uganda \$285.4 million in export earnings and saves Uganda \$1,560,000,000 in imports.

This motion gives us an opportunity as leaders to reflect on how we too can educate and mobilise our people that we lead in our constituencies

towards transformed livelihoods. It is a pivotal moment to appreciate the President's insights on the potential of Uganda's economy in the sectors of commercial agriculture, manufacturing, services and ICT.

Mr Speaker, His Excellency reminded us of the National Resistance Movement's initiatives to move people out of a subsistence economy over the years. He urged us to mobilise Ugandans to abandon unproductive subsistence farming methods and land fragmentation and embrace the four-acre model.

He highlighted Government programmes such as the Parish Development Model, *Emyooga*, and the Growth Opportunities for Women Enterprises with minimal interest rates that can help our people. His Excellency further re-echoed that fundamentals for economic development are in place and on track, citing peace and security, infrastructure development, to mention but a few.

He called on us Ugandans to build on this base to become job and wealth creators. In addition, His Excellency highlighted the importance of the Pan-African agenda for strategic political stability and shared socio-economic growth. Mr Speaker, I beg to submit. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Seconders? Hon. Mary Kuteesa. I have two formal seconders. They are the ones I will allow today.

4.26

MS MARY KUTEESA (NRM, Mwenge County South, Kyenjojo): Mr Speaker, this is my maiden speech in the 12th Parliament. I am, therefore, entitled to all the rights and privileges that come with a maiden speech.

I rise to second the motion to appreciate His Excellency the President for his clear, visionary and firm State of the Nation Address that was delivered to this august House on 4 June 2026. I second the motion on the following grounds, specifically, they are three.

First is the strong stance against corruption. The President gave a stern, uncompromising and historic declaration of war against this great vice holding our nation and productivity back - corruption. By declaring a season of no corruption for public officers for this House of Parliament, he has directly echoed the cries of the ordinary persons that we represent.

It is clear that the complacency, bureaucratic embezzlement of government resources, poor service delivery at our Government institutions, inflation of project procurement costs and other irregularities witnessed at every level of Government are not the responsibility of the President. He is waking us up to deal with these.

Corruption is not just a moral failure but an economic crime and the biggest risk we have to our security and peace in this country. Every shilling stolen is a shilling taken away from a mother accessing a hospital and takes our goods from reaching the markets.

The President's speech called upon the 12th Parliament that we have a constitutional duty. He reminded us that we stand by this constitutional duty under Article 79(3) to promote democratic governance and provide oversight for this country.

The President has challenged the Legislature, the Cabinet, the public service and every Ugandan to stop corruption. Friends, we cannot keep blaming the President. We are the ones; every individual, Member and citizen.

The second is the point of peace and security. His Excellency gave the nation an unwavering assurance of continued enjoyment of peace in this country, which is the bedrock of our thriving economy. Democracy cannot be absolute except when we have peace, law and order. Without security, our legislative mandate, economic policies and national development frameworks would all be meaningless. We as Ugandans in this region have enjoyed peace. Committed to that, we cannot deny it because of the one President of the region who is providing peace in this region - His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. (*Applause*)

Mr Speaker, we are about to conclude an intense, historic election, which has brought many of us to this House. Sceptics thought it would be chaotic. Detractors thought it would be exploited and the vulnerabilities therein would be used to fail a democratic exercise. We must note that we are here; the election period is ending, and we are confident that it will end peacefully.

I think it is in order that this august House should appreciate the Commander-in-Chief, specifically for his unwavering stewardship of the national security architecture, and the gallant men and women in our law enforcement agencies who keep us and our country safe. We cannot take it for granted *-(Applause.)*

The third point is the enabling factor in economic transformation.

The President said, “No More Sleep.” Honourable colleagues, our peace as a nation will not be absolute if we still have Ugandans living in poverty. The President’s address to the nation declared war on politeness that keeps our people in poverty - laziness. He said, “Don’t *kutuhenda*,” which literally means, “Don’t break us.” Everybody must work.

The President tasked us to forget our big titles, engage the communities we serve - those that have sent us to this House - to monitor wealth creation programmes such as Parish Development Model (PDM), Emyooga, and all the others; ensure that our communities participate and make household incomes that contribute to the nation’s development.

Honourable colleagues, the President tasked us, the citizens, to wake up to our duty as is enshrined in objective 29 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995). It demands that every citizen of this country should be engaged in gainful work for every citizen, their family, this nation and the development of Uganda. It is the job of every Ugandan - *(Member timed out.)*- I am concluding, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, it is not Members who give space on the Floor. When members say, “Yes, more

time,” and you switch on, that is not how we run the House. Just conclude.

MS KUTEESA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was on the conclusion, and I may not have said everything in it. 35 out of 80 per cent of our arable land is underutilised. It means we are performing under 50 per cent. We must wake up our people to chase poverty by utilising at least 60 per cent of the 80 per cent as a start.

Mr Speaker, it is therefore fitting that this 12th Parliament registers profound gratitude to the Head of State for the clear guidance, vision, prioritising peace, wealth creation and the war against corruption as a Launchpad for this country’s attainment of our Vision 2040. I thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Makumbi, welcome back to the House.

4.35

MR HENRY MAKUMBI (NRM, Mityana County South, Mityana): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to justify the motion thanking His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda for the clear and precise exposition of Government policy contained in the State of the Nation address.

Parliament expressing gratitude to His Excellency the President is an established Parliamentary practice to acknowledge his constitutional duty to present Government policy before Parliament and to preserve unity, peace and security, which are crucial for the social and economic transformation.

Mr Speaker, the motion further affirms the President’s commitment to working with the Executive to implement programmes and policies that promote the welfare and prosperity of the people of Uganda.

The President further focused on the rule of law, national security, and institutional capacity, emphasising that a strong legal framework is vital protection for major Government projects such as energy and roads, which will expedite economic growth, attract investors, and create employment for the increasing population.

The State of the Nation address provides the strategic policy direction that guides Parliament in discharging its constitutional mandate of legislation, appropriation, oversight, and representation.

The address further establishes the framework within which ministries, departments and agencies align their programmes, plans and budgets to advance Uganda's Tenfold Growth Strategy.

His Excellency emphasised that national transformation depends on the integrity of public service, vigilant leadership, and the prudent management of public resources through accountability.

The "no more sleep" slogan calls for active, ethical, and results-oriented leadership at every level of Government.

As I conclude, embracing this address as a Parliament, we are choosing to build a highly productive, self-sustained economy. We are empowering every Ugandan to be an active shareholder in the nation's wealth.

I urge this august House to support the motion with one voice. Let us convey our deepest gratitude to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda, and let us commit to mobilising our communities and constituents to implement this revolutionary vision.

I beg to move. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Makumbi. Leader of the Opposition, wait. Honourable colleague, do you have an issue? Access the microphone. When I ask if you have an issue, it means I need you to speak to me on the record.

4.40

MS JANET AUMA (UPC, Woman Representative, Amolatar): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to support the motion moved –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable, if you listened to me earlier, I guided that today the motion is moved. Then I allow only two seconders who are on the motion as a requirement, and we invoke rule 55 to allow the Leader of the Opposition to present a response to the State of the Nation address. Because the two shall be debated together, you need some time.

We shall start the debate next week, and I will start with you. Number two, the Clerk should ensure that the State of the Nation address is uploaded on our Alfresco so that Members can access. We had already discussed this with the Government Chief Whip. The Leader of the Opposition has already uploaded his copy. Leader of the Opposition?

4.41

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

(Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the Woman MP for Kakumiro. I see she has stepped away for her remarks. She said that she was making those remarks as the Woman MP for Kakumiro, and the colleagues who have spoken to us this afternoon.

The State of the Nation address is one of the most important constitutional duties entrusted to the Head of State under Article 101 of our Constitution. It should give the country an honest account of its condition, acknowledge the challenges that the citizens face, and set out measures to address them. It should not be a catalogue of Government activities or a victory speech; It is an opportunity for accountability.

The Head of State built his address on three pillars: the NRM's historical journey from 1959, the reach of PDM into 3.7 million households and a projected 10 per cent GDP growth.

He talked about milk surpluses and coffee exports, dismissed young people seeking work abroad by calling Uganda a paradise that they are abandoning, and named journalists whose writing displeases him. He did not speak with clarity about the debt that is consuming

our country's future, the hospitals without medicines, the schools failing a generation of children, the roads deteriorating every rainy season, or the corruption documented in audit report after audit report, and I thank colleagues who have pointed out some of these issues.

Colleagues, the true state of the nation is measured by whether citizens can access quality healthcare, afford education, find meaningful employment, earn a decent living, and live under institutions that are honest and accountable. The farmer wanted to know why inputs are expensive, and markets are unreliable. The unemployed graduate wanted to know where jobs would come from. The patient wanted to know why medicines are unavailable. The parent wanted to know why universal education still costs more than they can afford. The taxpayer wanted an assurance that public resources would be protected from theft. Most of those questions, honestly, went unanswered.

Mr Speaker, I have prepared this response drawing on official government and public institutional sources, including the Auditor-General, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, sector performance reports, budget documents, and parliamentary committee findings, reports that we have passed here as Parliament. The central question before this House is this: Are the lives of ordinary Ugandan citizens improving? On that measure, there is considerable work to be done, colleagues. I am glad that this point is admitted on both sides of the House.

Economy and public debt

The Head of State cited GDP growth to \$69.3 billion and a per capita income of \$1,420, just above the lower-middle-income threshold of about \$1,136. Yet many Ugandans are asking a simple question: If the economy is growing, why is life becoming more difficult? Growth must show up in household incomes, employment, and access to services.

The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development's background to the budget Financial Year 2025/2026 report puts

rural poverty at 19.4 per cent against 10.3 per cent in urban areas, and notes that seven sub-regions, home to 44 per cent of Uganda's population, account for 70 per cent of the country's poor.

These are the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development's figures. Growth that does not reduce poverty or improve the cost of living for ordinary families is, in the end, largely statistical.

The most serious threat to Uganda's economic future is our public debt. Mr Speaker, our public debt has risen from roughly Shs 70 trillion in Financial Year 2020/2021 to over Shs 126 trillion today. Listen to this, honourable colleagues. This is an 80 per cent increase in five years – an 80 per cent increase in our debt burden in just five years! That should worry all of us, honourable colleagues.

The debt-to-GDP ratio is at 53 per cent, above the 50 per cent threshold that was set by Uganda's own Charter for Fiscal Responsibility, and domestic interest-to-revenue has risen to 23.66 per cent; more than Shs 1 in every Shs 3 collected now goes to creditors, before a teacher is paid or medicine procured.

Interest payments have climbed steadily from Shs 3.9 trillion in Financial Year 2021/2022 to a projected Shs 13 trillion in Financial Year 2026/2027, for a cumulative Shs 46.9 trillion over six years, all flowing to foreign-owned commercial banks.

The Financial Year 2026/2027 budget adds a further Shs 185.5 billion in commitment fees on loans signed but not yet used. These are loans signed but not yet used. We have got to pay Shs 185.5 billion. This should be criminal. This is wastage – money that is supposed to avail services in all our constituencies. Uganda is paying for borrowing that has not happened.

Honourable colleagues, we keep borrowing but without corresponding returns. The Auditor-General has reportedly flagged weak project implementation, delayed completion, cost overruns and underutilised borrowed funds,

among them the Lubowa Specialised Hospital arrangement with Enrica Pinetti, the Roko Construction bailout, the DEI BioPharma bailout, the Inspire Africa Coffee venture in Ntungamo, and the Atiak Sugar factory under UDC, all private ventures, financed through public borrowing whose returns to citizens are yet to be demonstrated.

Public revenue is being diverted from schools, hospitals, roads and agriculture to service debt whose benefits ordinary Ugandans cannot see or feel. Sustainable growth requires prudent fiscal management, productive investment, value for money and genuine accountability in the use of public resources.

Mr Speaker, let me speak about the cost of living and employment. One of the most glaring omissions, in my view, in the State-of-the-Nation Address was the rising cost of living, which we see every day and everywhere in our constituencies.

Households are grappling with food, transport, school, health care, and rent costs that together exhaust whatever income they earn. The UBOS National Governance, Peace and Security Survey of November 2025 shows that food accounts for over 50 per cent of low-income household expenditure; not a statistic to be tracked in a spreadsheet, but a household emergency at every meal.

Fuel prices of Shs 6,500 and above per litre up-country drive up the cost of everything that moves by road, and Uganda spends approximately Shs 600 billion annually on petroleum imports, priced in foreign exchange. Every weakening of the shilling is directly reflected in the price of a meal, a school run, and a market trader's fare.

The employment picture is equally serious. Uganda's population currently stands at 45.9 million, yet only 9.4 million are in formal employment. Approximately 700,000 young people enter the labour market every year, while manufacturing, the sector best placed to absorb them, contributes only 8.4 per cent to our country's GDP and employs only 8.3 per

cent of the workforce, below the 13 per cent average for Least Developed Countries.

The formal economy cannot absorb what the population produces - that is a fact - and the consequence is visible on every street corner and in every family surviving on informal, insecure work.

Between 2020 and 2025, an estimated 500,000 Ugandans took up work contracts abroad, most in the Middle East under conditions widely documented as exploitative. These are not people abandoning a paradise, as is suggested. They are people seeking opportunities they cannot find at home.

A government that exports its youth as cheap labour and then mocks them for leaving has forfeited the moral authority to speak about their economic transformation. What is required is deliberate investment in industrialisation, agro-processing, manufacturing, tourism and genuine support for small and medium enterprises, with success measured by decent livelihoods created, not programmes announced.

Let me talk about corruption and accountability, which Hon. Kuteesa Kamuli is very passionate about, and I applaud her for that. Corruption, honourable colleagues, is still one of the biggest obstacles to Uganda's development.

The Inspectorate of Government, in its Anti-Corruption Annual Report 2024/2025, estimated that Uganda loses about Shs 10 trillion annually to corruption –m Shs 10 trillion per year dissipates!

The Auditor-General's 2025 Annual Report found unaccounted for funds, unsupported expenditure and procurement irregularities in 72 per cent of audited entities. These are Government entities that are audited.

Payroll audits continue to uncover thousands of ghost workers, and the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority has reported persistent irregularities in public contracting, including inflated prices and non-

competitive awards. The cost is measured in schools not built, medicines not delivered and opportunities denied.

Parliament was told in January 2026, this year, that only 31 per cent of the Auditor-General's recommendations for Financial Year 2023/2024 had been fully implemented, while more than a third were not implemented at all.

The fight against corruption will be judged by stolen funds recovered, audit recommendations implemented, and the investigation, prosecution and conviction of those responsible, regardless of office or political affiliation.

Mr Speaker, let me speak about human rights, civic freedoms and justice. A nation's strength is measured not only by economic growth, but by its commitment to constitutional freedoms, human dignity and the rule of law, an area that we always pay little attention to. *(Applause)*

The Uganda Human Rights Commission's quarterly report, that is, January to April of this very year, recorded over 1,200 claimants of arbitrary arrest, torture, enforced disappearance and unlawful detention, a 34 per cent increase in the same period in 2025. So, this only gets worse.

At least 47 journalists and media workers faced arrest, harassment and confiscation of their equipment in the preceding 12 months. Arbitrary arrests feed directly into the crisis in our prisons and our courts. Even those produced in courts spend lengthy periods without getting justice, and the proposals by our Head of State to abolish bail for a number of offences do not help matters, honourable colleagues.

We should empower the Judiciary to independently do its work and then we, together, hold it accountable where delivery of justice is not forthcoming, and where there are concerns about fair trial, as we have seen for several Opposition politicians and supporters who are in jail.

The Uganda Prisons Service and Uganda Human Rights Commission's 2025 Annual Report

records the system holding approximately 70,000 people in facilities meant for 18,500 people. Our prisons have a capacity of 18,500, but they are holding 70,000-plus people, a congestion rate of 378 per cent, with over 55 per cent on remand, some waiting for years to be tried.

By October 2025, the Auditor-General found 115 of 413 children in one rehabilitation centre had completed their sentences. They were still being held because the system lacked the capacity to process their release. This is wrong, colleagues.

The Chairperson of the Uganda Human Rights Commission, Mariam Wangadya, has publicly accused some State actors of deliberately weakening this vital institution. She has argued that despite the Commission's critical constitutional mandate to safeguard the rights enshrined in Chapter Four of our Constitution, the Bill of Rights, appointments have been made on political considerations rather than competence. She described some appointees as broke and sickly political failures, suggesting that such appointments have undermined the Commission's effectiveness.

This matter ought to be addressed. When we see Government officials speaking out and publicly lambasting, this has got to be looked into. I hope the Government will.

Constitutional rights are not privileges granted at Government's discretion. They belong to every Ugandan by virtue of the Constitution. Security agencies must operate within the law, with every citizen enjoying equal protection under it.

Mr Speaker and colleagues, sometimes Government blames the Opposition, civil society, and media houses for making the country look bad. If we are to be honest with ourselves, some Government officials contribute significantly to making our country look bad. Whenever people are abducted and tortured, or when media houses get closed arbitrarily, these violations of the law make it to the international press. You have been seeing

international press reports about these issues. How then do we expect tourists to come to our country with all these negative situations?

We have been dealing with a situation where most of the world thought numerous people were dying of Ebola in Uganda, which of course was untrue. Travel advisories, however, were issued and many would-be tourists cancelled their visits to Uganda, which affected our tourism.

As we clarify to the world that the Ebola situation in Uganda was blown out of proportion and misunderstood, I thank the Government. I have been seeing Government officials speak out. I saw Mr Alan Kasujja, the Executive Director of Uganda Media Centre, and others saying, "Look, the problem is not as has been described in our country." This clarification is a good thing. As you defend our country, the facts come out. People think Ugandans are dropping dead of Ebola every day. That is untrue.

As we continue to clarify and defend our country, which we must do, as Government, we find ourselves dealing with international press reports about violations of the law. We need to address all these issues.

Potential investors want to come and set up businesses in Uganda to employ our young people. These investors can easily get discouraged because of what they see and hear. These negative press reports hurt our economy, and they affect all of us, colleagues.

Civil society organisations have been targeted for suspension and closure. Most of them have had their accounts frozen by the state. No explanations, no court orders. Why does the Government target people and entities who point out the ills in our governance rather than address them? We have to build our country together.

Dissenting voices should not be targeted for persecution. We need to listen to the issues raised and then work towards fixing them.

Mr Speaker and colleagues, we held our national election at the start of this year, but many questions remain unanswered. Why does the military continue to interfere with our elections? This interference did not just happen to us, the Opposition competitors, by the way. I saw several colleagues from the NRM raising similar concerns in their constituencies as well. Why hasn't the Government accounted for the billions spent on the biometric voter verification kits, which did not function on election day? Why hasn't the Electoral Commission publicised the declaration-of-results forms on which they based their declaration of results?

Colleagues, our country needs to heal from the tumult that has become of our elections. We can only heal when these questions are sufficiently responded to.

Mr Speaker and colleagues, let me talk about health. Patients face medicine stock-outs, long waiting times, inadequate staffing, and rising out-of-pocket costs. For many families, illness is simultaneously a health emergency and a financial crisis. Somebody once said, "Most Ugandans are one medical bill away from poverty."

The Ministry of Health's sector performance report for the financial year 2024/2025 shows that malaria accounts for 27 per cent of outpatient visits and 19 per cent of in-patient deaths, placing Uganda among the top 10 countries globally for malaria burden.

HIV prevalence stands at 5.3 per cent. Tuberculosis affects 200 per 100,000 people, with a 72 per cent treatment success rate against the World Health Organisation's 85 per cent.

Non-communicable diseases account for 33 per cent of hospital admissions and 11 per cent of deaths, with hypertension affecting 26 per cent of adults and diabetes 5 per cent, mostly undiagnosed.

Skilled Birth Attendants fall to 55 per cent in rural areas, compared with a 74 per cent national average. The national average looks fair. We now need to address the rural one,

because the national average is 74 per cent. That is fair. The problem, however, is now in the rural areas, which we need to address. A contraceptive prevalence rate of 39 per cent drives a total fertility rate of 4.7 children per woman.

The doctor-to-patient ratio in Uganda is 1:25,000, compared with the WHO recommendation of 1: 1,000. Over 56 per cent of approved health worker posts are vacant. 60 per cent of Ugandan-trained doctors leave the public system within five years.

The Shs 132.6 billion that is allocated to recruit 16,963 health workers is welcome. Without addressing pay, working conditions, and career development, recruits will simply accelerate the exodus. They will leave.

We also continue to entreat the Government to abandon the plan to stop facilitating medical interns. This policy is counterproductive. Financing is the most fundamental failure. The Financial Year 2026/2027 health budget stands at Shs 5.7 trillion, 6.1 per cent of the national budget. It has remained unchanged from last year and is less than half of the 15 per cent Abuja Declaration, which we committed to as a country. The Government signed this declaration two decades ago. Per capita public health spending is at \$37, less than half the WHO minimum of \$86.

National Medical Stores required Shs 1.5 trillion in the financial year 2024/2025 and received Shs 1.4 trillion, while Mulago National Referral Hospital received Shs 18.2 billion against a documented need of Shs 72.3 billion. This is our national referral. Let us fund it more. That is a 75 per cent funding gap at the country's flagship hospital.

Development partners finance 64 per cent of essential medicines in Financial Year 2024/2025. The Government contributed 36 per cent. Over 41 per cent of health costs are paid out of pocket. 40 per cent of facilities experienced drug stock-outs of anti-malarial, antibiotics, and anti-retrovirals in 2023.

Uganda has one ambulance per 200,000 people. One per 200,000 people. That is why colleagues always buy ambulances. Ideally, we should not be doing that, but we end up doing it because of this gap.

Only 12 per cent of facilities have functioning emergency units. Referral hospitals operate at roughly 10 per cent of ICU capacity due to inadequate staffing.

Mental health, apparently, is the most neglected area of all. 75 per cent of Ugandans who live with mental disorders receive no treatment. Only five dedicated mental health units exist nationwide, and the sector receives less than 1 per cent of the health budget against the WHO recommendation of 5 per cent.

Mr Speaker, we have severally demanded the completion of Lubowa Specialised Hospital and proper accountability for the billions spent on that project thus far. The Government needs to provide answers to the questions about Lubowa Hospital.

Incidentally, I am interested in this hospital being up and running. Some people think that we in the Opposition want the project to fail and for the Government to look bad. Actually, I want this project up and running so that taxpayer money is accounted for and, more importantly, so that people can access health care. They do not have to leave the country, so we are waiting for Lubowa Specialised Hospital.

Education

Honourable members, few matters weigh on Ugandan families as heavily as education, yet we often give the challenge in this sector little serious attention.

The Auditor-General's report for the year ended 31st December 2025 found that across 157 local governments inspected, 136 secondary schools had no science laboratory and a further 270 had laboratories that were inadequately equipped, yet the Government introduced a policy to promote sciences; 182 schools lacked libraries, 251 had no teacher accommodation, and 380

reported inadequate classrooms, with some schools operating condemned pit latrines and this is dangerous for our little children.

There are cracked walls and deteriorating roofs. The Government speaks of competence-based learning, yet many schools lack the infrastructure to implement it. We need to fix this.

Learning outcomes are equally alarming. The 2025 National Assessment of Progress in Education report found that more than - and this is alarming - found that more than 60 per cent of primary six learners could not read a simple passage in English or perform basic numeracy. This is a Government report. After decades of investment in universal primary education.

The national pupil-teacher ratio stands at 53:1, exceeding 70:1 in several districts, against the recommended 40:1. Secondary gross enrolment is only 29 per cent, and technical and vocational institutions enroll fewer than 400,000 learners, against a youth population exceeding 10 million in the relevant age bracket.

The Universal Primary Education (UPE) capitation grant of only Shs 18,600 per learner and Shs 21,000 for learners with special needs is insufficient, pushing schools to levy charges on parents, a practice that undermines the principle of universal education. Think about it, colleagues. Eighteen thousand six hundred shillings per learner, not per term, but per year. How is this child supposed to compete globally in this day and age? It is not possible, so we are saying UPE is a good programme and initiative, but we are not funding it, and that is why it is failing. That is why 60 per cent of the children who are in P.6 cannot read a sentence in English, so we need to put more money there now that we are all saying it is a good programme, and we agree on this as Government and Opposition side. Why are we not funding what we all agree is good?

Salary disparities between science, arts and primary teachers have weakened morale and

fueled attrition. We welcomed the increase in pay for science teachers, but there is no reason the same does not happen for arts teachers as well. The Government must substantially increase investment in school infrastructure, review capitation grants to reflect the current realities, recruit and retain qualified teachers, strengthen technical and vocational education, and prioritise learning outcomes as the central measure of success, or we risk producing a generation enrolled in school but unprepared for a modern world.

Agriculture and rural livelihoods

Agriculture employs approximately 68 per cent of Uganda's workforce and contributes 24 per cent to our GDP, yet production, measured as value added per worker, stands at just \$462 per year, among the lowest in East Africa. That is according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries sector performance report. Again, Government figures.

The Head of State highlighted selected success stories in dairy and coffee, but did not pay sufficient attention to the structural constraints that are trapping millions of smallholder farmers in low productivity and poor returns.

Uganda has approximately one extension worker per 2,000 farmers against a recommended ratio of one per 400. More than 5,000 extension positions are vacant nationwide in all of our constituencies.

The Auditor-General's report of 2025 found only 44 per cent of required extension workers across 135 local governments were fully employed, meaning farmers who are receiving Parish Development Model(PDM) money through their SACCOs do not have technical guidance to use it productively because who is supposed to guide them? The positions are vacant.

Only 4.6 per cent of cultivated land is under irrigation, and post-harvest losses run at 30 to 40 per cent for perishable crops, with the destruction of value caused not by farmers failing to produce, but by our failure to provide storage, cold chains, and market infrastructure.

PDM disburses Shs 100 million per parish annually. That is roughly Shs 4,000 per household per month. A sum that honestly cannot transform smallholder productivity, and some of our parishes have a lot more people than others. That is a reality -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, we agreed on 30 minutes. I see you are already 43 minutes in. I do not know what we are going to do, and I see your statement is still long.

MR SSENYONYI: I seek your indulgence to run as quickly as I can.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do, since we have it all on record and it is going to be debated and you will get more time to respond to some of those issues.

MR SSENYONYI: ICT and digital transformation

The Opposition shares the Government's aspiration for a digitally connected Uganda. On that, we also agree, but digital transformation must be measured by whether citizens can access affordable internet and whether technology genuinely improves service delivery and accountability, not by systems launched or fibre laid.

Mr Speaker, I will now keep skipping a few things here and there. Let me move to works and transport.

Works and Transport

Honourable members, the Head of State highlighted investment in roads and the Standard Gauge Railway(SGR), but did not pay sufficient attention to the maintenance crisis that is consuming what has already been built.

The parliamentary Committee on Physical Infrastructure reported on the Integrated Transport Infrastructure System(ITIS), showing that over 95 per cent of national, municipal, and town council roads are in poor

condition, with transport costs accounting for up to 40 per cent of Uganda's total exports. This is a challenge that we need to address as well.

The Auditor-General identified 14 transferred road projects worth Shs 1.8 trillion that stalled under the UNRA mainstreaming exercise, while KCCA's allocation was cut by 14.56 per cent, even as absorption fell to 22.7 per cent under the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area Urban Development Program, leaving KCCA facing a road funding gap of about Shs 45 billion.

What would we like to see? Number one, restoration of the transport arrears budget to at least Shs 300 billion with a binding three-year clearance schedule approved by Parliament. And this money is for all our constituencies.

Number two, quarterly audited progress reports on the ITIS programme tabled before the relevant parliamentary committee.

Number three, real accountability for non-performers. Uganda needs roads that last, rails that move cargo, and falling transport costs. Not promises while contractors go unpaid and roads deteriorate.

Let me talk about local government and service delivery. I saw the honourable Minister of Local Government around.

Mr Speaker, the quality of Government is judged not at the centre of power but where citizens actually live. The Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury(PSST) acknowledged, in February of 2026, that more than a third of all public spending flows through local governments and that the Government fails to deliver services where citizens live if internal audit fails at that level. The Auditor-General's annual report shows this is already the present reality.

The Parish Development Model(PDM), which is the Government's flagship programme to alleviate poverty, is the most attractive case study in this case. Of Shs 3.26 trillion released

to over 10,500 PDM SACCOs nationwide, only Shs 2.7 trillion had been disbursed and reached intended households by June 2025, leaving Shs 508 billion undistributed.

In 55 local governments, 619 households were found implementing ineligible projects, according to the Auditor-General. And the audit identified 109 confirmed ghost projects. These are people stealing taxpayers' money. Activities that do not exist on paper receive public money, yet they have nothing happening on the ground. We need to address this matter.

It is imperative that critical staff vacancies be filled across local governments and that accounting officers responsible for the diverted funds face meaningful sanctions. I have seen the thrust of our colleagues in the Ministry of Local Government. We want to see action in this regard.

Mr Speaker, let me move to the tourism, trade and industry sector. Tourism recorded strong performance in 2015, and the opposition says so plainly because it is a fact. There was a strong performance last financial year. International arrivals grew by 19.7 per cent to 1.64 million visitors, exceeding the 2019 pre-pandemic benchmark because we had challenges of COVID-19 at the time. And earnings reached a record Shs 5.8 trillion, up by 21.3 per cent from 2024.

The sector contributed 6.6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and directly supported 803,691 jobs, yet this is being delivered despite a structural funding deficit. The current program funding of Shs 492 billion falls way below the Shs 620 billion required under the Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV), and the Uganda Tourism Board could not submit 16 planned international event bids. Why? Lack of subvention funds.

Uganda ranks 112th on the World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, behind Kenya at 82nd, while Rwanda has invested over Shs330 billion since 2018 on tourism branding alone. That is just branding. More than Uganda's entire annual Uganda Tourism Board (UTB) budget.

These comparisons should not be seen in a bad light because these are our sister countries in the East African community. There are only four five-star facilities that exist nationwide. And tourists leave an estimated 60 per cent of potential spending untapped. This is a goldmine that we need to take care of.

Mr Speaker, let me move quickly to the environment and natural resources sector. One of the most significant omissions in the address was environmental sustainability. The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)'s state of the environment report of 2025 shows Uganda has lost over 60 per cent of its forest cover since independence, with deforestation running at 92,000 hectares a year, one of the highest rates in Sub-Saharan Africa. Wetland coverage has fallen from 15.6 per cent of national land area to about 8.9 per cent. This is an area we need to fix as well.

Let me move to energy and minerals. The installed electricity generation capacity has risen to 2,098 megawatts. That is a notable achievement, and we are taking note of that achievement as the Opposition, but it is not matched by access or efficient utilisation. The United Nations country analysis for Uganda, 2025, shows that by 2024, only 53 per cent of households had access to electricity and just 25 per cent were connected to the national grid. We need to fix this area as well.

Let me move to the presidency and then the office of the Prime Minister and Defence. The Head of State spoke strongly against corruption and non-performance. These are welcome pronouncements, but credibility requires accountability to begin at the institutions closest to the centre of power, and on that test, the record is unsatisfactory.

The Office of the Prime Minister, designated by Article 108A as the engine room of Government, has repeatedly been linked to major accountability failures. These are issues we have discussed here, including parliamentary reports.

In March of 2026, Office of the Prime Minister(OPM) officials appeared before the

Public Accounts Committee, this very year, over allegations that Shs 3.5 billion earmarked for victims of the Kiteezi landfill collapse had been diverted to activities elsewhere. Again, we need to act on the pronouncements that we are making.

Let me move to the last sector, that is, the East African Community and Regional Integration. The Opposition supports regional integration, and the Pan-African vision is one that we share.

However, meaningful integration requires more than declarations. The East African Community (EAC) Secretariat's regional integration report of 2025 shows intra-EAC trade at only about 18 per cent of total regional trade, and the East African Monetary Union originally targeted for 2025 has been postponed indefinitely for lack of the fiscal discipline and institutional convergence that it requires.

Now that we are promoting the East African Community (EAC), we need to act upon it. Mr Speaker, I did see the other day a lawyer within the region who is licensed to practice here being barred from accessing our country. She was issued a decision that you are not wanted here, *persona non grata*. Let us follow the process even as that happens.

She should have been given a chance to explain herself, that this is what we are charging you with, you then have a chance to explain yourself. When we expel - we have been complaining about South Africans who are expelling nationals, including Ugandans - let us not do the same.

In conclusion, the facts presented in this my response paint a clear picture. While progress has been made in some areas, many Ugandans continue to face poverty, unemployment, poor public services and growing pressure on their livelihoods, and the gap between official claims and daily experience is still wide.

Ugandans want decent healthcare, quality education, reliable infrastructure, opportunities to earn a living, accountable Government management of public resources, and respect

for the rule of law by all institutions. These are reasonable expectations. They are not out of the world or wild expectations. And they should be at the centre of Government action.

The Opposition will continue to advocate for these priorities and to hold the Government accountable for its commitments to the people of Uganda. We love this country dearly. Let me say that again. We love this country dearly. *(Applause)* And we commit to working towards its betterment. That is precisely why we keep raising the concerns that we do, so that we get to fix them. When our country thrives, we all thrive. I say all this for God and my country. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, LoP. Honourable colleagues, this is provided for under Rule 55 of our Rules of Procedure; to listen to the other side. We are going to start a debate on Tuesday next week. So, I request whips to whip your Members and use our parliamentary research department. We shall be giving each member three minutes uninterrupted because this is a debate where each one will be given the opportunity. Three minutes uninterrupted, for submission. We shall ensure that at least each Member who wants to speak is given the opportunity to speak to this motion. We have agreed upon this with the Rt Hon. Speaker, and I hope all of you will make maiden speeches, at least.

Colleagues, I want us to use 10 minutes to handle item 4(2) before we go to item number 5.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ON THE LOCAL COUNCIL AND WOMEN COUNCIL ELECTIONS, 2026

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Local Government?

5.26

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Ms Justine Nameere): Mr Speaker, permit me to congratulate you on your re-election. I convey my warm greetings

from the wonderful people of Masaka City, “*ekibuga kya Ssabasajja Kabaka*”, whom I am honoured to represent in this Parliament, the 12th Parliament of the Republic of Uganda.

I commend this august House for granting the ministry the opportunity to present this paper on the elections of LCI and LCII administrative units, a matter that goes to the very foundation of service delivery. It concerns leaders at the last mile and grassroots, where lives of millions of Ugandans are shaped.

I now move on to the paper, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, you will recall that upon the expiry of the elected term of office of the administrative units, that is LCI, LCII councils and Women Councils, in July 2023, Regulation 11A of the Third Schedule of the Local Government’s Act, Cap 130 was amended, providing the Minister of Local Government with powers to extend the term of office of these administrative units for a period not exceeding 180 days at a time.

The Women Councils Act, Cap 113, also enabled the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development to extend the term of office of Women Councils and committees for a period not exceeding 180 days.

The term of office of the administrative units, LCI, LCII councils, Women Councils and committees has gradually been extended for periods not exceeding 180 days, with the first extension taking effect on 10th July 2023. The most recent extension, which was the sixth, took effect on 26 December 2025. The current term of office of the administrative units of LCI and LCII expired on 28th June 2026.

In accordance with the regulation 11A of the Local Government Councils Regulations, the Minister of Local Government extended the term of office of the current office bearers to perform its functions until newly elected leaders assume office after a formal handover.

The Electoral Commission has since issued a roadmap for the conduct of the 2026 administrative units, that is, LCI and LCII council elections, as follows:

The village LCI elections will be held on 28 July 2026 at every village. The parish LCII elections will take place on 10 August 2026 at every parish headquarter.

Mr Speaker, these elections are of great importance because local councils constitute the foundation of Uganda’s decentralised government system.

The local councils are the first point of contact between the Government and citizens. They play a central role in maintaining security and order, resolving disputes through local council courts, mobilising communities for development, supporting government programmes such as the Parish Development Model and *Emyooga*, as well as monitoring service delivery.

Mr Speaker, the law is prescriptive and categorical on majority of the elections for Local Council I, Local Council II administrative units and for Women Councils. Therefore, the provisions governing these elections are established, and this House is fully conversant with them, so I will not break them down.

Response to the specific questions raised on the Floor of Parliament

Mr Speaker, my senior minister, the Hon. Balaam Barugahara was here in this august House yesterday and a number of questions were raised. He is not able to be here because he is attending to our people in Bulambuli – (*Interjections*) - we shall come to the other districts respectively and the MPs will be made fully aware, accordingly.

This is the response to specific questions raised on the Floor of Parliament. Mr Speaker, allow me to respond to the specific questions as follows:

Question one was on the sensitisation on the ongoing registration and election of LCI chairpersons and Women Council chairpersons.

I would like to respond by saying that it is the mandate of the Electoral Commission to do

sensitisation and voter education on matters regarding elections.

Whereas the Electoral Commission is doing awareness through media, print media, electronic media, and social media, there is need for strengthening and enhancing this sensitisation. The Ministry of Local Government is working closely with the Electoral Commission on an effective mobilisation strategy in these remaining days to step up mobilisation and ensure voters turn up in big numbers to elect their leaders.

Mr Speaker, we commend all the leaders, some of them being honourable Members here, who have done the patriotic role so far of popularizing and reminding the citizens of their role in these elections. Also reminding the leaders about the need to participate and to make sure they are free of taint because we are in *Kisanja* no more sleep and no corruption.

Question two was about the clarity on who is an eligible village resident.

Mr Speaker, an eligible resident shall be a citizen of Uganda who is 18 years of age or older at the time of registration, an ordinary resident in the village of registration, and willing to be a member of the village council.

Such a resident requires this information for registration: names, national ID number, voter number or application ID number; even for those who do not have the national ID yet, as long as they have a reference number for their application for that national ID, they are still welcome to the village council, which means they form part of the people that will vote for their leaders.

And of course, this person must be a resident; they must have a residence in this village. It does not matter whether they own the residence, rent it, or live with relatives, as long as they have a place of abode in this village.

All persons appearing for registration shall be required to prove that they meet the above-mentioned qualifications.

Mr Speaker, it is important to note that the electoral process at the parish level is different from the village level. At the parish level, the people eligible for voting are members of the different executive committees of the village councils.

These constitute an electoral college that votes for members of the executive committee at parish level. For clarity, let me say that one more time. These constitute an electoral college that votes the members of the executive committee at parish level.

Furthermore, according to section 123 subsection (2) of the Local Government Act, Cap 138, the election of village or cell council chairperson in parish or ward council chairperson shall be by the electorate lining behind the candidate nominated for the office; their respective portrait - you could line up behind the respective portrait of that candidate or symbols.

Question three was about the voting programme. The voting programme, I will quote as provided by the Electoral Commission, will run as follows:

- a) 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. verification of voters by the village election official (presiding officer);
- b) 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., voter education and briefing of voters on voting procedures by the village election official (presiding officer);
- c) 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., voting by the electorate lining up and thereafter, the counting of votes;
- d) 11:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., filling of Form EC10 and declaration of the Chairperson-elect; and
- e) 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., nomination and approval of the executive committee members by the Village Council and filling Form EC11.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I wish to request as follows:

- (i) That Parliament goes into recess to enable the Members of Parliament to go to their

respective constituencies to mobilise the masses to turn up and exercise their democratic right to vote for their local leaders; and

- (ii) That the 28th day of July, 2026 be declared a public holiday to enable voters to travel to their villages and exercise their democratic right to vote for their local leaders.

Mr Speaker, I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister, for updating us and taking up a role beyond your ministry because the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs is the one that should be doing this. However, I remembered that since it was with the Ministry of Local Government yesterday, I requested the latter to do that. I am sure you worked with the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. The Attorney-General is always here to give a supporting role in case there is anything that would need to be added.

Thirdly, on your requests, tomorrow we have the Business Committee of Parliament meeting. I will present it to them. Government Chief Whip, please, you also emphasise it so that we see how much time we could give you, honourable colleagues. Personally, I will go home to vote. I must go and vote for my LCI; it is extremely critical.

If I were allowed, I would even vote for women. I am a member of the Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA). About the public holiday, that is a Cabinet issue, which I think the Ministry of Public Service will look at.

Let me allow the Shadow Minister of Local Government to - but honourable colleagues, these days you have become sharp. I make my statement, you edit and add on yours. *(Laughter)*

5.38

THE SHADOW MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Patrick Okello): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think my colleague

has some element of gender - through your office, Sir.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, summarise, and then I will allow the one for gender.

MR PATRICK OKELLO: I will be very brief. I would like to, first of all, thank you for giving us this opportunity to interact with our line ministries.

I also join you and the honourable colleagues in mourning the people who died in the tragic accident, in which I also lost a relative whom we are burying tomorrow, on a sad note. May the souls of all the departed rest in eternal peace, and also those who got injured, get the blessing of the Lord, get healed and get back to their families as we become productive citizens.

Mr Speaker, allow me to quickly make a statement on the question we are addressing -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable member. Do not make a statement; just seek some clarification.

MR PATRICK OKELLO: On the issue of sensitisation, I would like to applaud my line minister for being very clear. I would say I am very satisfied with the response you gave - *(Applause)* - I applaud you because you are not the colleague we were seeing out there. This is very commendable. I think we shall go a long way to work together. *(Laughter)*

Secondly, on the question of residence, I think you were on point. You made it very clear, and I thank you for that, my honourable minister. The only remaining bit is the question of the officers deployed on operational duties. You should clarify that.

On the voting time programme, I think you were also very clear on that, too. My only concern with you is that this election is a little different from the one we had ourselves. Remember, these villagers are back into production periods, and their election is time-bound, according to the programme you have given.

If voting is to start at 11, it will be so - my prayer to you is that you try to make sure that the sensitisation reaches the last village. Some of our villages are so wide, and they may not walk like during the last election, where others walked for four to five miles but were still able to participate in the election within the time. In this case, it is at a specific time, so try to make that very clear to them.

In the last election, we had a bit of a hiccup where some facilitation was not accorded, especially to the constables who were all over social media for unpaid money. These are the very people who are going to man this very difficult LCI election. Therefore, I pray that you work with the Electoral Commission to ensure that the very people who were not facilitated in the last election are not demoralised. Otherwise, there will be a lot of gaps.

I also agree with you that you forward our concern to the Cabinet so that we go on recess. A public holiday is also very important. When I was in the village last - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, you have already agreed with whatever, so we do not need to go into justifying the agreement.

Attorney-General, I do not know if you can guide us. The Ministry of Local Government is not the one in charge of elections yet the questions we are asking are very specific. I would like to have a consensus from you, honourable colleagues, that we carry over this debate to tomorrow so that the Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, or if the Attorney-General is ready, they go and consult. Usually, they come with a technical officer because this is an issue of facts, not of opinion. If it is this date, time or payment, it is about facts. We cannot come and argue about it. Attorney-General, I do not know how you see it.

5.40

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Mr Speaker, I am in agreement with your proposal. We can give a comprehensive response tomorrow.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, and so, let us debate it tomorrow. It will be the first item and I will start with the Shadow Minister of Gender, Labour, and Social Development. Yes, Minister of State for Local Government?

MS NAMEERE: Mr Speaker, I humbly request that the honourable members are allowed to react to, specifically, what I presented because tomorrow, we already have laid out programmes of the ministry being in the field and they were shifted to – however, if the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs is specifically going to present – *(Interjections)* - Mr Speaker, I beg for your protection.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, continue.

MS NAMEERE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. If the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs will present tomorrow and do not specifically need the backing of the Minister of Local Government, we would kindly appreciate that.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I was saying this because this information you brought is from the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, which supervises the Electoral Commission. Yours is mobilisation, which you have done very well. I just wanted to know if you have any legal mandate.

MS NAMEERE: Honourable members, none of you have a right to tell any Member of Parliament to sit down. No. I was simply thanking the Speaker so that I could go and take my seat.

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I can sit without being held in my waist.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, order. Why I have guided this way - I do not want to put the Ministry, which is not responsible for organising elections, on the spot on the issue. They have done a great job, getting all this information and doing the mobilisation. So, mainly, we wanted the Ministry of Local Government on the part

of mobilisation. But also on mobilisation, you can see the minister has said the electoral commission is responsible.

Therefore, I would like the Electoral Commission, which is represented by the minister - thank you, Hon. Nameera, for the great job. Next item?

Tomorrow, we shall resume this debate so that I can allow more of you together with the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, so that we get more information.

Thank you. Next item?

**MOTION SEEKING LEAVE OF
PARLIAMENT TO INTRODUCE A
PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL ENTITLED,
"THE ADMINISTRATION OF
PARLIAMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL"**

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, as a private member, you have the right to present a Private Member's Bill, as clearly enshrined in rules 127 and 128, and Articles 79 and 94 of the Constitution.

Now, when a Private Member's Bill comes or a member comes for a motion seeking leave, as presiding officers, what do we look at?

Number one, we look through your draft and we ask ourselves, does this offend Article 93 of the Constitution, which is about the limitation on matters of finances, that have a charge on the Consolidated Fund? Number two, does it affect non-derogable rights? Are you trying to suppress non-derogable rights? Number three, rule 123, is it establishing a one-party rule?

These are the things we look at. The moment we find that you conform to that and/or you do not offend those provisions - as presiding officers, our hands are tied.

Now, the next phase will be for the House to decide whether a member proceeds with the Private Member's Bill or not. Hon. Namara? Clarification from Hon. Nsamba and then we will listen to Hon. Kakooza.

MR OSHABE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the 11th Parliament, there was a member who came before us here with a similar desire to amend the Administration of Parliament's Act. That time, the member was from the Opposition side. We thought he was rightly placed.

Mr Speaker, the political parties from the Opposition side were invited and they all submitted a rejection.

Now, the clarification I want to seek from you, Mr Speaker, is whether this Parliament will proceed properly on a matter of political parties where they made their statements. And whether Ugandans will take us seriously anyway, when political parties put their positions clearly known and it is on the record of this House?

Mr Speaker, when we keep pushing for the same - you can guide us whether - the other Parliament having dealt with the same issue and political parties having been heard when they gave their opinions, it is right also to continue with the same.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssewungu, do you have a point on the same issue?

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, I was also in the 11th Parliament. In Australia, there is a type of hunting done by people using what they call a boomerang. When you are using a boomerang, you throw a stick to kill a bird in the air. At the end of the day if you do not catch that bird, the boomerang comes back to you.

The honourable member from Buyaga West County, it is very imperative to know whether this is the first assignment he has from his constituent to come and table such an amendment. I have been reading his Tweets and everything here is a boomerang on him.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssewungu, just stay there. Let me ask you - a private Member has a right to move a Bill here. I do not think any Member has a right to be told how his constituency will react or not because he knows the constituency he represents. The issues we are talking about border on arguing on a Bill, which is not yet presented.

Therefore, don't you think that it would be prudent for us to proceed with the motion and then we debate and you decide? This is because in relation to what Hon. Nsamba raised, one, here we do not have Bills, which are a preserve of which side presents them, apart from Bills that do have a charge on the Consolidated Fund, which are clearly prescribed under Article 93 of the Constitution.

Therefore, any Member can move any Bill apart from those, which are preserved for the Government, and those are clearly provided for by Article 93 of the Constitution.

Number two, Hon. Namara was not here when whatever happened, happened. He does not know why the Member withdrew or the arguments that were provided. And the same political parties are here. They can make those arguments and they convince Members. It is not for me to decide; it is you, honourable colleagues.

Having said that, I am going to allow Hon. Namara to present his motion - no, allow Hon. Dennis Namara to present his motion. Hon. Ssewungu, I will not allow you to continue intimidating a Member by saying that he is facing problems in his constituency.

Kindly, take your seat and let Hon. Namara do his work of representing his people. After, we will debate. Yes, Hon. Namara?

6.04

MR DENNIS NAMARA (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise under Article 79 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda as well as Article 94 of the Constitution and rules 58 and 127 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament to move a motion seeking leave of Parliament to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled, "The Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Bill". The motion reads:

"WHEREAS Article 79 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda vests in Parliament the power to make laws on any matter for the peace, order, development and good governance of Uganda;

AND WHEREAS Article 94(4)(b) of the Constitution and Rule 127 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament grants a Member of Parliament the right to move a Private Member's Bill... -"

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Namara, there is a point of procedure.

MR OSHABE: Mr Speaker, in your communication about this motion, you indicated that the Member informed you that his Bill does not affect Article 93 of the Constitution. I expected Hon. Namara to lay, on the Table, a certificate of financial implications before he runs around with his unwanted motion. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, honourable colleagues, he has moved under rule 127, but Rule 128 of our Rules of Procedure is very clear: the Private Member will table a motion and, to that motion, he must attach a draft Bill. Now, that is a draft Bill, which I, as the Presiding Officer, have to assess and see whether it does not negatively impact the provisions that I cited earlier, especially Article 93 of the Constitution, and ensure that the Bill does not go against non-derogable rights, and does not establish a one-party state.

Now - listen to me properly. You see, I am the custodian of the rules. Please, listen to me - then, once the motion is carried - once we grant a Member the leave, that Member will go to the Parliamentary Counsel and the Clerk so that they help him to polish up the Bill very well, aligning it with the object and principles.

Once that is done, the Member will take it to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to seek a certificate of financial implications. Once it is cleared, then he will bring it back to Parliament, and it will be gazetted and tabled for first reading. So, the certificate of financial implications is a requirement on first reading, not on leave.

Do not mistake it for a Government Bill because, for the Government Bill, it right away comes with the certificate. However, in this

case, he is asking for permission. He is saying: give me permission for me to go and draft a Bill. Okay? So, honourable colleagues, it is very clear: on the first reading, he will require that.

Hon. Ssewungu, that does not give you a way to the microphone. *(Laughter)* Hon. Ssewungu, no! Supporting me does not mean you go to the microphone. *(Laughter)* Kindly take your seat.

Hon. Denis, please, continue.

MR NAMARA: Mr Speaker, we pardon the Members for their sheer ignorance of the law –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Namara, that is not the language that we use here.

MR NAMARA: I withdraw it. [The motion continues as follows]:

“...AWARE THAT the embracement of political pluralism in 2005 and the subsequent amendment of the Constitution in 2006 led to the establishment of the Office of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, under Article 82A of the 1995 Constitution;

FURTHER AWARE THAT in 2006, the Administration of Parliament Act was amended to provide for the election of the Leader of the Opposition and the grounds for vacation of the Office of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament;

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT the election of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, under Section 8 of the Administration of Parliament Act, is restricted to the most numerically dominant Opposition party in Parliament, who may consult Members of other Opposition political parties in Parliament and independent Members of Parliament;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that the prevailing grounds for removal of the Leader of the Opposition from office are inadequate and require expansion to include incompetence and misconduct as a safeguard for accountability, efficiency and effectiveness;

NOTING THAT reforming the manner of election of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament by requiring the involvement of all Opposition political parties in Parliament will bolster inter-party cooperation and dialogue, national cohesion and the growth of political pluralism in fulfillment of the democratic principles enshrined in the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, as detailed in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda;

FURTHER NOTING that expanding the grounds of vacation of office of the leader of opposition in Parliament to include incompetence and misconduct will hedge the performance and behaviour of the duty bearer against abuse;

APPRECIATING that the proposed amendments to the Administration of Parliament Act will necessitate a corresponding amendment to the Rules of Procedure, with regard to the procedure for election of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and vacation of office of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that Parliament grants me leave to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled “The Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Bill”.”

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Is the motion seconded? *(Members rose)* It is seconded by Hon. Okwalinga, Hon. Ngompek and Hon. Linda Auma.

Hon. Namara, would you want to justify your motion?

MR NAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, we must acknowledge that this is a new Parliament. This is a new Parliament and every new Parliament is supposed to make laws and rules for the better functioning of that Parliament.

This is not the 11th Parliament; it is the 12th Parliament. The Administration of Parliament Act talks about how Parliament functions. It is the internal nuts and bolts of how the internal technicalities and operations of Parliament are executed.

That is why, at the inception of this Parliament, we should come up with laws and rules for the better functioning of this Parliament.

All said and done, Mr Speaker, we are talking about anchoring democracy. Democracy cannot only be on the side of the National Resistance Movement. Democracy should be on two sides. The maxim of equity says “those who seek equity must come with clean hands”. So, when you come and say “the Government should be accountable”, even on your side, you should be accountable.

Mr Speaker, the Bill is to amend the Administration of Parliament Act to provide for the election of the Leader of the Opposition by Members of the Opposition in Parliament, from amongst themselves.

Number two, it is to provide additional grounds upon which the Leader of the Opposition may cease to hold office for purposes of accountability. If every person – every minister of the Government of Uganda can be censured because they draw money from the Consolidated Fund, how come there are no checks and balances on the side of the Leader of the Opposition, who draws money from the Consolidated Fund?

Number three, it is to require the Shadow Cabinet to be approved by all Members of the Opposition, not only one political party – Mr Speaker, I beg to be protected from some -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Namara, they are not on record. Continue.

MR NAMARA: Oh! Thank you very much. Number four, as you can see, Mr Speaker, from the appointments to the committees of Parliament and international bodies, only one political party, out of the 17 positions, has taken 16.

The other political parties - we do not talk about the Opposition of one political party, but the Opposition parties in Parliament. What type of equity do you talk about when 16 positions are taken by one political party, yet we have more than five political parties in Parliament?

What are the defects in the existing legislation? When you look at the Shadow Cabinet, out of 30 ministers, 20 are from one political party. The rest share only 10. We are saying we want to entrench democracy. What you preach to us is what you must practice.

What are the defects in the existing law? In July 2005, Uganda transitioned from the Movement political system to a multiparty political system, through a national referendum. The adoption of the multiparty system of governance saw the amendment of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda to create the Office of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament.

Subsequently, in 2006, the Administration of Parliament Act was amended to provide for the Office of the Leader of the Opposition. Section 8 of the Administration of Parliament Act provides for the election of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament to the government having the greatest numerical strength in Parliament.

Whereas Section 8 of the Administration of Parliament Act requires the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament to be determined through consultation with other political parties in opposition and independent Members of Parliament, it has been a norm that the choosing of the Leader of the Opposition is not done in Parliament, yet the law is about the Administration of Parliament; it is handled from outside Parliament. We want the members of the opposition, together with independent members of the opposition who are here as the law provides, to be consulted on that matter.

Mr Speaker, so what are the remedies we are looking at?

1. The Leader of the Opposition is to be elected by all the members of the opposition political parties.

2. Additional grounds upon which the Leader of the Opposition may cease to hold office because they need to be accountable. If people cannot elect them, then they cannot be accountable. They are accountable to the people who elected them. The President of Uganda, by law, can be censured by this Parliament. The Prime Minister, by law, can be censured by this Parliament. All the ministers here can be censured by this Parliament. How come the Leader of the Opposition cannot be checked by this Parliament? We therefore put that ground.
3. The Leader of the Opposition is to consult other political parties represented in Parliament when appointing chairpersons and deputy chairpersons of standing committees. Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Seconders? Hon. Linos Ngompek. Three minutes and then after Hon. Okwalinga.

6.06

MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo): Mr Speaker and honourable members, I rise to support the Bill to amend the Administration of Parliament Act, Cap 272, for the following reasons - honourable members, whereas Section 8 of the Administration of Parliament Act requires the Leader of Opposition in Parliament to be determined through an elective process:

a) The Act and the rules do not prescribe how the election to determine the LOP is conducted. Over the years, a practice has developed where the LOP is merely designated by the party with the highest numerical strength among opposition parties in Parliament. This simply means imposition of someone by the rest of the opposition in Parliament, and yet democratic principles of governance dictate that there ought to be wider participation in the process to determine the leadership.

b) Even where political parties undertake internal processes to designate the LOP, those internal processes are not democratic and deny members of the opposition the right to

offer their candidature to serve as LOP since the LOP is merely imposed on the members without election. This not only infringes Section 8 of the Act, which requires elections to be conducted to determine the LOP, but also affronts Article 71 (1) (c) of the Constitution, which requires that the internal organisation of political parties shall conform to the democratic principles enshrined in the Constitution.

As a result, there is a need to amend the Administration of Parliament Act Cap 272 to:

a) Allow for the participation of all members of the opposition in Parliament in the election of the Leader of the Opposition to achieve effective representation.

b) To reflect the role and status of the LOP in our democracy by ensuring that the LOP is the leader of the opposition, the leader of all members of the opposition parties in Parliament and his or her election should reflect that status and role. I beg to submit. Mr Speaker, thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Okwalinga. Procedure – yes, Hon. Masaba.

MR MASABA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I rise under Rule 2, on the interpretation of our Rules of Procedure. The definition of an Independent Member of Parliament means a “*Member of Parliament elected to Parliament independent of any political party or organisation.*” Go ahead to the Leader of the Opposition means a “*Member of Parliament who is the leader in Parliament of the party in opposition to the government and having the greatest numerical strength in Parliament.*”

Mr Speaker, I am an independent Member of Parliament, and I am serving my second term. I have never subscribed to any political party, but I have been able to win and have been re-elected as an independent Member of Parliament. The previous two Members have been referring to us, the independents, to be part or involved in the election of the Leader of Opposition yet the Leader of Opposition is defined.

As an independent, I do not subscribe to NRM, I do not subscribe to the Opposition -(*Applause*)- Mr Speaker, as an independent, I would not want to be involved in any matters concerning the Opposition or the NRM unless I do have a memorandum of understanding as some of the independents who have the MOUs with the National Resistance Movement.

The procedural matter I am raising is: are the two honourable members proceeding well to keep referring to us, the independents, as ones who should be involved. He has, according to his justification and according to what he has stated, said that as the Independent Member of Parliament, we need to take part in the election of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Speaker, are we proceeding well, by the honourable members referring to me as an independent, as one who needs to take part in the matters of the opposition? Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. No, the member is referring to the rules and the law. He has committed no offence, but honourable colleagues, you see, when you are going to debate this motion, consider two major things:

1. Does it cure a lacuna in the law? Are you getting me? That is the question. I will know that through your voting. How you vote on the motion is how I will know because you have someone who says it does, and you have another who says it does not. You need someone in between who will put you to a vote. That is number one.
2. Listen! You see, that is a problem of moving ahead. We are not discussing the Bill. The Member is saying, "Give me permission to go and prepare a Bill." That is it. Okay? That is what he is saying. I remember, honourable colleagues, there are Bills, which have come here, and we fail them on second reading if we do not find them okay, but the Member is saying, "Please, there is a prima facie case. There is a case on the surface and that there is a gap in the law. I want to go and cure this gap through the

law." It is you to decide whether to allow him or not. Very simple.

On the issue of independence, Hon. Masaba, I would request you, first, that if you feel uncomfortable, you exempt yourself from this debate.

I have some independents who have already expressed interest in the matter, so you cannot speak for all of them. Here, independents are independent of each other. You cannot have one which is binding the other but those are details which would be in a Bill which is not here. Hon. Okwalinga.

6.14

MR SIMON OPOLOT-OKWALINGA (NRM, Kanyum County, Kumi): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I rise to support the Bill to amend the Administration of Parliament Act, Cap. 272 with the following reasons:

One of the democratic principles enshrined in the Constitution is non-discrimination and inclusivity as provided in Article 21 of the Constitution. It requires that no person shall be discriminated against on grounds prescribed in the Constitution including political opinion.

Mr Speaker, I believe that the proposal in the motion to have the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) elected by all the Opposition political parties in Parliament will usher in an inclusive process that will be open to all Members of the Opposition parties irrespective of their numerical strength in Parliament.

Two, what will happen in a situation where two Opposition parties get equal Members elected in the House? Who will appoint the Leader of the Opposition? (*Interjections*) The law is for the future.

Mr Speaker, the proposals in the Bill give a voice to the smaller parties in the decision-making of Parliament. It should be noted that currently, the party with the greatest numerical strength among the Opposition parties in Parliament, makes all the decisions in Parliament relating to the Opposition and has continuously ignored

the voices and views of other Opposition political parties and Independent Members in electing the LoP.

Whereas the Leader of the Opposition is a major office in the parliamentary system -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order from Hon. Ssewungu.

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, the Member on the Floor is my good friend, and indeed, I was with him on the motion to censure the former commissioners throughout the whole process.

Mr Speaker, the Rules of Procedure of Parliament are very clear that you refer to your notes, not reading.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Which rule?

MR SSEWUNGU: The Rule, which is in this book. *(Laughter)* Mr Speaker, is the honourable member to continue reading yet the rules do not allow us to read but rather to refer to our notes?

Mr Speaker, let me bring the specific rule in the Rules of Procedure - it is Rule 9. Is the honourable member to continue reading instead of referring to his notes? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rule 9 refers to the seating arrangement in the House. Hon. Opolot-Okwalinga, please continue.

MR OPOLOT-OKWARINGA: Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. Actually, he now reminds me of one of the -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, do not be diverted also. I am saving you, but you are instead wasting time.

MR OPOLOT-OKWALINGA: Whereas the Leader of the Opposition is a major office in the parliamentary system and in the administration of Parliament, as it is now, it does not prescribe the procedures and grounds for its removal. Therefore, there is a lack of grounds to secure the Office of Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Speaker, this means that LoP can be removed anytime, even without justification. That is why we want to come up with an amendment to protect the office of the LoP democratically. *(Applause)* Right now, somebody can wake up somewhere in the headquarters of a certain party and remove you. For us, we want to secure your tenure democratically. *(Applause)*

Consequently, there is a need to amend the Administration of Parliament Act to, among others, empower Members of Parliament to hold the LoP accountable by prescribing the procedures and grounds upon which a Leader of the Opposition may cease to hold that office.

Also, to encourage Opposition party cohesion, foster unity and trust among them by ensuring that one, the LoP is elected through a democratic and consultative process which will take into account the views and aspirations of all shades of opinion of the Opposition in the Parliament of Uganda.

Two, it will further ensure that the Opposition Shadow Cabinet is appointed through a consultative democratic process since LoP, being the Leader of the Opposition parties in Parliament, may designate Members of the Opposition party to a committee of Parliament and to a Shadow Cabinet.

Mr Speaker, I beg to submit in support of the proposed motion. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, for record purposes - and I want us to make it very easy for my senior brother, Hon. Ssewungu - it is Rule 78 that limits us from reading but it allows a Member to consult notes.

Rule 78(2) gives the Speaker powers to allow a Member to read in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, Hon. Opolot-Okwalinga was right. I have given him exceptional permission. *(Laughter)*

My brother, Hon. Masaba, raised a critical issue of Independents not being involved in this conversation. However, Section 8(2) of the

Administration of Parliament Act states that, *"In electing the Leader of the Opposition, the party to which he or she belongs may consult other political parties in Opposition to the Government and Independent Members of Parliament"*

We do not have Independents who belong to the Opposition. Independents can swing and belong anywhere. The word is "Independent". I want to go with what the law says. These are things that maybe, in the future, we should look into and try to protect the Independents to avoid that lacuna.

Honourable colleagues, I am going to allow debate. Let me pick Members. Number one is the Member for Wakiso, two is Hon. Alenyo, and the third is Hon. Cohen.

6.30

MR JOHN TEIRA (NRM, Bugabula County North, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was persuaded by Hon. Nsamba, who is drawing your attention -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I had picked Hon. Alenyo but I will not allow him now. I want some new Members. The Member behind Hon. Silas. I will allow Hon. Ronald Muhenda, Hon. Cohen, Hon. Teira, Hon. Naluyima.

MR TEIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wanted to join you to set the record straight on the matter raised by Hon. Nsamba about moving a Bill from one Parliament to another.

Mr Speaker, in this House, we have Hon. Anne Adeke, who, in the 11th Parliament, moved the Sexual Offences Bill. That Bill had been moved in the 10th Parliament by Hon. Amoding. I want it to be clear on record that there is nothing that can stop a Bill from surfacing in this House, even if it was raised before. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Naluyima?

6.24

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. Being my maiden speech to

be delivered when you are chairing this House, allow me to also congratulate you on that post.

Mr Speaker, back to the matter that is on the Floor, allow me to draw the attention of this House to the framers of the Constitution, at a time when the country is practising multipartism. There is a provision for the Leader of the Opposition, and what was the intent? Look at the fact that during our elections, we go through campaigns and the first runner-up of the parties in this country can only be represented by the political party in the opposition with the highest numerical strength. So, why did they think about that? This is so that we have a side which checks the Government.

You realise that, for example, in the composition of Parliament, many of the Independents here have a Memorandum of Understanding with the ruling Government. How best will the number of Independents contribute to matters of the Opposition, yet they are already aligned with the Government, as per their Memorandum of Understanding? I pray at this moment that we reconsider this.

If we are talking about inclusivity and equity, if we talk about the Prime Minister, should this side also rethink and move a Bill so that the Prime Minister is also chosen by the Opposition? Shall we be fair when we start thinking along those lines? I pray and request that we maintain harmony.

If the main role of the Leader of the Opposition is to check the Government, let us reconsider the way the Leader of the Opposition is chosen but maintain the thinking of the framers of the Constitution that during multipartism, we shall have the Leader of the Opposition whose duty will be mainly to keep the Government in check, and that Government cannot be checked by Independents who already have the numerical strength and already have Memoranda of Understanding. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Sometimes, we tap into the wisdom of elders.

MR OPONDO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am rising on a point of information. Let me also clarify, Hon. Naluyima. Actually, the Members of the Opposition do debate and vote for the confirmation of the Vice-President and the Prime Minister on this Floor *-(Applause)-* and through the Committee on Appointments, you appoint the ministers by participating in vetting.

Therefore, in principle, there is nothing wrong with Members of the entire Opposition voting. Indeed, there is nothing wrong if we even take the route that the ruling side does vote for the Leader of the Opposition because that is the principle. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I have allowed Hon. Ronald Muhenda, then Hon. Cohen Amany.

6.28

MR RONALD MUHENDA (Independent, Fort Portal Central Division, Fort Portal City): Mr Speaker, as an independent Member of Parliament, I am thankful that we are also coming into the conversation because we have honestly been out of it. It has been NRM, opposition; NRM, opposition. Because of our numerical strength, we are now coming into the equation. *(Applause)*

Now that that is the case, we saw what happened yesterday about the Constitution of the administration and leadership of Parliament. I think we should not be looked at when it is convenient to be looked at. We are very strong participants. We are, like you are saying, numerically strong today.

It is my thinking that as we move forward, we should equally prepare ourselves for the situation we are in. It is a unique Parliament. You have over 60 Independent Members of Parliament. What do you do with them? What conversations do you now have with them?

Finally, I am thinking that if we are to even think of ourselves, as we talk about the Leader of the Opposition, we can talk about a leader of an alternative voice. We are not opposition; we have alternative voices. *(Applause)* Thank you.

6.30

MR COHEN AMANYA (NRM, Igara County West, Bushenyi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The motion is seeking leave of Parliament. We shall have the time to discuss this. The Bill is about to arrive. There are two ways. There comes a time when the Government eats its own children, but there is also a time when the Opposition eats its own children.

When we are before this Parliament, honourable colleagues, let us not work in anticipation of what is going to happen. I can guarantee you this Bill will come to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, and you will find the legal minds there. We shall debate it.

There will be public participation on whether it fits the Bill. It will be either defeated in the committee or in this Parliament. We can guarantee that we shall be there for you and everyone. As long as the Bill meets what we call the constitutional threshold, we shall be there. Do not worry. Let the Bill come and you will find us along the way. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Adeke, then Hon. Gyaviira.

6.31

MS ANNE ADEKE (FDC, Woman Representative, Soroti): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. It is very interesting that all the movers of this Bill are members of the NRM, very concerned about the Opposition. *(Laughter)*

I oppose the motion to grant the Member leave to introduce a Private Member's Bill, and that is based on the unconstitutionality of this Bill. It totally negates the principle of multiparty politics, which is about enabling an opposition to do what it can do without taking advantage of your numerical strength.

What the mover of this Bill seeks to do is to use the numerical strength in this House. Little wonder that all the movers are from the NRM.

Mr Speaker, I want to touch on that provision of Section 8 that you read in the principal Act. Pardon me because the Bill was attached to the motion. The language that is used in that section that you read is "may" and what the mover is seeking to do is "shall" and forcefully conscript Independent Members to permanently be part of the Opposition, which is unconstitutional.

If you read the provisions of Article 71(1) (f), no one is mandatorily forced to belong to a political party. *(Applause)* So, I oppose it because it is unconstitutional and it is bad in spirit -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, what are you opposing? I just want you to be clear.

MS ADEKE: I oppose the motion.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You oppose the motion?

MS ADEKE: Yes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: When we are debating the granting of the leave, you only focus on the object and principles. When the Member goes back to the First Parliamentary Counsel - because he has not yet given this advice. The Attorney-General can maybe tell us because after this leave, the Member will go to the Attorney-General, who will then guide on anything to do with unconstitutionality.

For now, the Member is only saying I have an interest in bringing a Bill. The draft Bill that he has can go and be completely changed. The Attorney-General can guide on that because when we start talking of unconstitutionality, then we have gone into the Bill. Attorney-General, can you guide on that?

6.34

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My sister, Hon. Anne Adeke, what we are doing now is discussing whether to grant leave or not.

The motion presented what the mover considers to be the mischief; what he thinks we need to correct the anomalies he has found in dealing with the Office of the Leader of the Opposition.

He says, "If you grant me leave, this is what I have found to be wrong." While we have a Leader of the Opposition, it does not represent the rest of the Opposition.

If we agree with that argument, we should grant him leave. Then once the Bill comes to the House, we shall look at its content. If there is content that we believe is unconstitutional, we will deal with them accordingly. But for now -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Attorney-General, at your level, if you grant a Member leave, will he come to you for help to polish anything unconstitutional? I want to understand.

MR KAFUUZI: Once he is granted leave, the law says he should be helped by the first Parliamentary Counsel in drafting the Bill. Meaning that we will iron out all the basics and present a Bill that is palatable for debate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Adeke, please continue. I am sorry for the interruption.

MS ADEKE: Most obliged, Mr Speaker. Thank you very much for that elaborate guidance, Attorney-General.

I would like to conclude by saying I am a member of the FDC, an opposition political party. In fact, I am the FDC Whip. I have not been consulted so much that the views presented here are from the Opposition, to say that we were never consulted before the Leader of Opposition is arrived at. We are from the Opposition. The consultative process is done in-house.

So, I would like to get clarity from the movers of the Bill. You stated that there is no consultation done among the Opposition political parties. Who among us, the Opposition leaders, did you talk to know whether the main

Opposition political party did not consult with us? *(Applause)* I am the FDC Whip. I speak for the FDC, and that is our position. I so submit.

6.37

MR GYAVIIRA LUBOWA (NUP, Nyendo-Mukungwe Division, Masaka City): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

For the little time I have been here, I have started to understand that presentation of Bills, and of course enactment of laws, is a process. It requires this august House's valuable time.

If this august House, and the people who are concerned, for whom the movers of the motion are fighting, are already saying this motion will bring an unnecessary Bill. This Parliament's valuable time cannot be wasted on a matter for whom the people it is supposed to fight have found the motion irrelevant. Nobody is complaining. The movers are not bringing this motion to help us, the Opposition. They probably have other selfish interests which we are – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Gyaviira, there is a point of order.

MR WABUSANI: Honourable Speaker, I am called Stephen Wabusani. I represent the people of Bushigai County in Bududa District.

Mr Speaker, you have given due guidance regarding this motion here. You guided that this motion should go through the due process. It is not worth debating or giving any further guidance as far as it is concerned.

Is it in order to continue talking about a matter which you have already given guidance on? Should we continue in the same way when you have fully given guidance? Is the motion a Bill already, that the Member continues referring to it as “the Bill?”

Mr Speaker, is it in order that we continue debating the same thing on which you already gave guidance?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, it is in order. It is because I have not closed the debate yet. Yes, motion?

6.40

MR OFWONO OPONDO (NRM, Older Persons Representative, Eastern): Mr Speaker, I beg that you put the question – *(Interjections)* Mr Speaker, I beg that you put the question.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, that is not how you will make me run the House. Okay? Hon. Nsamba, what you call a game – I now put the question that the motion seeking leave of the House to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled, “The Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Bill” be approved.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Namara, congratulations. Proceed and seek the support of the Attorney-General and the Clerk. Consult and draft a Bill that addresses the concerns you identified.

Honourable colleagues, the House is adjourned to tomorrow at 2 p.m.

(The House rose at 6.41 pm and adjourned until Thursday, 08 July 2026.)