



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FOURTH SESSION - FIRST MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 14 AUGUST 2024



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 11TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Wednesday, 14 August 2024

Parliament met at 2.11 p.m. at Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's meeting. As most of you might have already heard, last night we lost one of the ardent media personalities in this country, Mr Tamale Mirundi, at Kisubi Hospital.

He served as a Presidential Press Secretary for 13 years and has served this country for a long. I would like to express my condolences and that of Parliament to his family, especially, Mr John Tamale, the son, who works with us here in the Legislative and Procedure Department of Parliament; friends, and the entire country on this great loss. May his soul rest in eternal peace. Let us observe a minute of silence in his honour.

(Members observed a moment of silence.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Matters of national importance - Hon. Allan Mayanja?

2.11

MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a matter of national importance. The project of Luwero-Kiwoko-Butalangu Road of 29 kilometres worth Shs 93 billion in loan money from the Islamic Development Bank. It was secured in 2017 and it is behind schedule. It is at 8.1 per cent against the 64 per cent under Dott Services Ltd.

As of now, people along that road have been affected and some of the Project Affected Persons (PAPs) have not yet been paid. We would like the Government to explain this to the entire nation because it is affecting all Ugandans. Thank you, Mr Speaker for the opportunity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government?

2.13

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Denis Obua): Mr Speaker, this being a loan from the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), it is important that the line minister be given an opportunity to give a response. I have been in a meeting with Hon. Musa, representing the Ministry of Works and Transport, at the office of the Prime Minister. I left him there, but I undertake to draw the attention of the Ministry of Works and Transport in writing to respond to this important question.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Government Chief Whip, I wish you could remind honourable colleagues in the Cabinet to

be here. These are issues that can clog the Order Paper. You find many pending statements that turn into long questions. It is very important for the ministers to be here. I remember when I went to Kyankwanzi in the Cabinet retreat, the President also seriously took this matter.

These are our colleagues here and we do not want to clog the Order Paper. Therefore, let the minister come tomorrow and respond. We do not need a statement. It will be in the form of Prime Minister's (PM) time. I will give the minister a chance to respond to a colleague to avoid clogging the Order Paper. Hon. Chamonges?

2.15

MR WILLIAM CHEMONGES (NRM, Kween County, Kween): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance concerning the cutting of crops, mainly, maize, Irish potatoes, and beans in my constituency; that is between the border of Kween District and Mount Elgon National Park.

I get ashamed to talk about it every time, but I have no alternative. I have got to repeat it. This matter is one of those that we have failed to get a solution. Last week, my colleague, Hon. Evelyn, talked about it, when the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) officers shot five cows along the main road in Bukwo. Not even a month has passed, but they cut over 30 acres of Irish Potatoes and maize, which is now remaining with one month to be harvested.

Mr Speaker, yesterday I sent you the photos - and you can check on WhatsApp when you are free - of women crying and holding their maize. My Resident District Commissioner (RDC) went to UWA offices and showed them to their bosses. The director and others there looked shocked.

We have failed to understand why it has taken the Government over 30 years to sort out a very simple matter; to demarcate the permanent boundary between the people and the National Park – *(Interruption)*

MR NAMBESHE: Thank you, honourable, for giving way. The running battles between communities living along the fringes of Mount Elgon National Park and the UWA personnel have been going on for a long time. They are trigger-happy and they even shoot. It cuts across. It is not only in the Sebei Subregion, it is all over the Bugisu and Sebei subregions.

The information I would like to give the honourable colleague is that these UWA personnel are so corrupt that they extort money from members of the community and allocate them pieces of land inside the forest.

For some of these crops that are cut, they wait until they have matured; some crops take longer. For instance, some people have grown *matooke* and others maize. When it is about to be harvested, they subject them to fear, when they cut a portion of the crops. They expect people to again pay back. This has been extortion.

The information I am giving the colleague is that the running battles between UWA and the people have been going on for a long time. We have lost many of our people to the trigger-happy UWA personnel and something drastic must be done by this Government. This is because it has been going on for over 30 years, as he states.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Prayers Hon. Chemonges.

MR CHEMONGES: Mr Speaker, for all the times I have talked about this matter in the House, we have never had time to give you the whole picture and you appreciate it. Probably, that could be the reason why we have never taken action because we always get one or two minutes. Kindly give me more time; like two, three or four minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable.

MR CHEMONGES: Mr Speaker – *(Member time out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Chemonges, your time is up. Switch on the microphone and state your prayers.

MR CHEMONGES: Mr Speaker, before I state my prayers, I would like to thank Hon. Nambeshe because he highlighted something that I was about to mention; the issue of corruption. It is indeed corruption that makes them - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister? Hon. Chemonges, you decided to use your time the way you wanted. However, I understand the issue because when I was a Government Chief Whip, I visited parts of those areas with Hon. John Faith Magolo after we had buried the father of Hon. Wandwasi. I met people on Mount Wanale and I survived the second *Imbalu*. As we were talking serious business, they started playing *kadodi* and then someone said, “Ah, these guys are coming for you for *Imbalu*.” *(Laughter)* It is not very easy to deal with these guys.

I met the leaders that evening. Honourable minister, you will continue having these questions. The other day Hon. Evelyn Chemutai was here on the same issue and Hon. Chemonges has over 10 times raised the same issue.

However, the question is very simple; just sort out the issue of the boundaries for Mount Elgon. What is happening on the Sebei side is also happening on the Bugisu side. It is only that the Members of Parliament from Bugisu – now, if I allowed and opened up – the issue is very simple. When I was there people said, “No, “the President said we shall go with the boundaries of 1993 because there is a survey which was carried out in 1993.”

Now, Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) again says, “No, go back to the ones of the 1960s.” I think it was 1964 or something. Honourable minister, I request that this time you develop a Cabinet paper on this issue; take it to Cabinet and get final guidance from Cabinet and then inform these people whether you want to re-open the boundaries or not so that we have it settled.

Honourable minister, first wait; let me hear from Hon. Fadil and Hon. Sarah.

2.23

MR FADIL TWALLA (NRM, Tingey County, Kapchorwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On the same matter, on 13 April 2023, the President visited the Sebei Subregion and met with the leadership of Bugisu and Sebei. He directed the Prime Minister to open the boundaries between the people of Sebei and Mount Elgon.

We then followed up with the Office of the Prime Minister, and she said that in one month she was going to open those boundaries. To date, we are still crying about the same issue. We want a clear answer today so that we have this matter sorted once and for all. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Fadil, I can tell you - at least, I sat in Cabinet for nine months - you cannot get a final answer from a minister. That is why I was saying that you need to go back and agree on it as Cabinet. Hon. Sarah?

MS OPENDI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to give information that serving then as the Minister of State for Lands, Housing and Urban Development, the Cabinet constituted a team led by Gen. Moses Ali, the then Second Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Leader of Government Business.

We moved together with a Cabinet subcommittee and comprised the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Ministry of Health, and we toured the entire Bugisu and Sebei subregions. We even produced a Cabinet paper.

This Cabinet paper was actually discussed in Cabinet. What needs to be done is to follow up. Maybe you could ask the minister to look up this Cabinet paper, and that could be a starting point so that they implement the recommendations that were made at that time. This is the information that I wanted to give. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is really very important; institutional memory.

Hon. Angura, yours are issues of Tororo; do not tell me that UWA has extended the map and –

2.25

MR FREDRICK ANGURA (NRM, Tororo South County, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have a mentality here where many times, our people do not want to acknowledge and recognise the boundaries that are within the domain; either of the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development or other agencies.

As far as the boundaries of Tororo County and West Budama are concerned, we moved to the United Kingdom and we had to go to the Commonwealth archives. Now, when those boundaries – the report has been generated.

I believe that this time, it should act as a precedent to everyone here. That when that report is laid on the Table, everyone should accept where the boundary marks were put yesterday by the colonial masters and it should be recognised today, unless otherwise. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Why do you allow me to predict you? Hon. Jonathan Odur on procedure.

MR ODUR: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The procedural matter I would like to get guidance on is that you mentioned that you were in Cabinet for nine months. It has been more than two years since you left the Cabinet and you still hold the position that what used to happen when you were in Cabinet may still be happening now. You also volunteered to give an answer to the question raised to the minister.

Wouldn't it be procedurally right that this new Cabinet that now excludes your answers to the issues raised by the honourable member? Or can it actually confirm that it is still the sleeping Cabinet that you were part of then or something has changed that they can now do things much faster to respond to the plight of Ugandans? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Odur, you just wanted to go on record that I was in a sleeping Cabinet. *(Laughter)* No, that is unfair. I cannot be part of a sleeping Cabinet and that is why I went up to Mount Wanale, working. That shows it is a working Cabinet. Hon. John Faith Magolo?

2.28

MR JOHN MAGOLO (NRM, Bungokho County North, Mbale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to affirm that indeed you came to Mount Wanale in Bungokho North. The way those guys were dancing is just the way they welcome visitors. The way they saw you and the cordial relationship you established with them, they actually realised that you were part of them and that was part of the celebration.

In 2017, a report was produced by the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and it was shared by all the stakeholders in the Bugisu Subregion. That report shows the boundaries of 1993.

The recommendations were – yes, there are some places where the community has entered into the UWA land and then UWA has also entered into the community land. However, there was consensus that now that the boundaries have been opened, let everything be done so that the pillars are established. Then that position has never been implemented. It is only a talk.

Therefore, our prayer is that the report that has been shared by all these stakeholders be implemented and the matter set to rest. What is hindering the matter that it comes up every time as though the Government is not acting? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Minister for Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, in the words of Hon. Jonathan Odur, “Show us that you are not sleeping.”

2.29

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Mr Martin Mugarra): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The issues that are being raised here, especially

those to do with conservation, are unfortunate. I have been to Mount Elgon myself and moved across the communities and the boundary areas neighbouring the park so I understand the issues.

The same is true in the key area where we have Mbwa Tract. In Kanungu - as the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, we have had discussions. I have interacted with the Members of Parliament and told them about our challenge.

Just like Hon. Faith Magolo said, there are some areas where the community encroached into the park and some areas where the boundaries of the park derailed off the actual boundary and partly got into the communities.

However, our interest is to resolve the matter once and for all and we have prepared a Cabinet Paper. The Uganda Wildlife Act, 2019 that Parliament passed removed de-gazettement whatsoever. Therefore, it is a matter I cannot resolve as a minister.

Mount Elgon National Park is one of the most hostile parks to the rangers in this country. I lose a number of rangers every year because of the fights between the communities and the wildlife. The people on Mount Elgon attack people with guns and sometimes they are shot at and killed; it is unfortunate.

My commitment is that we will expedite the Cabinet Paper so that the Cabinet can advise. The Attorney-General has given advice but we need to have the Cabinet's advice too so that it can resolve the matter. I will do that in the shortest time possible. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, when can you report back to this House?

MR MUGARRA: Mr Speaker, I assure you that I will put a request as soon as possible to have this Cabinet paper put on the Cabinet Agenda. As soon as it is there and it is discussed, I will be back to the House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us give you one month, honourable minister.

MR MUGARRA: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before Hon. Muzaale takes the Floor, I do not know whether Hon. Ecweru already had this issue on the delayed completion of the Luweero-Kiwoko-Butalangu Road funded by IDB shared with him, because we usually do. What is the delay? The honourable Member for Nakaseke Central would like to know. (*Hon. Aisha Kabanda rose*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable, I have not allowed you to speak. I see Hon. Ecweru making a pass for you. (*Laughter*) Rarely do I see Hon. Ecweru being that generous. I do not know what has happened today. Please, Hon. Aisha, proceed.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the generosity. Is it procedurally right that the honourable minister puts on record the people who are holding guns, using them against the officers and it is just left like that? I see the honourable Member of Parliament for that area struggling to say "Order" or "Procedure".

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, it was your statement.

MR MUGARRA: Mr Speaker, just for the record, sometimes, our armed rangers are attacked by members of the community – (*Interjections*) No, with spears and pangas. I have evidence; pictures. It is unfortunate that I have lost some rangers to this. The most important issue is that we should resolve this so that everyone lives in harmony and every life is protected.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, it is not the community attacking with guns?

MR MUGARRA: No, it is some wrong elements attacking some of our armed rangers with pangas – (*Interjections*) - yes, and they have killed a number of them provoking a reaction from the rangers sometimes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. (*Hon. Nambeshe rose*) Please, Hon. Nambeshe, first take your seat. I can see the pain on both sides - A minister also losing a ranger because he is responsible for his rangers. He has made it very clear that they are attacked with spears, pangas, and by wrong elements.

Once a clarification is made, it is well captured. That is the work of the Hansard team here; so, our record is very clear. The minister has clarified that it is not the community, but some wrong elements who attack with pangas and spears. Also, these rangers are Ugandans. Let us have Hon. Ecweru.

2.35

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT AND WORKS (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Mr Speaker, I beg to step out so that I get the latest facts about that position of the road and then I will come and give Parliament the correct answer.

2.35

MR MARTIN MUZAALE (NRM, Buzaaya County, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My issue is connected to the monthly service charge that we pay for the *Yaka* metres and the general complaints about them. We pay big sums of money for the installation of these *Yaka* metres; between Shs 750,000 and 800,000. At the same time, they are charging us monthly -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Martin, sorry for the interruption. The Minister for Energy and Mineral Development is coming. She called me earlier on that she was meeting the President and immediately she will be coming here because she even has a statement. Do you think if I gave you an opportunity at that time, it would be better? Hon. Sarah Opendi?

2.36

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I went to a bank at Forest Mall and a lady was accompanied by a UPDF officer, holding a gun, completely hooded. The head was covered and only the eyes were being seen.

While it is thugs and thieves that we know cover their faces because they intend to break into buildings to steal and do all kinds of things, it is now a common occurrence where you see people in security uniforms wearing hoods.

Even during this riot of the Generation Z, the youths who were protesting against Parliament, I saw armed security officers completely hooded, and yet I thought that this is against the Penal Code Act. I would understand if they were seated in a speeding car but they were moving on foot during the day and walking on the streets hooded. What is their intention?

I would like to find out from the Government whether this is a new way of dressing and is acceptable in a country where there is peace. Why should we allow this kind of thing to happen?

We even see security operatives kidnapping people while hooded. Mr Speaker, I am raising this because we are getting close to campaigns - (*Interjections*) - yes, this may happen during this time. So, I just need clarification from the Government and those in charge of security on why we are seeing this occurring among our uniformed officers. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government?

2.39

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, I am going to look into that matter, with the security minister, so that we see how to handle it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think when the minister comes, we shall, indeed, ask him to give a response. Hon. Nakut Faith?

2.39

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Mr Speaker, there is a man-made crisis. In January, in preparation for the international events that our country was going to host - Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

and G77+China – the Government had to clean the streets so that we could have a beautiful picture when the visitors came.

From the cleaning, nearly a hundred children were removed – those street beggars. They were taken to Masulita. With the leadership of Napak and partners, who supported us, 425 of those children were resettled in Napak and put in three schools. The partners have been supporting us up to now, when they have fatigued.

I received a call, on Monday, from primary school head teachers that are keeping these children on our behalf – these victims of trafficking. They are overwhelmed with needs. The children do not have food and they do not even have the beddings and medical supplies. The teachers are overwhelmed. They were doing this duty on behalf of the Government.

My district wrote to the ministry for Karamoja affairs and the ministry for disaster, but there is no response. There is a risk that if the head teachers give up, those children could get back to the streets. That is the risk we want to avoid.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Education and Sports said that a policy is going to be out against boarding. If that policy is implemented, the future of these children and all the others in our region will be bleak completely: they will not have education. It will mean that education is prohibited for that category of people.

I have my prayers which I wish to submit. One of them is for the Office of the Prime Minister to support and supply the immediate needs – food and beddings – for the 425 children, who are in school now. They will not even go for holidays because if they go, they risk being trafficked back to the streets.

Prayer number two is for the Ministry of Education and Sports to exclude Karamoja from that policy, banning boarding section. I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister for education, let me start with you. These children are at the schools.

2.43

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (PRIMARY EDUCATION) (Dr Joyce Kaducu): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I thank my sister, Hon. Faith, for raising this very critical matter concerning the future of our children in Karamoja.

First of all, Mr Speaker, I am so happy that these children have been removed from the streets and taken back to school. That is at least hope for all of us, that they have been removed and safely taken to pursue their career in the education sector.

Secondly, I am equally happy that the three schools in Napak District have all accommodated these children and they are learning.

Mr Speaker, what is unique in Karamoja is that – some of you might not be aware. Given the unique nature of the region, most of our schools – not all – do accommodate the children in the boarding section.

I would like to tell this Floor that the Government policy is that all our primary schools and secondary schools are day school by policy. However, for a school to have a boarding section, they must meet the minimum standard – whatever we want to make a school to become a dormitory –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, can I suggest – because you see, when such a pronouncement usually comes in, the public goes to these Members of Parliament for answers. That is a very important pronouncement that you have made and I have requested ministers – I have really begged you – that when you are making such an important pronouncement, also, bring a statement here on the Floor so that Members can be updated.

This is prime time by the way. When you bring it here, we discuss it and you have a buy-in from all these Members of Parliament, it becomes very easy for you. So, on this issue – I know it is an issue which can raise a lot of debate – can you bring a statement on your policy for boarding schools?

DR KADUCU: Thank you so much for your wise guidance, Mr Speaker. I pledge that I will bring a statement on our policy guidelines on the public schools and the boarding section. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is tomorrow okay? You seem to have them ready.

DR KADUCU: Can I request, kindly, for next week?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay. Wednesday next week. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Prime Minister's intervention to give supplies and food – and all that – to support these children?

2.46

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, of course, I would say that it is bad and sad that our children are lacking food right now. We are going to intervene so that the children can get food and they should be kept in school because we know the consequences of sending these children back. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ecweru, do you have an answer on Luweero - Butalangu Road?

2.47

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Mr Speaker, I consulted my team. It is true that this Parliament approved a loan from the Islamic Development Bank for addressing that road, which is about 92 kilometres.

The truth is also that the company, Dott Services, was given the contract to handle the road. However, it looks like Dott Services may

have had challenges that they have not brought to our attention, as the supervisors, to the effect that much as there are resources available for them to do the job, the speed at which they are moving is a lot wanting.

I have agreed with the engineers, particularly the one supervising, that he gives me, as the political supervisor, a report by tomorrow afternoon on why they are slow and, if they have problems, how they can be helped. So, that is what we have discussed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, that is a very critical road. You can visit it yourself to see and meet the contractor, as the political supervisor.

MR ECWERU: I commit to doing that.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Feta?

2.48

MR GEOFFREY FETA (NRM, Ayivu Division East, Arua): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. On the 10th of this month, the road between Karuma, Anaka and Pakwach was blocked after River Tangi, as usual, broke its banks.

For the last three years, this has been happening around such a time. We tried to reach the responsible ministers but they were not able to respond to us. Therefore, we have to bring it here.

I have three prayers. One, the ministry should be able to update the country. What causes this, every other time, around this time? This is because there is heavy traffic from Malaba, Lira, Karuma and to West Nile through that part. Also, traffic from greater Acholi moves to West Nile through that road.

Two, what could be the short-term and long-term solution? We cannot continue to have traffic interruptions just because a river has broken its banks.

Thirdly, we pray that the ministry engages the leaders in that area, including the West Nile caucus and Acholi, so that they can hear our views on the way forward. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Works and Transport.

2.50

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Mr Speaker, it is a pity that River Tangi has broken its banks again, and caused this disruption. Indeed, I visited the area last year with a team of leaders from West Nile and engineers. While the entire road is being worked on by China Railway Seventh Group and the National Enterprise Corporation (NEC), the engineers assured me that they were going to have a phased approach towards the intervention of that particular spot.

The phased approach was that if they increased the culverts as a temporal measure, with the diameter that they recommended, it would accommodate the river as we plan to build what they call a box culvert, at that spot. We agreed that they do that. Unfortunately, even with the box culvert that was laid, it has been overwhelmed by the flood that came in the last few days.

We have told them that instead of following the road systematically, thinking that they can only do a box culvert when they reach that particular spot, and given the sensitivity of that location, there is a need for them to start planning for how to install a box culvert, and eventually work on the entire metallic bridge. This is while we work to revive the metre gauge railway.

Mr Speaker, we are aware of the pain and suffering but we are doing whatever it takes to make sure that we restore normalcy there.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, let it not be an exchange. Let the minister meet the MPs from the affected areas.

MR FETA: Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, do not access the microphone that way. He is off the Floor. Hon. Dr Isingoma-Mwesigwa - Hon. Mapenduzi, what is the procedural matter?

MR OJARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Much as the honourable minister has committed, wouldn't it be procedurally correct that he gives a definite period within which he will meet the Members of Parliament? This is because for almost two years, I have been waiting for the honourable minister in Gulu. He will tell you that they will meet you, and that will become a story. It would be good for him to be specific on what step is being taken and when, so we can measure. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ecweru, I know you for being very proactive. Can you meet this team tomorrow? This is because it is an emergency.

MR ECWERU: Mr Speaker, we shall meet tomorrow. I will meet the West Nile team tomorrow. We had a commitment with the Prime Minister but since we are two, my colleague, Hon. Fred Byamukama, will represent the ministry in the Prime Minister's office. I will meet the leadership from West Nile in the boardroom of the Ministry of Works and Transport.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Tomorrow at 10.00 a.m.?

MR ECWERU: 10.00 a.m. is okay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Very good. Tomorrow at 10.00 a.m., I will cross-check with you, honourable colleagues, later.

MR FETA: Thank you.

2.53

DR PATRICK ISINGOMA-MWESIGWA (Independent, Hoima East Division, Hoima City): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. This is for the same minister. Currently, the

Government is upgrading the Kyaliwajjala-Kira-Kasangati-Matugga Road. At the moment, Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) has paid almost every Project Affected Person (PAP), except the fuel station owners along that stretch.

Mr Speaker, those are double standards because the reasons given by UNRA and the Ministry of Works and Transport are not convincing. They said that fuel station owners require a lot of money to be compensated.

What is good for the goose is good for the gander. When you are compensating, compensate everybody. When you are not compensating, do not compensate everybody. Do not choose whom to compensate and whom to leave out.

My prayer, Mr Speaker, is for the Government to ensure that they rise to the occasion and handle this matter before it escalates to the level of litigation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you have heard the warning.

2.55

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Mr Speaker, just a few minutes back, I consulted the learned Attorney-General over this subject. I drove along the road this morning and found out that indeed work is proceeding where we acquired the right-of-way. However, along the petrol stations, there are bottlenecks.

When I consulted my technical people about why that was, the indication was that the petrol stations were resisting us to take over the land and prepare. The assessment has already been done but they do not seem to accept what the valuer has indicated as compensation for them.

Therefore, the Attorney-General has given guidance and we are going to proceed with it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, there are not many on the road, so what you should do is engage them. Call these

people for a meeting, rather than sending them letters. You go to the Attorney-General and write letters – Engage them. They are Ugandans. I do not know anyone who does not want that road worked on. Hon. Niwagaba?

2.56

MR WILFRED NIWAGABA (Independent, Ndoorwa County East, Kabale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The experience I have had, not only on that road but on Busabala Road, is that the ministry is trying to avoid compensating petrol station owners, and in the process redesigning the roads in such a clumsy way that you will not have an actual road. You will have terrible bends and discharge of waste will be difficult. You are literally trying to avoid compensating landowners with petrol stations under the guise that the value is high.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, engage. They are not many.

MR ECWERU: I had shared with the learned Attorney-General this morning and he guided me on what should be done. I am going to request him that given the directive of Parliament, can he help me -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, this is not a directive.

MR ECWERU: Okay, given what we have agreed here.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, it is not about what we have agreed. I do not want you to say, Attorney-General, I have disregarded your advice because Parliament said A,B,C,D. What we are doing is giving guidance that these people are not many. That advice of the Attorney-General – I am saying, do not just write to them letters if you feel they do not agree with it. Engage. Engaging is always easy, and you can tell them that the Attorney-General has advised me this way. That is what I was trying to put across. Yes, Hon. Sserukenya.

2.58

MR DAVID SSERUKENYA (NUP, Mak-indye-Ssabagabo Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Ever since Busabala Road was upgraded, land grabbing became rampant in Busabala Ward. It was Tuesday night last week when Kibiri Market was fenced by land grabbers. The market was developed by the Government 18 years back and the it is collecting revenue from this market. On top of that, the Government constructed a police station on the same land but unfortunately, land grabbers left the police station out and fenced the market.

My humble prayers are:

1. Intervention by the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development.
2. If the claimants are genuine, let the Government buy this land because they have already put there money.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government?

2.59

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Thank you, honourable colleague. I am going to bring this to the attention of the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development because it is a serious issue that the market is being collected revenue from.

I do not know whether the land grabbers are real or not but I have to bring it to the attention of the minister. He is going to get in touch with you, honourable member. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssekikubo.

MR SSEKIKUBO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have been seated listening in to the manner we are handling business on the Floor of this House. I thought the Leader of Government Business is there to marshal her troops; I mean the ministers around so that they can give answers.

We are talking of a ministry with more than three ministers. It should not be a ritual for the Government to post obvious answers. Once you say you are going to inform the line minister, you are putting down the level of consciousness and expectation, not only of Members of Parliament, but the whole country. Those who are watching us know that these parliamentary sittings are live; members are seeing - and at the end of the day, we do not get value for money.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you were in my position what would you do, Hon. Ssekikubo? *(Laughter)*

MR SSEKIKUBO: Mr Speaker, I would propose that this Parliament sanctions the frontbench by putting them to task, by penalising them - we can express dissatisfaction and displeasure in the manner the frontbench is conducting business. I am surprised that even the Government spokesperson cannot move constructively on this matter. He is seated here and seeing questions being raised and the ritual answers being given.

Mr Speaker, can we move to a stage where we name and shame those ministers who are responsible for pulling down this House?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. On the exact same thing as Hon. Ssekikubo - Yes, Hon. Tebandeke.

MR TEBANDEKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rule 50(1) of our Rules of Procedure, verbally reads and states: *“A Minister shall attend sittings of the House to answer questions asked of him or her.”*

Mr Speaker, the rule is specific that “a minister shall attend” and while a minister attends in absentia and a question remains pending with no answers, doesn’t it explain more of incompetence? Is it procedurally right that you permit me and I come here with a censure motion against such ministers?

MS KAAYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the same, honourable?

MS KAAYA: Yes, I am raising a procedural matter on the same. Mr Speaker, the Government Chief Whip is present. Sometime back, the Government Chief Whip would call the ministers – sometimes, they are not very far away from Parliament - and they would come and respond to some of these questions later. The Chief Whip would cross-check.

Mr Speaker, sometimes the ministers also plan for field trips in our constituencies, and yet we are here waiting for them; for example, Hon. Mayanja, the Minister of State for Lands, Housing and Urban Development was in Kiboga yesterday, without my knowledge. Today, I was waiting for him here to respond to some of the issues. *(Laughter)*

On the same issues, really, they are following up with ministerial activities but I think it would be procedurally right that the ministers gazette some of these three days for plenary. The Chief Whip should also cross-check with them whether they are around to come and respond to these questions. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Okot Ogong.

3.05

MR FELIX OKOT OGONG (NRM, Dokolo South County, Dokolo): Mr Speaker, I happened to serve as the minister for parliamentary affairs and my work was to ensure that ministers attend to their duties. During my time, my office would prepare a record of attendance of all ministers in respect to Parliament and that report would be submitted to the appointing authority. If your performance is below 30 per cent -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could that be the reason why you were dropped? *(Laughter)*

MR OKOT OGONG: I was the best-performing minister during that time. Even as the Minister of Youth and Children's Affairs, I was awarded - I have the plaque with me,

as the best-performing minister. During our time, my office would prepare a report of the attendance of ministers, and their participation in Parliament, and it would be submitted to the appointing authority. If your performance was below 30 per cent, you were not dropped but you are warned. My not being there is political; it is not about performance. It is all about politics.

I think this is easy and can be done, so that ministers should be here. Last time, you informed us here that you have your schedule of duties; that each and every ministry must be present in Parliament at all times. You have your schedules, that so and so will be here today, Monday, and it is only three days: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. On Monday, you can go upcountry; on Friday you can do other things; Saturday and so forth.

Parliament is a very important institution. This is where we transact our businesses. If ministers are not there, then you will clog the performance of this Parliament.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable.

MR OKOT OGONG: Therefore, Mr Speaker, you need to also warn ministers. We need to have a stick; we need to use our powers as Parliament. Ministers, stand warned that we shall act. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Odur.

3.07

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Mr Speaker, my understanding - and you have guided before - is that any Member with a matter of urgent national importance comes to your office. The practice has been that your office labours to reach out to the ministers in advance to avoid ambushes. If a Member came to you to raise a matter, I know you would say, "No, I cannot allow it because the ministers are not prepared."

So, I look at the Government as a single unit. Having a leader of Government Business and

several ministers here means they should work together collectively to respond to the concerns of Ugandans. When we come and ask questions and we do not get answers, these questions are repeated. Sometimes I sympathise with Members when they speak here every day. There is a Member from Ntoroko, but he is not here, Hon. Rwemulikya – no, I think he is from Ibanda, who has been raising, in the last five years, the challenges he has faced with the floods and roads there, every three months. He is a member of NRM.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I want to suggest – while we, as Members of Parliament, have been taken through orientation, I think our ministers have not. I do not know whether the Cabinet has that, but they have to do that. You cannot get these ministers in their offices. If you go to their offices and you write a chit, and they see that it is from an MP, you will hardly access them.

If you send them a text message - most of them – *(Interjections)* - I and colleagues have a testimony about this. Even when you send them a text message, you do not get a response *-(interjections)* - the last time, before *-(Interruption)*

3.10

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The public, which includes our voters -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Let us listen to the minister.

DR BARYOMUNSI: The public, which includes our voters, listens to this debate in the House yet an impression is being created that ministers do not value Parliament and that they do not receive Members of Parliament in their offices.

The honourable member is generalising. Can you be specific and say, “I went to the Ministry of ICT and the minister was in the office and

he refused to receive me?” I am saying this because for many of us the standing order in our ministries is that when a Member of Parliament comes in, we tell ourselves to allow the Member to just get access; even if I have a meeting inside, and I know that is the practice in most of the ministries.

Unless you name and say minister ministers so and so. Please stop blanketing all of us as if we do not value Members of Parliament.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Jonathan Odur, conclude.

MR ODUR: Thank you very much. For the record, I can name many of the ministers, and some of them are even looking at me. I wrote to them but they have never replied to my letter; they are here. However, for the record, let me say that I have attempted to see the Minister responsible for Education and Sports. *(Laughter)*

The minister is not inside this Parliament right now. However, the point I am making is that the ministers should take this seriously.

It is not only me, some of your colleagues are just not able to speak, but the truth is that it is extremely difficult for Members of Parliament to access the ministers and that is why I have given this evidence to you – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, just number one, today I want to thank the ministers; the Frontbench is full. *(Applause)* I want to appreciate it.

Number two, Rule 114 of our Rules of Procedure requires ministers to be in the House. The problem, however, is that the same rules do not provide for sanctions – *(Interjections)* – yes, because these ministers are like fellow Members of Parliament.

If they do not attend the required sittings as per the law, we as leadership, is when we can come in and inform whoever is responsible.

Otherwise, honourable colleagues, what we pick from this is that we should not judge each other but improve how we coordinate with each other. For example, honourable ministers, we would always be happy if you have lunch with Members in the canteen, for example.

I know many ministers go in and they do have lunch. The problem is we end up judging everybody yet we have Ministers who are always here. Hon. Bahati, Hon. Musasizi, Rt Hon. Nakadama, the Government Chief Whip and the honourable Minister for Local Government are always here. Hon. Mbadi used to be with us here all the time as CDF and now he is - but Hon. Dr Baryomunsi, Hon. Anifa, and all of you, honourable colleagues, you are always here.

However, honourable ministers, as you know, like we shared in our own way in Kyankwanzi, please always inform your colleagues to endeavour to attend.

You are a Member of Parliament. Sometimes in case you leave that Frontbench, it will be difficult for you to come and sit on the Back bench when you never used to be here; and one day it might happen. I want to thank the colleagues who are here. We appreciate our honourable colleagues who always come.

Let's listen to Hon. Nambooze Betty, then Hon. Martin Muzale.

3.15

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE (NUP, Mukono Municipality, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to refer to a press release that was released by the Electoral Commission on 30 July, 2024, outlining a number of activities to be undertaken ahead of the 2026 elections.

Mr Speaker, at number one, the Electoral Commission set out dates 6 to 16 August 2024 for field demarcation of constituencies and electoral areas and the re-organisation of polling stations.

What is happening on the ground however, is that the Electoral Commission constituted

a team that comprises Town Clerks, Chief Administrative Officers, District Planners, Sub County Administrative Secretaries and themselves as the team to do this work.

What they are doing is that they are splitting constituencies and electoral areas. They started with local governments, splitting electoral areas, merging some, and doing away with others.

Mr Speaker, in all this exercise, they have not involved the political parties who are major stakeholders in this business. I got to know about this from my councillors when they came to me because most of them were losing their constituencies.

In accordance with the Local Government (Amendment) Act of 2020, this House passed and this is what is being implemented. For someone to become a sub-county councillor, they must have 30,000 voters, in the KCCA and other cities, 100,000 voters, Municipal wards 15,000 voters, city division wards - 15,000 voters, Sub counties - 12,000 voters, Towns wards 12,000 voters, and then municipal wards, 7,000 voters.

Mr Speaker, as much as the Electoral Commission says that they are implementing a law that was passed by this House, they are using the census of 2014 to determine the population, not the current census.

Mr Speaker, after 10 years, a lot has changed and the population has grown. So, if you go out to create electoral areas relying on the 2014 population census report, then, in essence, you are rigging elections because the number of residents has drastically changed, especially for us who live in the urban areas.

Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, state your prayers.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Mr Speaker, I would like to also raise another issue. When they follow up on this, you will realise that

they have decreased the number of councilors. I have also been looking at the number of my councils and noticed that some of them now have nine councilors.

Therefore, if you have a council with nine councilors and four are on the executive, three are chairpersons of the committees, that means that committees now in councils will have no members. We might find a councilor sitting alone in a committee to supervise a department in the district, subcounty, or municipal council.

Lastly, they have failure to involve the stakeholders when we all agreed that we are operating in a Multi-Party System of Governance and that political parties are the major stakeholders, especially when it comes to elections. So, this exercise was conducted in a way that the major stakeholders were left out. Therefore, it leaves a lot to desire.

My prayers are as follows:

1. That the Electoral Commission, through the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, be ordered to involve all the stakeholders instead of using the technical people to create constituencies; and
2. That after 10 years, it is erroneous to refer to the population census of 2014 although they told me that they did this because the result of the recently concluded population census has not been gazetted.

Mr Speaker, what does it take to gazette the results of the population census that was concluded so that in 2026 we create constituencies based on the population quarters, as it was the intention of the framers of our Constitution?

3. We make laws, but laws should not cause absurdities, where you find that a council has been decreased to the number of councilors who cannot constitute a council with its organs.

The best thing would have been for the Electoral Commission to refer this matter to Parliament

for us to reconsider the amendments we made since it was in good spirit and we wanted to decrease the number of leaders; our intention was not to create an absurdity like the case has turned out to be.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Betty Nambooze. Yes, Honourable Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.

3.22

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS (Mr Nobert Mao): Mr Speaker, this country is known as the Republic of Uganda. The word “Republic” means that we are a representative government and the representatives are a result of elections.

Therefore, electoral activities are paramount in these arrangements, which are in our Constitution. Now that this matter has been brought to the attention of the Government by the honourable Member of Parliament representing the people of Mukono Municipality, I would like to state as follows:

In the decision-making process, you must seek the input of those who will be affected by the decisions. The chief administrative officers, town clerks, and electoral commissioners are not candidates for elections or players. Even when you are making rules for football or when choosing the referees, you consult the football clubs. So, this matter is critical. The way I have understood it is that the honourable member has stated that the Electoral Commission has perhaps misread the meaning of the word “independence.”

The Electoral Commission is independent, but it doesn’t mean that they act alone or for themselves. For the record, I would like to state that this is not the first time the Electoral Commission has done things that have caused embarrassment.

Yours truly was once removed from the voter’s register by an electoral commission officer who claimed that they had retired the register.

(Laughter) I had to go to court to prove that one cannot retire a register, but it can be compiled and updated. Therefore, let me take this as homework but I will do the following two things:

- (i) I will meet them and hear their side; and
- (ii) I will direct whoever is concerned to convene an extraordinary meeting of the National Consultative Forum (NCF) of political parties.

This is a constitutional body chaired by the ruling party but deputized by the leading opposition party in Parliament.

I believe that will be a forum for us to do the right thing for those who will seek elections. Not everybody will be a candidate but the parties are the best groups to make the input impactful.

I promise that as early as possible, next week, you will have your actions, but you will also hear in the media the things we are trying to do.

We want to avoid gerrymandering because we don't want any accusation by those who will lose elections to claim that they lost because of the actions of the Electoral Commission. They say "A stitch in time saves nine." I thought I was being extremely clear. Okay – *(Interruption)*

MR FETA: Thank you, honourable minister. The concern that our colleague has raised has also been raised by many councilors across the country.

Section 108 of the Local Government Act, talks about the population quarter. Subsection (1) talks about 100,000 in the case of cities, and section (c) talks about 15,000 in the case of municipalities or city divisions. Isn't this a contradiction? Would you clarify this?

This is for the representation of the directly elected councilors in the city council. One is talking about one councilor representing 100,000 people –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, do you want the minister to clarify on the law, which was made by this House?

MR FETA: I thought he is the right person to clarify on the law.

THE DEPUTY: Okay, honourable minister.

MR MAO: Mr Speaker, laws are not suggestions, but everybody is obliged to comply because they are non-negotiable. So, there is no way the Electoral Commission will say that they are doing the right thing if it is outside the law. It is as simple as that.

Therefore, my job is simply to communicate clearly to them ...

It is as simple as that. My job is simply to communicate clearly to them that:

- i. They need to act in a consultative manner; and
- ii. They must be objective and this means that they must deal with current data.

And if you are using outdated data from 2014, and their excuse is that it has not been gazetted, then I agree that is an absurdity. Mr Speaker, let me take this as homework.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I am glad that there is still some agreement between the two former Democratic Party (DP) friends - *(Laughter)* - I am happy that the OB and OG are - but honourable minister, this is a very critical issue.

After all this, you need to update this House so that we are all informed. Some people are asking; "...come 2026, will each subcounty have a female counsellor, now that it is in the law?" but people are still debating it.

You need to give us an information statement out of that roadmap so that we can be able to update our people.

Honourable colleagues, it is already 3.30 p.m. - look at our Order Paper. Let me have Hon.

Martin Muzaale and then I will take the rest tomorrow, starting with Hon. Betty Aol.

3.29

MR MARTIN MUZAALE (NRM, Buzaaya Country, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am raising a matter regarding the payment of service charges for Yaka metres and the general complaints about the new metres. We are paying for the units and a lot of money for the installation of those metres; between Shs 750 to Shs 800. There is no further justification that we should go ahead to pay for the service charge.

Secondly, the general complaints about the new Yaka metre; it is presumed that its consumption compared to the consumption of the old one is so high. If the units run out, one has to load.

I imagine a situation where one is about half a kilometre from their neighbour or late in the night and all of them are sleeping; one cannot approach them.

Thirdly, when one is loading these Yaka metres, the digits are so many in that if one has a challenge with eyesight, it is very difficult for them to load. I have witnessed it - whenever I send them to my mother, she gets challenged to load these units.

We have a challenge when we are loading these Yaka metres; the network is always a problem. As you are loading, they tell you to wait - the units are not coming on the screen and you end up loading another one.

My prayers are:

1. The service charge be scrapped. When the Mobile Telephone Network (MTN) and Airtel had just come, they were charging these services but as a result of competition, we no longer have them;
2. I do not know whether the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) approved these Yaka metres, which consume a lot and do not fit the standards of Ugandans. It is important that UNBS tests these metres

to determine whether they fit the standards of Ugandans; and

3. That we get automated Yaka metre digits such that immediately one loads on their phone, it automatically turns on. This will save Ugandans who have challenges with their eyesight. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, I can see both of them. Okay, the senior Minister is here.

3.33

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have heard the complaint from my colleague. It touches on the technicality of the *Yaka* metres. We will capture all the complaints he has raised and interface with the *UMEME* to rectify this so that we can give good services.

However, all the metres and other gadgets that we use are always checked by the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS).

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Committee on Energy, I assign you this issue. Report back in one month. Next item.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER ON
THE STATUS OF THE ELECTRICITY
CONNECTIVITY AND ONGOING
RELATED PROJECTS IN THE COUNTRY

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Before the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development takes to the Floor, Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, we had an issue on hooded security personnel earlier on, raised by Hon. Sarah Opendi; we do not want to clog the Order Paper.

3.35

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (VETERAN AFFAIRS) (Ms Huda Oleru): Mr Speaker, the uniform those people are wearing does not belong to the Uganda

People's Defence Force (UPDF) but now that it looks similar, we are going to investigate and report back. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, the Member said that they are in UPDF or police uniform but they cover their faces so they are not visible while in public.

The Member said that if they were using pickups or escort vehicles, she would not have a problem but her fears arise from an incident she witnessed around Forest Mall when she saw a person in military uniform guarding a lady wearing a hood in broad daylight.

Are hoods part of the uniform or military attire? Or it is a matter you need to go and look into as the Government?

MS OLERU: Mr Speaker, if that has happened, it is wrong but we are still going to investigate further because there are so many people who try to camouflage and pretend to be security personnel when they are not; we will give you a better answer.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The question was well captured on the *Hansard*. Usually, the Government Chief Whip captures them and shares them with the respective ministers for follow-up; so, let it remain in that line.

Honourable colleagues, we are already coming to 4:00 p.m. I would like us to go to the statement that is on the Order Paper.

3.37

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The purpose of this statement is to apprise Parliament on:

- i) The progress of the implementation of Bridging the Demand-Supply Gap Balance through the Accelerated Rural Electrification Programme, funded by a loan from the EXIM Bank of China. This was a loan targeting the subcounties;

- ii) The progress on the implementation of the Electricity Access Scale-Up Project (EASP), funded by a loan from the World Bank; and

- iii) The status of connectivity in the entire country.

The background, Mr Speaker, is that the Government, through the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, received a credit facility from the EXIM Bank of China to implement the Bridging the Demand-Supply Balance Gap through the Accelerated Rural Electrification Programme for electrification of subcounties in the country in order to support social-economic development.

The components of the project were:

- (i) The construction of the medium and low voltage networks;
- (ii) The installation of pole-mounted distribution transformers; and
- (iii) Provision of last-mile consumer electricity connections.

On 31 October 2017, my ministry entered into a commercial contract with TBEA Company Limited as the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contractor at a contract price of \$212,669,840.08. My ministry also engaged a consultant (M&E Associates), a Ugandan company, to supervise the project as the Owner's Engineer.

Construction progress of the project

Mr Speaker, following the contract effectiveness of the EPC contract, the contractor proceeded with the implementation of the project, and, overall, the physical construction has been completed.

The outcome of the project is outlined as follows:

- (i) A total of 210 subcounty headquarters/town councils were electrified under the

project, adding 3,202.46km of medium voltage, and 6,827.82km of low voltage to the national grid as well as installation of 1,744 distribution transformers that were fully completed, commissioned and handed over to the various network operators like UMEME, Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL), Kilembe Investments Ltd., and West Nile Rural Electrification Company (WENRECO), for operation and connection of customers;

- (ii) In addition, the project procured connection materials to connect 180,228 electricity customers in the entire country. Currently, pre-paid metres were supplied and connections are ongoing across the country. This was to support the Government's Electricity Connections Policy (ECP) free connection policy.

The contractor completed Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) studies across all regions, and the reports have been submitted to the Chief Government Valuer for review and approval. To date, the Chief Government Valuer has approved the Resettlement Action Plan reports – this is about compensation to project-affected persons – totalling Shs 38 billion for the compensation of project-affected persons.

Furthermore, the project constructed a warehouse at Kakiri in Wakiso District and handed it over to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development. The ministry is now using this facility for the storage of connection materials and other power line equipment.

Although construction works have been completed, as a contractual obligation, the contractor remains on the ground to rectify any defects that may occur until my ministry issues the Final Completion Certificate envisaged during the second quarter of the calendar year 2025.

Challenges faced during the implementation of the project

Mr Speaker, the project has faced a number of challenges that we continue to address as we

implement the defects liability period. The challenges are highlighted below.

The contract did not cover transformers needed for the construction of 11kV networks. However, some of the subcounty headquarters selected for electrification are situated in areas with existing 11kV networks. As a result, 11kV schemes, comprising 78.9km of medium voltage and 176.9km of low voltage lines, have been constructed but are pending the installation of 30 distribution transformers. These schemes are located in the districts of Manafwa, Kumi and Soroti. The necessary 11kV transformers are currently being procured by the ministry, with delivery anticipated by the end of next month – September.

The responsibility of compensating Project-Affected Persons (PAPs) for the crops and trees damaged during construction works falls on the Government of Uganda. We are unable to compensate PAPs due to budget constraints, as I will be explaining further. Currently, the obligation for compensation on this project amounts to Shs 35.5 billion, but no funds have been provided in the Financial Year 2024/2025.

The rampant vandalism of project materials, mainly wires from completed schemes, has severely compromised the functionality and reliability of constructed networks, leading to frequent power outages and increased repair costs. Theft and/or deliberate damage to essential components, such as power lines and transformers, disrupts service delivery and imposes a financial burden on the ministry. Addressing this issue requires enhanced security measures, community awareness and strict legal penalties to protect the infrastructure and ensure the continued benefits of these projects.

Let me now embark on the Electricity Access Scale-up Project (EASP). Mr Speaker, the EASP builds upon the Government's earlier interventions to directly support the expansion and strengthening of the electricity distribution network and scale up consumer connections by facilitating at least one million electricity connections, covering households, commercial

enterprises, industrial parks, mining centres and public institutions.

This will significantly increase the level of access to grid electricity in Uganda as well as increase the share of clean energy usage for cooking. The interventions are, therefore, well aligned with the Government's Vision 2040, the National Development Plan (NDP) III, the Parish Development Model (PDM) and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7, which targets energy access, among others.

Parliament cleared the loan in November 2022 and the project achieved effectiveness on 20 July 2023.

The project is financed by the World Bank to a tune of \$628 million, of which \$276.5 million is a grant, \$20 million is to be leveraged from the private sector and the Government of Uganda will provide \$10 million.

Mr Speaker, the Electricity Access Scale-up Project (EASP) is a five-year project whose interventions will be delivered through five components namely:

- (i) Component 1: Grid expansion and connectivity; consumer connections, and investments in new grid infrastructures to accommodate additional connections;
- (ii) Component 2: Financial intermediation for energy access scale-up. Uganda Energy Credit Capitalisation Company (UECCC) will use innovative financing mechanisms, including lines of soft credit, through Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs) and grants, through energy service companies to promote the supply and uptake of clean energy technologies;
- (iii) Component 3: Energy access in refugee host communities. This will provide interventions detailed under components 1 and 2, but specifically in the refugee hosting districts;
- (iv) Component 4: Project implementation support, affordable modern energy

solutions and implementation of Performance Based Conditions (PBCs); and

- (iv) Component 5: Contingence Emergency Response (Rapid support for eligible emergencies). A transformer has collapsed; you will have to be disaster-prepared.

The project implementation is being undertaken by Project Implementation Units (PIUs) at the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development and the Uganda Energy Credit Capitalisation Company (UECCC).

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) is in place to provide oversight and strategic guidance during project implementation. The PSC committee comprises representation from the Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, as well as Ministry of Local Government, UECCC and my ministry.

Progress on the implementation of the connection to the grid expansion components

Progress of grid connection under EASP

The EASP targets to add 1,073,000 new grid connections. Implementation of grid connections under the Umeme Concession commenced in March 2024. Customer applications for both no poll or one poll service are being received and processed. Between 11th March and 30th July 2024, a total of 221,412 applications were received by Umeme, marking a 72 per cent progress in the application status of the 309,841 targeted connections for the period ending March 31st, 2025.

The cumulative number of connections made by Umeme, as of 30th June 2024, stood at 64,037 and Umeme has indicated that they will be able to deliver as per the work plan since other development partner-funded projects are closing out at the end of July 2024 and their main focus will be on the EASP.

Other distribution companies are undertaking free connections using materials procured by my ministry using other funding sources that were already in place before EASP. The ministry is currently procuring electricity connection materials under EASP to be used by these distribution companies.

Progress on grid expansion and connectivity under EASP

My technical teams are undertaking surveys in preparation for the development of construction designs for the power line extension schemes to be implemented under EASP.

All due care is being undertaken in the preliminary data capture exercise to ensure equitable regional spread of new electricity lines in support of new electricity connections. The project is targeting potential consumers who have lived near the electricity network without being connected to the grid, and therefore, the targeted extension will be in a radius of about three kilometres.

The implementation of the grid expansion works is in the preparatory stages, with the focus being on:

- (i) executing procurement to on-board the service providers to deliver the various aspects for Grid Expansion; and
- (ii) preliminary designs and surveys in preparation for the Grid Expansion execution.

As previously highlighted, the scope of grid expansion works will involve:

- (i) The construction of 2,900Kms of Medium Voltage (MV) network; and
- (ii) The construction of 3,100Kmsk of Low Voltage (LV) network and associated 1,200 distribution transformers.

The progress attained in the procurement and preliminary designs for grid expansion activities is highlighted below:

1. Planning, Designing and Supervision Consultancy (PDSC) - the contract with Grant of Permission Agreement (GOPA) Intec was signed on the 22 May 2024 and commencement is to be achieved this month August 2024 after advance payment;
2. Materials Logistics Service Provider (MLSP) - this service provider shall manage the storage and transportation of all EASP inventory for connections and Grid Expansion materials. The procurement is at technical evaluation;
3. Resettlement action plan consultant - the consultant shall support the acquisition of way leaves for the grid expansion components. The procurement is at the financial evaluation level; and
4. Procurements for Bulk Material Suppliers (BMS) and line installation contractors have also commenced.

Progress on the implementation of the financial intermediation component of the EASP implemented by Uganda Energy Credit Capitalisation Company

Mr Speaker, Uganda Energy Credit Capitalisation Company is a Government of Uganda (GoU) company established to catalyse financing for renewable energy projects and increase access to clean and modern energy services. This company uses limited public resources to leverage private sector participation in the financing of renewable energy projects and access programs.

The company is an Apex Clean Energy Financier that majorly intermediates its services in partnership with financial institutions (commercial banks regulated by the Bank of Uganda and microfinance institutions and SACCOs regulated by Uganda Microfinance Regulatory Authority as well as energy service companies distributing clean energy technologies.

This company is implementing the financial intermediation component of the Electricity Access Scale-Up Project (EASP), which is about \$110 million. It will provide financial, technical and other support for off-grid and clean energy access and productive use of energy.

Energy access includes solar home systems, solar systems for commercial enterprises, clean cooking solutions for private and public institutions and productive uses of energy such as water pumping, irrigation, refrigeration and cooling; water heating and grain milling powered by both on-grid and off-grid energy sources.

The above interventions target nationwide coverage including refugee host districts and refugee settlements. This company will also disburse grants to support the supply and installation of large stand-alone solar systems to electrify public schools, public health centres and public water supply systems.

The key Uganda Energy Credit Capitalisation Company (UECCC) implementing partners include participating financial institutions (PFIs) and energy service companies (ESCOs). The PFIs include commercial banks, microfinance institutions, leasing companies, savings and credit cooperative organisations and investment funds.

The PFIs and the ESCOs that are partnering with the UECCC were publicly solicited through a nationwide call for expression of interest published in September 2023. To date, 32 financial institutions have been accredited to apply for credit support facilities.

To date, a technical review committee and the World Bank have evaluated and cleared 87 of those companies to participate in the prize subsidy programmes. The committee comprises representatives from the Uganda National Bureau of Standards, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development and UECCC project implementation units.

Honourable colleagues, it is important to note that UECCC continues to achieve expressions of interest from financial institutions and energy service companies that are interested in participating in the EASP.

Mr Speaker, on the progress of the result-based financial programmes under UECCC, this company will partner with accredited energy service companies to discount prices for off-grid solar systems for lighting and charging. These are solar lantern prices that will be discounted by 60 per cent. The prices for solar systems with two lights will be discounted by 50 per cent.

Clean cooking solution prices powered by solar, briquettes, ethanol, biogas, electric pressure cookers and liquefied petroleum gas will be discounted by 30 to 50 per cent depending on the technology, productive uses of energy equipment such as water pumping, irrigation, refrigeration and cooling. Water heating and grain milling will have prices discounted by 60 per cent. *(Applause)*

To date, 35 energy service companies dealing in off-grid solar, 30 energy service companies dealing in productive use of energy products and 22 energy service companies dealing in non-biomass cook stoves have been shortlisted. The selected companies have a wide outreach and will use market-based approaches to deliver price discounts to the public. The only requirement to purchase the discounted products will be a national identification card and the ability to pay the prices after the discount. Beneficiaries will be able to walk away with their products after purchase.

An independent verification agent (Audit Firm) will make use of a digital platform to verify sales submitted by the energy service companies. The digital platform will facilitate transparency during the verification process by the independent verification agent. The UECCC will also support the energy service companies to address market entry barriers through incentives to make sales in remote areas of Uganda like Karamoja, the islands and the refugee host districts. This company

shall soon execute grant agreements with the selected companies to convey the price discount to the public and procurement of the independent verification agent is ongoing.

On the progress of the credit support facility under the UECCC, this company will provide a line of credit to PFIs to on-lend to households and commercial enterprises for the acquisition of clean energy technologies, off-grid solar, productive use of energy, clean cooking solutions, internal wiring and three-phase connections; and to provide working capital loans to energy service companies.

On appraisal on disbursement of loans, Mr Speaker, to date, Shs 43.5 billion has been approved for on-lending to beneficiaries by Centenary Bank, Housing Finance Bank, Finca Uganda Limited, Post Bank Uganda Limited, Stanbic Bank Uganda Limited and Development Microfinance Limited. Ten additional applications from PFIs are under appraisal, totalling Shs 41 billion.

Progress of Public Institutions Programme

For the Public Institutions Programme, UECCC is the grant purse holder to disburse contract payments to the energy service companies competitively procured by the ministries for Water and Environment, Health and Education and Sports to electrify rural water pumping schemes, public health centres and public schools.

On the Ministry of Water and Environment, UECCC has signed grant agreements with four successful energy service companies that shall electrify the 40 identified water stations covering Northern Uganda (10), Western Uganda (10), Eastern Uganda (10) and Central Uganda (10). The grant amount committed so far is approximately Shs 22 billion. The water pumping stations will be identified by the Ministry of Water and Environment.

While the Ministry of Health is currently finalising the bidding documents for onward submission to the World Bank with no objection, the release of the request for

proposal is planned for September 2024 and about 350 health centres identified by the Ministry of Health will be electrified through this component of the EASP.

The Ministry of Education and Sports is currently finalising the bidding documents for onward submission to the World Bank for a no-objection. The release of the request for the proposal is planned for September 2024, and about 350 Schools identified by the Ministry of Education and Sports will be electrified through this component of EASP.

Implementation challenges

Mr Speaker, the Electricity Access Scale-up Project is largely a project that will support the implementation of free connections as stipulated in the Electricity Connection Policy. However, my ministry had a liability of about Shs 72,522,836,357.84 being the outstanding arrears owed by the Government of Uganda to the utility companies and contractors in respect of the services and works implemented under the Rural Electrification Programme we experienced. *Umeme* delayed the commencement of free connections under EASP as a result of unpaid arrears.

However, with the approval of the Cabinet, my ministry has since paid outstanding arrears to electricity service providers amounting to Shs 36,228,585,366, which had been audited by the independent auditors KPMG and the balance was to wait for the independent audit and verification by the Office of the Auditor-General.

All outstanding arrears have since been audited by the Auditor-General and the balance will be completed to avail cash flow to the service providers.

Mr Speaker, on the status of connectivity in the country, the electricity access in the country stands at 60 per cent - *(Interjections)* - yes. Twenty-two per cent on-grid out and 38 per cent off-grid. We count the solars that you use; that is off-grid. *(Laughter)*

All district headquarters have been electrified except for Obongi, which is a newly created district, Kalenga District, which recently shifted its headquarters, and Buvuma District, which is an island. otherwise, the rest of the district headquarters in the country have been connected. Projects have been initiated to electrify these three distinct headquarters; I am talking about headquarters.

The Government has also embarked on electrifying subcounty headquarters; this has been our policy. With only 410 subcounties still remaining out of the 2066 Subcounties, town councils, and Division headquarters; 410 remain unconnected.

The power distribution grid has increased from 6,496 kilometres, in 2005 to over 80,000 kilometres, currently. We have 2,228,384 customers who are grid-connected. Ninety-five per cent of which are domestic. This leaves a balance of about 8.2 million households that need to be connected to the electricity grid.

My ministry, together with the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development, continues to develop new projects and mobilize financing to propel the country to universal access by 2030 using both on-grid and off-grid solutions.

Mr Speaker, the challenges in implementing the rural electrification programme are as follows:

1. The inadequate counterpart funding by the Government is a key challenge to the implementation of the Rural Electrification Programme. Whereas my ministry has contractual and Project Affected Persons(PAPs) compensation obligations totalling over Shs 440 billion, the Budget provision for the Financial Year 2024/2025 is Shs 55 billion only. The demand is Shs 440 billion; the budget is Shs 55 billion only.

Whereas construction works under the Subcounty Project financed by the Exim Bank of China have been completed, the Government has since released Shs 2.2 billion

for compensation out of the required Shs 38 billion.

Similarly, construction works have been completed for the Uganda Rural Electrification Access Project (UREAP) financed by the African Development Bank but the Government has only released Shs 2.6 billion for compensation to date.

2. The trend of inadequate counterpart funding has resulted in delayed implementation of the project and may be the case with EASP where the World Bank requires the ministry to compensate Project Affected Persons before construction works commence. If the subcounty under UREAP projects required compensation of PAPs before the commencement of construction works as required with EASP, these two projects would be stranded to date.
3. Vandalism remains a major challenge to the Power Supply industry. As already indicated, addressing this issue requires enhanced security measures, and community awareness, which we are doing and I call upon everybody to join me. It requires strict legal penalties.

I thank you, Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues when you supported the amendment to the 1999 Electricity Act, where we introduced stringent punishment for people involved in vandalism. This is still with us.

Mr Speaker, I would like to conclude, by requesting this august Parliament to note the progress made by the Government in the implementation of Bridging the Demand-supply balance gap through the accelerated Rural Electrification Programme funded.

I would like you to note the progress made by the Government in the implementation of the Electricity Access Scale Up Project. I would also like you to note the progress made by the Government to electrify the entire country.

I have also mentioned the challenges and I would like this august House to note the challenges faced in the implementation of the

Rural Electrification Programme that include financial constraints and vandalism.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to brief the country on this very pertinent and important project. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable ministers, these are the kind of updates - they help. I think this is a very important update for the country on the many questions that have been asked.

Honourable colleagues, we are going to open the debate. We shall be using three minutes, but I am giving five minutes first to the Shadow Minister of Energy and Mineral Development. Hon. Evans Kanyike.

4.18

MR EVANS KANYIKE (NUP, Bukoto County East, Masaka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the minister for the elaborate statement she has just made on the Floor. However, it is unfortunate that our Rules of Procedure are very silent on how shadow ministers respond to the ministerial statements.

I intend, as the Shadow Minister of Energy and Mineral Development to come out with a formal statement on energy governance in Uganda, including rural electrification under Rule 53 of the Rules of Procedure on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition.

I have read and listened very attentively to the minister's statement. However, it does not clearly address the Members' concerns. And that is Hon. Richard Lumu, Member of Parliament for Mityana County South.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, let me make it very easy for you. You had prepared a statement, but you did not follow the rules on how it should be done. Let me use my authority to allow you, because I can see you are going here and there to read your statement so that we debate. You can do it in a shadow way – *(Laughter)*- but he is a shadow minister.

MR KANYIKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your guidance and indulgence. The Minister of Energy and Mineral Development was responding to the question which was raised by Hon. Richard Lumu, Member of Parliament for Mityana County South. As the Shadow Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, I have this statement to present.

I would like to pay tribute to Hon. Richard Lumu who raised this matter of utmost national importance. Unfortunately, he is not in the House and is indisposed. Therefore, he is not able to respond to the minister, as provided for under Rule 48 of our Rules of Procedure. I will briefly, for the record, state his areas of concern that led to this ministerial statement.

Rural Electrification in Uganda has suffered a still birth of uncoordinated efforts, delivering very little after mainstreaming the Rural Electrification Programme from an independent agency to a department in a ministry responsible for energy in October 2021.

The programme virtually came to a standstill. At the time of the mainstreaming rural electrification in the ministry, hundreds or probably thousands of kilometres of low voltage lines constructed by the Rural Electrification Agency, (REA) had not been energised or commissioned. More than three years since these lines were erected, they are still not energised in many parts of the country.

I know Members of Parliament will bear witness with me that in their constituencies, many of those un-energised lines were vandalised and conductors taken by vandals.

A new World Bank loan and grant project; the Electricity Access Scale Up Project valued at US\$ 638 million has been rolled out largely to increase connection to the existing grid power lines. Only customers who are lucky to be next to the existing low voltage pole are benefiting from this loan project.

There is no ongoing programme to the extent that power lines to areas are currently not served. Our colleague, Hon. Lumu, rose to this

very important point of lack of expanded rural electrification in Mityana to raise this matter. He raised a matter of Kyetume Parish which is the leading producer of tomatoes in Mityana. The tomatoes go bad due to lack of a factory to add value addition.

A Turkish investor was willing to set up a factory but due to lack of electricity infrastructures, it was not possible. Hon. Lumu raised the matter of Kasikombe which has a Health Centre III but without electricity infrastructure as well.

Most of our constituencies, including yours, Mr Speaker, because I visited Mitooma North when we visited as a Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, and some of the areas in your constituencies are not connected to power.

In most of our constituencies, we have examples like those of Mityana County South, unfortunately, we do not see any programme to cure the rural electrification problem. The much hyped Electricity Access Scale Up Project is not able to expand coverage beyond the existing lines. The project was designed to connect customers who require both a no-poll and a one-poll service. We now know that the project is being implemented in some areas, excluding others, as the minister mentioned it clearly here.

In my constituency; Bukoto County East, Masaka District, we do not have any free connection. Honourable minister, in many other areas where implementation has commenced, only those who require no-poll service are benefitting contrary to the design approved by this House. Increasing –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a point of order.

MS KAWOOYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable colleagues, you know I am not a person who normally rises up on point of order, but for the sake of putting the record right – Mr Speaker, I am aware which constituency you are from. I vividly heard the Honourable Colleague referring to the constituency, as

Mitooma North and Ruhinda. Where exactly do you come from? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. For the record, I come from Ruhinda North Constituency.

MS KAWOOYA: Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I had kept quiet thinking that the Honourable Colleague might have gone to recruit in a different place. You know we do not belong to the same political line –*(Laughter)* – Now you have given him exactly where I come from; he might place a candidate against me. They supported me so much when they visited me as a committee. Thank you. *(Applause)*

MR KANYIKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. For the record, it is Ruhinda North in Mitooma District. Increasing access to the existing network will require the Electricity Access Scale-up Project, which requires injecting thousands of new transformers in the network.

The honourable minister is aware that some of the transformers in different areas in this country are dilapidated and there is need to replace them with a voltage that fits within those different jurisdictions.

Effect of energy governance on rural electrification programme

Uganda is currently undergoing significant uncertainty in energy governance leading to a lack of clarity on fundamental questions on the availability, reliability and affordability of power.

At the heart of the uncertainty is the end of the Umeme Limited concession and the funding of the infrastructure deficit, including restoration, rehabilitation, and expansion of the electricity distribution grid.

The honourable minister, when submitting to Parliament the Budget Framework Paper and the Ministerial Policy Statement for the Financial Year 2024/2025, highlighted the need

for Parliament to support the ministry to raise the Umeme buyout amount, as well as giving the successor of Umeme access to financing for the dilapidated grid infrastructure.

Umeme's concession is ending seven months from today and to be specific, 28th February next year at midnight –(Interjections) - You extended it to March? Okay, I stand to be corrected.

The signed agreement provided for Uganda to undertake a study of the status of the grid assets managed by Umeme in the 17th year of the concession.

Now, in the 19th year, the minister has not given this House a report on the status of the electricity grid managed by Umeme and by the extension of Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited.

It has taken Hon. Lumu Richard's lack of electricity infrastructure in Mityana South, for the minister to respond to the matters of energy governance with a budget implication.

Liquidation of Umeme

In this period of rationalisation of Government agencies, it was mooted and the minister informed the Parliament of the intention to merge the successor companies of the Uganda Electricity Board (UEB).

From 2001, now 23 years down the road, UEB has been under liquidation. One of her babies, the Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL), is about to repossess some of the assets that belonged to the board that has failed to die.

We know that the former employees of UEB are dying without payment of their terminal benefits and many have lost hope for receiving their benefits in their lifetime. The minister, for some unknown reasons, never mentioned UEB in liquidation.

Umeme's Successor

Uganda has nine electricity distribution companies; Umeme Limited, West Nile Rural Electrification Company (WENRECo), Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL), Bundibugyo Electricity Cooperative Society, Kyegegwa Rural Energy Cooperative Society, Pader-Abim Community Multipurpose Electricity Cooperative Society, Kilembe Investment Limited, Hydro Max and Kalangala Infrastructure Services Limited (KIS).

Umeme is Uganda's main electricity distribution company with a market share of over 95 per cent. UEDCL, the owner of the network, currently operated and maintained by Umeme, is slated to take back its assets and manage them.

For UEDCL to expand the current network after taking over from Umeme, the minister should inform this House of the proposed source of financing for those investments.

Other rural distribution challenges

Mr Speaker, supply and tariffs in West Nile and Kalangala are unique. Both areas have just been connected to the national grid through the electricity transmission infrastructure and a marine cable, respectively.

Kalangala, which was previously running on supply from a hybrid of solar and diesel engines, has now been connected to the national grid and joined the problems of the mainland. The tariffs are higher and there is power outage that never used to exist and is now so common in those two respective areas.

In Kalangala, a unit of electricity is sold to domestic consumers at Shs 1,269.5 excluding VAT by a distributor, Kalangala Infrastructure Services Limited. This district is also unable to benefit from the one-pole service under the Electricity Access Scale-Up Project.

We congratulate the people of West Nile upon joining the usual national grid challenges. The

arrival of the high voltage power to the West Nile is good but the minister is silent on the electricity distribution challenges there.

The last mile connection run by WENRECo in Madi-Okollo and Obongi districts.

Mr Speaker, as I conclude, I have a few prayers. Number one, I pray that this august House finds that there are many substantive issues of energy governance to be addressed by the Executive, beyond the minister of energy. Some of the matters I have raised require the input of the Attorney-General as well as the ministers responsible for privatisation and finance.

Lastly, I pray that the statement and that of the minister be referred to the relevant committee, that is, the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, to enable Parliament to debate and make recommendations on rural electrification with a background of energy planning and governance in our country.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable shadow minister, I read your statement – it is a very brilliant statement – but the problem is that you went broader and the minister had been limited to two projects. You see, the way it is structured is as if the minister has not responded to critical issues in the sector. Our assignment was only on two projects. Okay?

I request, honourable colleagues, that we limit our debate to those two projects for now. I will be guiding, at the end.

So, I will start with - I will pick a few here and then a few here. I will start with Hon. Robina Rwakoojo, Hon. Dr Keefa Kiwanuka and Hon. Songa. I am trying to pick one from each region. *(Member rose)* No, from West Nile, I have picked Hon. Songa for now. I also need to pick - wow, today all of you are looking at me with merciful eyes. *(Laughter)* This is very rare.

Let me pick an islander, Hon. Kyooma and Bishop. From the Independents, I will pick Hon. Silas and Hon. Niwagaba, for now. However, honourable colleagues, what I promise you is that, if we can keep it short, I want to give an opportunity to as many of you as possible because this is a national project. Even if it means us stopping on this matter today, I will give you time. Let us be quick, honourable colleagues, so that we give others a chance.

4.40

MS ROBINA RWAKOOJO (NRM, Gomba West County, Gomba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for her statement. I would like to talk about electricity in Kyayi Subcounty. When I did my investigations from the ministry, I was told that it was under the EXIM loan.

Gomba West has five subcounties and, of those, it is Kyayi, which does not have electricity. It has no inch of electricity at all. It has no pole, no wire and no transformer. In 2016, electricity to Kyayi was a presidential pledge and it was reaffirmed about a month ago by H.E. the President.

I pray that electricity lines be installed from Maddu, down to Ddegeya, Nyabugando, Nyakitembe, Lwaweba, Biyanja, Bugula, Nsororo and Kyayi itself and within the 19 villages of Kyayi Subcounty.

Secondly, I pray that vandalised lines in Mawuki Parish, Kabulasoke Subcounty, Lugaaga Parish in Kabulasoke Subcounty and others be replaced and the transformers be provided in Bulwadda, Kakubansiri, Rubaale, Bukundugulu, Matongo, Kyamboobo and Nsozibiri.

We have a solar power project in Kabulasoke – I do not know if this is out of it. It is the biggest in eastern and central Africa. I would like the ministry to find out the status of that land because it would be an embarrassment if it no longer was to be – if the power were not to go to the national grid.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Dr Keefa.

4.42

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA (NRM, Kiboga East County, Kiboga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on this. I had the opportunity to be the chairperson of the natural resources committee in the 10th Parliament for five years. A lot has been achieved, honourable minister. Congratulations. It is great work that has been achieved.

However, I have three points, just to keep to my time. The first one is that I am surprised that with 210 subcounties connected, you have declared the project complete, whereas they were supposed to be 287. Is this a symptom of some revision that has been done without the knowledge of Parliament?

The second point that I am interested in is that the purpose of the project was to stimulate demand in the country. Through connection – having increased users – it was hoped that it would bring the tariffs down. You have not reported on that. I wonder what effect this project has had on the tariffs in the country.

The other big problem that we had is that we were having a lot of generation and, actually, many times talking about excess supply than what could be consumed. There was not much in terms of investment in transmission and distribution. I think a lot has been achieved in the area of distribution – and, again, congratulations on that.

However, there was a concern that the transmission lines that we are having, on which the distribution lines are being connected, are very old – actually, some of them are obsolete. They were constructed way back in the 1960s. I have not heard any mention that actually some work has been done around the transmission lines – trying to update them. I think that is one of the reasons why we are having outages and increased technical losses.

Finally, honourable minister, there is a problem, as mentioned by the shadow minister, that a number of subcontractors around the country, on this TBEA project, have not been paid. I wonder what the status is at the moment.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, my chairperson. Hon. Keefa was my chairperson and we processed the TBEA project. It is a project – honourable minister, I am finding a few issues with this project and I think you need to dig deeper. I hope that in the debate, they will come out. There is a very good example here, on page 4, where you said that they did not cover 11kV transformers and you have 78.9 kilometres that do not have transformers.

So, where did these transformers go then, if they were planned for and were part of the contract? This means you have 78 kilometres where the contractor did not put transformers – and we say the project is closed. So, there is still a lot. I hope we can get out more.

Yes, I had picked Hon. Songa.

4.45

MR LAWRENCE SONGA (NRM, Ora County, Zombo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. First of all, I thank the minister for the statement. For the last 50 years, I have been waiting for that power in West Nile, but West Nile has been for power for 100 years. We thank you for that initiative to connect West Nile to the national grid.

We also pray that you fast-track, now, the completion of the Nyagak 6.6 megawatts so that it can be stepped up to supply power in West Nile. Then, the issue of the energy mix and the solar would be very important.

I congratulate you for the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), solar power, and the initiative for clean cooking, because we lose many mothers and children under five, due to indoor pollution. If we promote clean cooking, we shall be saving both in the health sector and the lives of mothers and children under five.

Related to that, the materials for making solar batteries are still taxed. It makes solar very expensive. It is the same with cylinders. That should be addressed.

On the Uganda Energy Credit Capitalisation Company and the Uganda Development Bank (UDB), the issue will be more to do with the interest rate. How much is the interest rate? Is it affordable? That should be addressed.

The agreement was signed but you say it does not cover transformers. Why did we sign an agreement which does not cover transformers? What is the alternative? Where are we going to get transformers? We need transformers to have electricity that is reliable, strong, and for industrial power generation.

On the issue of coverage, when I look at the district of Zombo and greater Nebbi, the coverage of this project is very scanty. Health centres and irrigation sites should be included so that they are also connected.

There is an issue of the Project Affected Persons (PAPs). During the recess, I had people who had challenges with that but we explained, and we shall continue to explain that the money is going to be processed so that they are paid.

World Bank issues focus too much on refugee host areas. How about refugee-impacted areas? This should also be addressed. Otherwise, on the challenges, we are ready to support you so that this can be addressed – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Okeyoh, then Hon. Kyooma.

4.48

MR PETER OKEYOH (NRM, Bukooli Island County, Namayingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I come from the islands and these are unique areas including; Sigulu, the islands of Mayuge, and Vuma, the only area, apart from Northern Uganda, that does not have access to electricity. Honourable minister, when are these Ugandans going to get the opportunity to have electricity in their areas?

Secondly, is the question of the solar energy that was established on Dolwe Islands. The people prefer that they go back to diesel power instead of solar power because a bulb is charged Shs 5,000, and it has become so expensive for the people. Like the shadow minister clearly indicated, people do not consume power. Honourable minister, when can this be reduced to make sure that people enjoy the power?

Mr Speaker, there is the question of compensation. This House and the Government should think twice. How do we access electricity and then consider compensation? Many projects have failed because of compensation. This House should address the question of compensation such that people access power and services. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, it was last week when I touched on that issue. We are facing problems. Honourable minister for finance, you have been running projects - and I am going to finance because it negotiates these projects. We have been running electricity projects in the constituencies without compensation; from Kuwait and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA). Now, you bring one project and say that you are going to give compensation, and then the people who were not compensated from the older projects say you people ate their money. Some even say that if I remove the lines, I also need compensation.

When you negotiate with the World Bank, all this money you put into compensation for one or two polls, add it so that you connect many people, and we have uniformity. It is something you just need to look into honourable minister for finance, when you are negotiating projects. It is for noting, honourable minister. Otherwise, it is a big issue. Yes, Hon. Kyooma.

4.51

MR XAVIER KYOOMA (NRM, Ibanda County North, Ibanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity, and I thank the minister for the comprehensive report.

I will start with the table. I appreciate that the update is on two projects. However, the biggest concern is whether electricity is under these projects or others. I have focused specifically on Ibanda, and I have detected that all the write-ups we made were not captured. It is only in Sub-county Kijongo where the issues were captured. The rest, including Ishongororo Town Council, where power passes over the biggest market in the constituency, were not captured.

I believe that since the minister has been choosing regions, most of the colleagues are affected in the same way so it would be prudent that at another time, the minister gives us a comprehensive report so that we know that if Ishongororo is not in the scale-up project, it is captured in other projects.

Compensation is a big challenge. Those who accessed compensation find that instead of getting Shs 30 million, they are given Shs 3 million, omitting one zero, which is a big concern. Some are compensated while others are not. We have raised all these issues.

Mr Speaker, the minister raised two challenges; counterpart funding. The good thing is that the minister for finance is here. Why would we fail to counter-fund these crucial projects for rural electrification? The minister will give us an answer.

Then there is vandalism. This has happened everywhere, Mr Speaker. The wires that are vandalised cannot be removed by ordinary people from the constituencies. This must be insider work, done by either the contractors or subcontractors, as Hon. Dr Keefa Kiwanuka mentioned. When that is done, it takes a lot of time before they are fixed. May I know whether that is done during the defect liability – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I had picked Hon. Noah Wanzala, Hon. Silas Aogon and then Hon. Niwagaba.

4.54

MR NOAH MUTEBI (NRM, Nakasongola County, Nakasongola): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the honourable Minister of Energy and Mineral Development for the comprehensive report. I also thank the Government of Uganda for extending power to Ugandans.

Mr Speaker, in the contract agreement of the project implemented in Nakasongola, there was what they called the one-kilometre radius. Wherever they put a transformer, power had to cover a radius of one kilometre. However, this did not happen, and I want the minister to tell me why.

Mr Speaker, wherever they put a transformer, it was supposed to be 100 kVA. However, in some areas, they installed 50kVA transformers. I ask the energy ministry why it happened. If the contract agreement said 100 kVA, and you put a 50 kV transformer, that is an audit query to me.

Mr Speaker, I appreciate that the ministry is going to extend power, where it is within three kilometres. They have surveyed some areas but in Nakasongola, they have not. When will they come to Nakasongola to survey? In case they come, honourable minister, we request that the Members of Parliament and other political leaders are involved in the activity.

Lastly, it is about the compensation. Mr Speaker, where these power lines were passing, mango trees and other trees were cut down and people were promised that they were going to be compensated. But up to today, compensation has not taken place, and people think that as Members of Parliament when we come here, we do not speak.

Mr Speaker, we request the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development to take it up and compensate these people who are supposed to be compensated. I beg to submit. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Aogon?

4.57

MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. First, I would love to appreciate the minister and the ministry. I want to congratulate her - much as she is busy with her colleagues - congratulations upon connecting West Nile. I was on that Committee on Environment and Natural Resources together with the Rt Hon. Deputy Speaker here, pushing for West Nile to be connected and it took so long. I nearly developed ulcers but I am now happy that, yes, finally, something has happened.

Secondly, the issue of connecting the three places, Buvuma, Karenga, and Obongi, is something we cannot wait for forever. We must stay nationalists. How can we afford to let the whole country get connected, we start on new projects all the time, but there are three places which have not been connected to date? We do not want to demonstrate. This one should be taken seriously. I now speak as a countryman. We need to help those areas.

Back to Kumi, Mr Speaker, we have had incomplete projects arising from the Rural Electrification Agency (REA). In 2017, we pushed for the Government to help us with rural electrification. Some areas were given poles but to date, people are not using their power. It is now seven years down the road. I remember when REA was being phased out, some money was transported to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development. Where did this money go because I thought that that money should have been able to complete for us these projects? To date, some of the places are not working. That one, I can tell you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: For the record, the money was transported -

MR AOGON: That is the financial language, Mr Speaker. *(Laughter)* It crossed lines and went to the other side. The minister should explain to us exactly why we have these debts with the contractors who worked with REA and yet you got over Shs 520 billion, which moved sides to the other side. That is a big issue.

Mr Speaker, municipalities need attention. Let us stop talking just about rural areas. Municipalities need attention because the populations are surging into towns. The towns are expanding, but there is no support. We are living in darkness, and crime is increasing. Come to Kumi now, the town has increased and the Government has given us some tarmac but it is in the darkness. When are you bringing security lights to municipalities?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I remember very well when I was on that committee. Nearly every year we would be told about those three districts, Obongi, Buvuma - no, Karenga is recent because they are saying for Karenga - they transferred the district headquarters and that is what caused the problem. Then they were saying, for Buvuma, they are getting the marine cable and this was up to around 2021.

For Obongi, what is the problem? In fact, I want to know what is so unique about Obongi, that we announce it every - Honourable minister, on Obongi, what is so unique that since I was a member of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, they say "Obongi, Obongi" - *(Hon. Alioni rose)*- Is Hon. Alioni from Obongi? *(Interjection)* No, for Obongi, we have Hon. Zumura. Yes, I know but Hon. Zumura is here. We have Hon. Zumura Maneno.

5.01

MS ZUMURA MANENO (NRM, Woman Representative, Obongi): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. It is true that Obongi is the only district in this country where the people have never seen a pole of electricity. For them to see a pole of electricity, they should first cross the river to Adjumani, that is when they will see a pole of electricity. They should go to Moyo, that is when they will see a pole of electricity, and yet they have been singing Obongi in black and white, but implementation is zero.

Mr Speaker, recently when the President was touring the country, he made a promise that by November 2023, Obongi will receive electricity. Up to now, there is nothing.

Mr Speaker, the people of Obongi are hosting refugees. If you take the population of refugees in Obongi, they are more than the host community. Under Component Three of Refugee-Hosting Communities to be connected to electricity, Obongi has been left out. Obongi is not connected. Why? Why is the ministry marginalising the people of Obongi?

Mr Speaker, recently you gave directives for the ministry to go to Obongi. I am here to inform you that none of them reached Obongi. Up to now, up to tomorrow, no minister has gone to Obongi. Since the minister is here – I do not know whether Obongi is in Uganda and if they do not want us in Uganda, since we are bordering South Sudan, they can give us permission and we move with the refugees, that Obongi belongs to South Sudan, and then we start demanding for electricity from South Sudan.

Mr Speaker, before I rest my case, let the minister explain to us why they are always defying your directives to go on the ground and investigate projects and report on the Floor of Parliament. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Nankabirwa, I know you will be in Obongi tomorrow. I know you very well.

MS NANKABIRWA: Mr Speaker and colleagues, I actually enjoy working in the field and I do not remember any time when you instructed me specifically to go to Obongi, and I defied. I have gone to the remotest places in this country and I am standing here to pledge that my ministry is committed to making sure that we conclude the loop of West Nile on grid connection.

For Obongi, I think the distance could be about 12 kilometres and when we were in West Nile recently on the 3rd, I committed myself before the President that my next move now is to make sure that we connect Obongi. I am standing here again to make a further commitment that before you go back to face the voters, Obongi will be smiling. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, you have seen that on this project, priority is being given to refugee-hosting areas and since Obongi is one of them, I hope it can be sorted quickly. Yes, I had allowed Hon. Niwagaba.

5.05

MR WILFRED NIWAGABA (Independent, Ndoorwa County East, Kabale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want the attention of my very good friend, Hon. Ruth Nankabirwa because I want to quarrel with her today. I want to quarrel with you today although you are my good friend.

One, I am surprised that Kabale District was left out of the rural electrification programme, and yet at the time this loan was procured, Kabale was one of the benefiting districts and in particular my constituency which has always been marginalised simply because Wilfred Niwagaba belongs to this side. I would want to know why you ultimately removed Kabale – *(Interjection)* - no, I was that side but I was chased - why did you remove Kabale from the benefiting districts?

Could that explain the reason why, when the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) was disbanded, all the poles it had planted in some of the parishes remained with no wires to date?

I would pray Mr Speaker, that an investigation be made on this particular loan, on how it was applied by REA and subsequently when it was transferred to the ministry. Who performed? Who failed to perform? And where is the money?

2. On the electricity access scale-up project, you have mentioned the number of health centres to be connected, water stations, schools and the like. I would like to know the list of these water stations in western Uganda, specifically for Kabale, Rubanda and Rukiga districts.

I also want to know which schools and health centres in western Uganda, particularly Kabale, are going to benefit. Because there is a lack of equity in your ministry. Maybe you will

bring some sanity. I know you have been busy with oil, but take it up; take up the electricity sector very seriously. There is a lack of equity, especially when it comes to my constituency.

I can tell you I have two power stations, one of which you have kept dis-used, and there is one which is running, but unfortunately, the power generated is evacuated to the national grid, leaving my people in darkness.

I had wanted to revolt and cut the wires, but I said let me be a good citizen. One of the good aspects of a good citizen, for us, we have agreed in Ndorwa East, if there is a government project, be it power, be it roads, our people will not seek compensation – *(Member timed out)*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude.

MR NIWAGABA: Yes, we have convinced our people that when they are getting a road or power, they will sign up without asking for compensation as long as the service is delivered.

Lastly, the Honourable Minister for Energy and Mineral Development, just give me the statistics of the 22 per cent of the on-grid where my constituency falls among the 22 per cent since we do not have the off-grid. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues we are debating and I want you to bring out all these questions because, in the end, this is a matter which must go to the Natural Resources Committee. When they bring these risks here, it is very difficult to scrutinise deeply.

I know the minister can engage with the committee very well. They scrutinize, in detail, and then Members can appear before the committee, for those who have issues. Then we have this matter well concluded.

I have picked mostly men; I want to pick ladies first. Therefore, I request all men to sit. I will start with ladies who have been here, not those who just entered. The ones who just entered know themselves.

Honourable members for Kiboga, Kalangala, Dokolo, Gulu, you are very many. Honourable member for Mukono, because you have complained, honourable member for Mbale. This is time for ladies, you are men.

Honourable members for Masindi, Buhweju, Sheema, Kumi, Napak, Bugiri, Fort Portal, Jinja, Abim, and Adjumani.

5.10

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Thank you, honourable minister, for the statement. Just to remind ourselves that there were some other two issues that were really falling in line with the statement that we needed from the minister.

There was an issue from the honourable member from Mbarara, who was worried about schools that do not have energy-saving equipment, and she was worried about the way schools use biogas in cooking. And so we thought that the minister would also come up with a response because they have some program for establishing energy-saving equipment for our population.

I have also observed that tracking progress in our ministry, needs improvement. If you give a chance to Members to ask, what shows that there is an improvement in electricity connectivity? The indicators that I will give sometimes cannot be traced in any report. That one makes people feel probably that there may not be an improvement. Therefore, we need to come up with these indicators and the contribution by every program but in totality what the all the program – *(Member timed out)*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honorable colleagues we are going to be quick so that I pick as many as possible. Because we have a chance of going to the committee. So, conclude Honourable.

MS KAAYA: Mr Speaker, the recent call for our minister to also mind about the generation of power from landfills. We request that you take it upon yourself and help KCCA and the

other municipalities to generate energy. We appreciate that 38 per cent of the population is off-grid and people think that is their effort and they are looking out for the efforts of the Government. So somehow, somewhere for us to report that the Government has only contributed about 20 per cent, is also on another scale.

We want the Government contribution to be more because off-grid is private expenditure, people suffer with the - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kalangala?

5.13

MS HELLEN NAKIMULI (NUP, Woman Representative, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker, and thank you, honourable minister, for your statement. I want to first of all congratulate the people of Kalangala and you honourable minister for allowing the people of Kalangala to access electricity being connected to the national grid. Thank you very much.

Unfortunately, we were using solar power and we had electricity from morning to morning. However, with this connection, it is very disturbing. We do not have power. The power supply is on and off and it is a disturbance to the people of Kalangala, especially the business community.

Mr Speaker, we are connected to the line from Vila Maria, which goes through Bukakata, the marine cable to Kalangala. This one is very congested and we, through the Kalangala Infrastructure Services, request that we get a dedicated line for Kalangala. I request, it is my humble request. Thank you so much for noting that down.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS NAKIMULI: Mr Speaker, another is about the tariff. When we got connected to the main grid, I thought the tariffs were going to be lower than what we were using before. However, as we speak, it is Shs 1,265.5 per unit, which is very high for my people. Madam minister, please try as much as possible to see that my people also enjoy. It is very high.

Finally, Mr Speaker, in Kalangala District where we have gotten the marine cable, the commercial consumption tariff is higher than the domestic. However, on the main grid, the people in Kampala and this side, the commercial consumption is lower because the Government has, I think, subsidized the business community because we get revenue out of all the businesses. In Kalangala, it is the reverse.

We would request the government to ensure that the people of Kalangala in the business community also enjoy this. Finally, the no - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mbale? There is no one on the Floor. Information is given to one on it.

5.15

MS MIRIAM MUKHAYE (Independent, Woman Representative, Mbale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also want to thank the minister for the statement. However, I just have two issues to raise with the honourable minister. I think Mbale is 60 per cent connected to the national grid, but we still have gaps in the health centres that are not connected in five subcounties and primary schools that have no power.

I do not know the procedure to follow such that these institutions can be connected, especially the health centres. There is a lot of struggle for people to be supported in the health facilities simply because there is no electricity.

The other issue is no-pole and one pole service. My people in Mbale District have applied for no-pole and one pole service, but they still complain that they are not supported. They have messages on their phones, having paid the amount that was required, but they have not got the service. So, I would like to know from you, honourable minister, what steps should be taken for these people to get the services? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Butambala and Dokolo –

5.17

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues to thank the minister for the statement. Concerning the project that talks about the three kilometres coverage per radius, my question is, how did it change from five to three kilometres? We have all along been told even in the committee that they are supposed to be five kilometres radius. When did it change from five to three kilometres?

Secondly, about the private sector engagement, where they need to engage the private sector to contribute, I have a scenario in my area where they are now telling each village to fundraise Shs 5 million to fasten the extension of electricity to their areas. Is this the private sector you are talking about, because already people are soliciting money from my people?

About the poles, I did not hear you speak about the electricity poles that are standing. I have so many villages in my area where electricity poles are standing up to now. And I almost want to run away from that area because it is like I am a hindrance. The people of Kasasala, Ranjiri and Tende voted for me, but it is like they will never get power until they throw me out of office. In your statement, you did not talk about those electricity poles that are standing. When should they expect to get power?

For them, this whole English does not benefit them. They want to know when they will be connected to electricity. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dokolo and Gulu –

5.19

MS SARAH AGUTI (UPC, Woman Representative, Dokolo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. All Northern Uganda does not have reliable electricity. Before I give an example, I am happy for Moyo because it was connected to electricity. On 3rd I was in Moyo for my aunt's burial and they were celebrating for having been connected to electricity.

However, an example of districts in northern Uganda that do not have reliable electricity is Amolatar in the south and Kaberamaido. Sometimes they get electricity during the day and at night there is darkness. I also know that their subcounties are not connected up to now. In Dokolo, where I come from, some homes and subcounties are connected to electricity, but the whole of Dokolo North not even a subcounty is connected to electricity.

Honourable minister, I would like you to note that in Dokolo District, some places have electricity while Dokolo North is not connected to electricity, including my home, Dokolo South, where I come from. Other places have electric poles and this started way back in 2016 when they began throwing poles around Dokolo District.

In 2021, the poles were erected. Now, in 2026, I pray that they are connected to electricity, especially - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Gulu and Bukomansimbi –

5.21

MS BETTY AOL (FDC, Woman Representative, Gulu City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to also thank my honourable minister who is very active and always visible on the ground. Thank you for the report.

In law they say, justice delayed is justice denied. Concerning connectivity, it looks like it is a song, but we don't see this happening to our people. The one-pole and no-pole service – you know our people complain. For us in Gulu City, we have this substation established and the generation in Aswa 1 and Aswa 2.

At least, we are surrounded by generation and we even thought that connectivity should be there. People ran away from Gulu, especially those in industry because of poor supply and insufficient electricity. We pray that they come back, but we should be very effective and vigilant on the ground.

Regarding compensation, some people complain about it while Hon. Niwagaba said that for them, they are free but in our place, some people say, "How could you compensate the other person and you don't compensate us?" Gulu City should be complete if the suburb is connected to electricity.

However, sometimes people struggle even to buy their own - *(Interjection)* - What do they call it? No, not poles. That one, but it is expensive. You remember that Umeme even inherited the electricity company yet it should have actually come out with their own - that one which I have forgotten the name. So, we cannot - *(Interjection)* - yes its own transformer. We cannot really allow our people to struggle - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Bukomansimbi, Member for Mukono, Member for Luweero and Member for Kyotera.

5.24

MS VERONICA NANYONDO (NUP, Woman Representative, Bukomansimbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, and minister for the statement. Honourable minister, I would like to seek clarity from your statement on the issue of no pole and one pole. We have people collecting different amounts of money from people promising to connect the final consumers to electricity. Some are collecting Shs 300,000 and Shs 500,000 in Bukomansimbi. However, for six months now, they are not connected, and yet they paid their money. I can bring the evidence to your office.

Secondly, I do not know what we should do in business centres where electricity is very low. People are doing businesses there, but they are complaining of power being on and off, and it is affecting their businesses. What should we do to help our people in business centres? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Mukono -

5.25

MS HANIFA NABUKEERA (NUP, Woman Representative, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the report. I associate myself with Hon. Niwagaba and Hon. Aisha Kabanda about the electricity poles that were erected there three years ago. To date, those poles have never been connected. Whenever we pass through our constituencies, they show us the poles, but we have no answers to such questions.

Secondly, Mukono has industries and factories - there is a problem of power shortage due to the lack of enough transformers along the lanes. That also affects the neighbouring residents near the factories and even other areas.

Since we need the industries and factories, the residents also need to consume and enjoy the supply of electricity. Please help us and connect more transformers in that area such that we can enjoy the supply of electricity. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Member for Kyotera.

5.27

MS FORTUNATE NANTONGO (DP, Woman Representative, Kyotera): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the minister and our able Shadow Minister for the statement.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you mean that the one of the Government is not able?

MS NANTONGO: No, I appreciate the minister and the able Shadow minister more - *(Laughter)* - we have an issue of overloading in the trading centres whereby the lines cannot serve both businesses and personal homes.

That stalls people's businesses who are operating - because the refrigerators and homes cannot operate at the same time on the same line, which is overloaded.

Secondly, there is segregation in the installation of these power lines because there are villages that are so close, especially in my area, Kabira - but you skip one neighbouring village and you go to the next one.

This village that is skipped is forced to personally acquire lines, which is very expensive because they ask for so much money; between Shs 7 and Shs 8 million which they cannot afford. It is challenging and we would like your response on that. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Member for Luweero.

5.28

MS BRENDA NABUKENYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Luweero): Thank you, Mr Speaker - *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Luweero, continue.

MS NABUKENYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the report and the Shadow minister. I have a concern on the earlier lines that were put in place under the Rural Electrification Authority (REA) projects.

When you come to our district, we have lines that have been in place without electricity for almost seven years. This is a very big problem because REA was disbanded and the Minister needs to inform the country on when they are going to work or complete these projects.

Even when our people ask UMEME to connect them, it cannot because it says these projects have not been commissioned. That is very fundamental and urgent because there are rural areas where you have lines but they cannot get electricity.

I am also concerned about the issue of compensation vis-a-vis accessibility because it seems like we have many projects but when it comes to compensation, you will need a lot of money to compensate.

When you are taking power lines for household consumption, you do not have to put so many poles on a piece of land. If we want to access electricity and find a problem in compensation, then we need to look at the policies and see what we can do as Ugandans.

We want this in our communities but we are hindered. I think we can have a discussion, be honest to each other and see how we can help the Government improve on electricity accessibility.

Finally, most rural people cannot afford electricity. If we do not discuss the cost of electricity to farmers or households where you have farmers, people who do not earn a dollar a day, you would never be able to bring electricity to their houses because electricity should not be - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Statistics show that it is the women who suffer most on issues of looking after homes, cooking and - yes, they face the biggest repercussions. *(Applause)*

Men can afford to pay bills and enjoy outside there. So, let us have the women.

5.31

DR FLORENCE ASIIMWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Masindi): Thank you, Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will allow you. These are your women; they are not mine. *(Laughter)*

DR FLORENCE ASIIMWE: Yes, and we are speaking for the whole district, so, we are actually speaking for all the men because we take the whole district.

Members, the issue of energy and electricity cannot be taken lightly because electricity brings life. Without electricity, everything comes to a standstill. The reason we mourn and lament over this electricity is because I am not getting the solution-

Thank you, honourable minister, for the enriched statement. Indeed, you told us that your issue is not implementation but financing. She told us that she demanded Shs 440 billion but only received Shs 55 billion; that is 12 per cent.

Members, we are going to lament and talk until the cows come home but there is no money for this electricity. If she has received only 12 per cent of the budget, how do we get the co-funders?

Madam Minister, how do we make sure that you distribute reliable and cheap electricity? We need to go to the Committee on Natural Resources and give our views on how we can help the Government because there is no money. We can talk until tomorrow but I can assure you that you will not see this electricity in your homes.

We need to find a way of getting the money. I do not know whether we reorganise the budget because I am just thinking of a solution.

The other time we were here talking about the agriculture cluster development project and we realised that a number of - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, Honourable.

DR FLORENCE ASIIMWE: We were here discussing the agriculture cluster project where a number of maize mills were installed in some places that are not connected to electricity and I remember making an alarm here; Madam Minister, where are you?

I request that you link up with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries- this cluster project is a failed project. A number of mills were put in place but they are not connected to electricity.

I request that you link up so that some of these machines are not wasted because they are not connected to electricity. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Napak, Shema, Buhweju and Kumi then I pick Bugiri, Terego, Jinja and Fort Portal. For areas where you do not see your Woman Member of Parliament, you can declare yourself a woman and then I will see what to do. *(Laughter)*

5.35

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the Minister for the statement. I have three issues to speak about: one of them is about the work that the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) started doing in my district, Napak, is not yet complete. For example, in Napak Town Council, half of the town council got connected and the other half required a transformer. The other half that does not have a transformer is the one that has institutions that are not connected.

It is my appeal that the ministry completes the work that REA started in Napak so that our small towns and institutions are connected so that our people – our children – do not come to Kampala to look for light. They also need a town that is lit.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, the minister has said she is worried that this project will not perform. That should worry us. I agree with Hon. Asiimwe, the Queen Dancer, that we should give our suggestion here. She said there is a likelihood of a non-performing loan – this is a loan that has already been acquired – because of a deficit of the Shs 385 billion that the ministry requires for PAPs. My appeal is that when the Executive is bringing their next estimates, they should also consider that or else it will remain a non-performing loan, which is bad for this country.

Mr Speaker, it also means that the next time we pass a loan here, we should be clear on where the other contribution is coming from and the commitment of the Government to put their contribution so that there is no non-performing loan.

Finally, Mr Speaker, on the question of vandalism, I visited our neighbour, Kenya. They have designated a police unit to handle vandalism of critical infrastructure. We could also do that, given the level of investment and the cost. For each pole that is stolen, it is about Shs 250 million. We cannot afford to just leave it like that. We could copy some good practices from our neighbours.

Finally – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us have the Members for Sheema, Buhweju and Kumi. Now, Honourable colleagues, you do not know the reason - you know I follow up on our WhatsApp groups. I saw the ladies complaining that as men, we are recycling suits. (*Laughter*) They gave me a list. So, today, I have decided to punish men. They said that we buy at least six pairs of suits so that we stop recycling. I have a list.

So, if you know you have been recycling – (*Laughter*)- I will forgive you when I do not see you recycling. That was on a light note. (*Laughter*)

Now let us hear from Hon. Nyakikongoro.

5.38

MS ROSEMARY NYAKIKONGORO (NRM, Woman Representative, Sheema): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I thank you for giving us the opportunity, as women. As women Members of Parliament, we are limited to other functions, but not these important projects that affect our districts.

I also thank you, minister and your entire team, because your ministry is always open. Whenever we want to approach you, you are very, very approachable.

Honourable minister, electricity is one of the things that the voters look at. It is something that they consider as tangible. All these things that Members have been talking about are affecting us – and I know you are all politicians.

For the poles that they were talking about – I do not know: who threw them there in 2016? Those poles are becoming a stumbling block in our politics.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank you. You talked about the project that was going to be implemented without transformers. I was just talking about the transformer that has been replaced in my place. In Kigarama – Katanoga – people are demonstrating. A transformer of

100kV was removed. I do not know which team brought that one of 50kV; it is not functional. People are complaining. I want to come to your office because they have presented a petition to me, which I have not yet printed out.

Mr Speaker, there is the issue of the TBEA project that abandoned certain sites. How are you going to reconcile with the ongoing projects that are happening in your ministry?

Mr Speaker, there is also the issue of - you talked about WENRECO and Kilembe. I am interested in Kilembe because it supplies power to my constituency. That Kilembe power is always off – load-shedding is too much. People are losing their property, particularly those traders, who have machines for producing - the millers, the welders and others. They are really affected. They are asking us, actually, to ask you if you could change them from Kilembe to this other Jinja power – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Buhweju and, then, Kumi.

5.41

MS OLIVER KOYEKYENGA (NRM, Woman Representative, Buhweju): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank you, the minister –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry for rushing you, honourable colleagues, today. I want to pick as many as possible.

MS KOYEKYENGA: I want to take us back to those people who were in the 10th Parliament. We came here and made a resolution on two things, about electricity. We agreed on electricity connection to the subcounties. We also resolved on free connectivity.

Honourable minister, I do not know whether we followed what we discussed. I even remember that in Financial Year 2019/2020, His Excellency the President went and commissioned connectivity to the subcounties. However, I want to assure you that, that project stalled. That was the project that was under TBEA. I want to give you an example of my district, Buhweju: it stalled there and then.

People have been calling me: “Honourable, come and take your poles to the Government because we do not see the use of these poles here.” It is that bad.

For me, I do not look at the poles and everything, but I look at the taxpayers’ money that is being wasted. Vandalisation is the order of the day because these people do not see anything in the wires. So, they come, take the wires and go and sell them. We have tried, as a district, to get those people who vandalise the wires, but we have failed to apprehend them. I do not know who is doing this and I do not know where the wires go. It is a mystery, honourable minister. *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kumi and, then, Bugiri.

5.44

MS APOLOT CHRISTINE (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the minister for the statement.

However, Mr Speaker, aware that there is a very big demand for electricity across the country, I want to make a proposal – even as we are aware about the budget cuts – that some money should, first of all, be put in the connection of those poles that are already existing because we need the service. We can have so many projects coming up, but what are we achieving? I think it is better to do one thing at a time and we see the service delivered.

Number two, I heard from the minister about the discount of 60 per cent. When is this going to be implemented? You know, the whole country is updated now when we are having plenary. This is so that when we go back to our people, we should be able to tell and give them details about the 60 per cent discount.

Number three, Mr Speaker, I am one of those who is worst hit because I have the state minister for energy. He is also finding life very difficult. Just on Sunday, we were in the programme for the inauguration of a new bishop and they just said - they decided to call the minister to be

the guest of honour so that the bishop’s house could, finally, get connected. *(Laughter)*

Also, there was a team of technical persons who did the surveys within the municipality, in Amejei Primary School and the centres. So many lines were surveyed across the three counties in Kumi District. Unfortunately, since the time the surveys were done, nothing has taken place.

When people see the technical staff doing the surveying, they believe that there will be power in the shortest time possible. How long should the communities wait after the surveys have been done to receive the service? It is very critical on the ground- *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member for Bugiri and the then honourable member for Terego.

5.46

MS AGNES TAAKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Bugiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the affirmative action. I hope the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development will do the affirmative action for Busoga for electricity distribution since we house the first dam. As other people benefit from the oil roads and tourism, we should also benefit from this electricity as Busoga. *(Applause)*

I take the opportunity to thank you, honourable minister, for a very good well-laid-out report. Your ministry has staff and agencies. I wish they could also go down and give that information to the people so that they understand how they are supposed to get connected; the free connections so that they give them information. Otherwise, that information is very rare on the ground.

Honourable minister, I thank you for the Tebian Electric Apparatus (TBEA) project that connected subcounties. However, I think that project needs an investigation because it is a project that was implemented at a time when the transition was going on between the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) and the ministry.

While the implementation was going on, those people could not be supervised. People would complain but one had nowhere to report. We would call the engineers and they say, “You see this transition - we do not have fuel”. This is how they implemented the project; they would take electricity to the subcounties and leave out the one-kilometre radius to the extent that they would leave very vital facilities like health centres and schools that are in a radius not even beyond a kilometre, honourable minister.

I request that in the subsequent programmes - I have seen some school connections in the statement - we reconsider those places so that they get connected, otherwise, the ground is not levelled because of that discontent among the population.

Honourable minister, I also request – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member for Terego and then honourable member for Jinja.

5.49

MS ROSE OBIGAH (NRM, Woman Representative, Terego): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to thank the minister and her team. A week ago, the minister sent her team to West Nile to find out the most shining and best district built. It so happened that Terego was the best and they launched electricity in Terego. I am so grateful.

Mr Speaker, I would love to behave like Oliver Twist. The electricity went straight to the district headquarters but elsewhere, we are still in darkness. I pray after launching in the district headquarters, let us spread it to the subcounties and schools so that Terego, which shines at the district shines elsewhere.

Last week, I was in Obongi. I will do a disservice to West Nile if I do not say this. The people of Obongi almost locked eight of us, Members of Parliament asking, “What are you coming to do here when you people cannot allow us to have light?”

Mr Speaker, the Obongi District Chairperson was supposed to travel and he needed to apply for an online visa. However, due to power shortage, and rain, he could not use the internet to apply for a visa, so he failed to travel. I am here to say that Obongi should be the number one priority.

Lastly, I attended a meeting of SynBio Africa. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) - of this very important scientist, is a Ugandan but now he heads synthetic biology at the eighth-best university in the world, which is in Singapore, that can turn all the waste we are complaining about in Kitebi into electricity –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is Kiteezi.

MS OBIGAH: I told you I do not speak Luganda because of something. You can take the word but to drive my point home, if we can have – *(Interjections)*- Mr Speaker, I seek your protection. These men are really bad. What is your problem? Keep quiet. *(Laughter)*

If we can allow you to have a meeting with this scientist, all the waste we are complaining about will be turned into electricity and chemicals for our factories – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, please link with Hon. Obigah Rose on this issue. I am sure you will do a good job together. Hon. Katali Loy and Hon. Linda Irene.

5.51

MS JOY KATALI (NRM, Woman Representative, Jinja): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I thank the honourable minister for the statement.

Honourable minister, in the last phase, Kagoma and Kagoma North constituencies were part of the beneficiaries unfortunately, like most of the Members are saying, poles are standing; they are not connected and not wired. Therefore, I would like to find out when they will be connected.

Over the weekend, other trucks came in with more poles. In Butembe County, the survey was done around March. It is my humble prayer that the contract is signed and they get to work.

Regarding transformers, we have centres like Buweera in particular, where they cannot use maize mills. The transformers have low voltage. We talk about value addition, but if someone cannot add value to their maize, then it becomes a problem. My village is called Wairaka B in Kakira Town Council, but the rate at which transformers get spoilt is alarming. I do not know whether the transformers are faulty.

When it comes to Government counterpart funding, it is an issue for all the loans that we come up with. I do not know what the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development thinks, but maybe we should reduce the loans and go somewhere we can fund this. As my sister from Bugiri asked, “Why wouldn’t Jinja, the host of the first dam be fully connected? Why shouldn’t Busoga be connected? I am not being selfish. I am only being realistic. When it comes to other areas, they have benefits. Electricity is what we can get from the Government as Busoga. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Linda Irene, Hon. Okori-Moe and Hon. Ababiku.

5.54

MS IRENE LINDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Fort Portal City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the statement. At least now in Fort Portal, our power is not on and off, we have constant power.

Honourable minister, under the scale-up, programme, Fort Portal City was allocated 3,000 connections. We mobilised people who did not have power and they were within the range where they were poles to be able to be connected. These people have applied and paid money but up to now, they have not been

connected. Umeme is saying they do not have poles yet these are the very people who had applied for rural electrification three years ago and did not get power. They have been waiting yet again, they are paying for the second time. Now, they are asking us, “Why is the Government making us pay twice and not giving us power?” Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Okori-Moe –

5.55

MS JANET OKORI-MOE (NRM, Woman Representative, Abim): Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the honourable minister for an elaborate statement. I thank her team for the job so far done. We know with time, everything will be fine.

I also want to thank the minister for the interventions that have been made in my district, Abim. I know some of the areas are already connected, like from Morulem Town Council to Nyakwai Subcounty. However, it has not been switched on. I do not think switching on power requires a budget. Honourable minister, if you are still busy, just tell us how to switch on and we do it on your behalf. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, in some of the subcounties like Alerek Town Council through Magamaga to Adea, most of the poles are wooden. Wildfires have burnt some of the poles already and the termites have eaten some. Electricity in Abim was commissioned in 2022. Honourable minister, the best thing to do for some of those areas is to provide concrete poles, which are very durable.

The other subcounty, which is almost like Obongi, is Opopongo Subcounty, the farthest in Abim. There is nothing but total darkness. Therefore, we request, honourable minister, that you use your powers to ensure that some of these areas that are not connected also get the services that they deserve. Otherwise, we want to thank you very much and wish you the best in that docket. We are proud of you, at least. You are my mentor. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ababiku -

5.57

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join the rest in appreciating the comprehensive report by the honourable minister and the team.

Mr Speaker, allow me to put the status of Madi Subregion right. We have three districts, including Obongi, Adjumani and Moyo that have been connected but the power is not reliable at all. We have even codenamed it as *Aziko*, something that comes and goes without warning you.

Our request has been that, as we recognise what you have done for West Nile where we belong, you need to have special consideration for Madi Subregion so that we can also get reliable power.

There is also uniqueness with the poles you have taken to Adjumani and Moyo. Any slight drizzle, not even heavy rains, the power goes off. We do not know the type of poles that you have taken to our area.

Honourable minister, we represent Government and Parliament when we are in our constituencies. For two years, you people have promised to me in writing that you are going to visit Adjumani. I have the letter. I have the name of the officer. You have never gone to survey so that you connect the subcounties. People have developed a mistrust.

I was with Hon. Mamawi in his subcounty and people almost chased us away. The subcounty is trying to fundraise to connect power in Itirikwa Subcounty because you have misinformed or misled us and we went and reported on your behalf but the subcounties are not connected.

We have service delivery units like the Health Centre IV where people are doing operations. People go to the theatre but we do not have power. We request that you look at the health services units like the health centres, the schools and the headquarters. Also, be with us.

I pray that you visit Adjumani as you promised. I am happy that the state minister is here. We need your commitment so that we give hope to the people because we know you cannot do miracles to fulfil all these things at once. My request – *(Member timed out.)*

6.00

MS MARY NAKATO (Independent, Woman Representative, Buyende): Thank you, Mr Speaker and the honourable minister for the statement made. We would like to thank the Government for the efforts that it has put in to support.

However, Mr Speaker, I would like to put it at your desk that people should not only assume that we use electricity to light for ourselves but right now, it is a business. I want to take an example of Buyende District because the lake has been a service to the rest of the population. We are left with nothing. The land is infertile and very few cattle keepers, so, the rest would benefit in electricity.

Honourable minister, I am requesting that you visit Buyende. As a result of the nuclear plant, the majority of those who come to visit the district keep on promising that we wait for the grid of the nuclear plant yet it is in one constituency. The other is not covered.

Secondly, we have two functional health centres IV where we have permanent doctors operating and running oxygen cylinders but electricity is rare. When we get a blackout, it takes a month to be reconnected. The transformers that are available, I believe it is the staff working with Umeme who come to vandalise them. There is not a villager who can manage to vandalise a transformer. It is the staff within Umeme who know how to reconnect and disconnect them.

Mr Speaker, I beg that Buyende should be given special consideration and Busoga at large, like other regions. Honourable members, do not think that we are segregating, but for Busoga Region, it is electricity that we can benefit from. Busoga being the mother of the dam, we deserve it, just like other regions. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kween representative -

6.02

MS EMMA CHERUKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kween): Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving us affirmative action as women in this august House today. I am really delighted. *(Applause)*

To our able Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, I also want to appreciate you for the wonderful report that you have given to us today.

Being the District Woman Member of Parliament for Kween, I want to put it to you, Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, that looking at the terrain of Kween - we have Soi County and the upper part, which is Kween County. The unfortunate part of it is that for the power that was given to Kween, I can rate it at 20 per cent. It is only following the Kapchorwa-Suam Road. You find that the houses that were considered can be about 20 meters away from the road but not those that are about 200 meters or a kilometre away.

When you look at the schools and the health centres that we have, we are in a state of a quagmire. The women are suffering when it comes to delivery. When you look at the terrain, it is hilly. For a woman to move from Kosil up there, that is Yatui where the crops were destroyed, to the health centre is very difficult.

It is, of course, very bad to reach the nearest health centre and there is no power. The nearest health centre is also far from the referral hospital, which is in Kapchorwa. In Kween, we only have the Health Centre IV. When you go to Soi County, they only have a Health Centre III. Therefore, the difficulty is to climb the hill. There is no road and so is the power. To help a woman who is about to deliver is very difficult.

I would like to interest you, honourable minister; kindly have a heart for the people of Kween and consider us, more so in this rural electrification programme. My people can only see the poles when they come to the

highway. However, when they are deep there, they cannot even watch the television like we are talking. They just hear stories. They cannot even afford the solar. They need to watch me presenting. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable. Member for Tororo?

6.05

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for her detailed statement and note that it was a big setback for us when REA was mainstreamed. However, we have to move with what is existing. I pray that the ministry acts very first.

Mr Speaker, it is my humble appeal that before we get into the next elections, please complete in areas where you placed poles and did surveys back before going into new areas.

Honourable minister, I hope you are listening. There are areas where you placed poles, surveys were done five, four, and three years ago- before you go to new areas- It is my humble appeal- because we shall have an uphill task explaining to the population. I served in the ministry and we surveyed areas; it is a big issue. Thank you, you pledged to come and people are waiting for you to come and explain because I cannot.

I want to state that we passed an Amended Electricity, Act in this House. In that Act, there are stringent penalties but we still see vandalism of transformers. It is my humble appeal that we find a way of fitting cameras to these transformers to get the thieves. I do not think it is the local people who are removing oil from these transformers. It must be the skilled people who know what to do.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, we have a skilling program under the President's Office and also under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, other skilling programs run by different agencies, and the Parish Development Model. Most of these young people are being trained, and given skills in welding, and tailoring, but they all need electricity.

They cannot come to Kampala or towns with electricity.

They need to provide services to the population down there. We need to ensure that all the trading centres, as mentioned previously, are lit so that people can be self-employed. Unemployment is high in this country- (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we have taken two hours on this statement, and this debate cannot end. I am referring this statement and one of the Leader of the Opposition to the Committee on Energy, Environmental Natural Sources. The *Hansard* always captures it very well so that they can interrogate it further.

We can appear as colleagues, look at the gaps come back here, and continue with the debate. I have taken note of those who have debated today, next time I will start with those-honourable colleagues we have time we spend here.

Today, I have generally been unfair to men. I do apologize for that. I still have around 30 Members who would want to speak. When you say, "I am unfair," I do not know what I would use to pick you not the other colleague, because we are all equal here.

That is why I use my methods of choosing women- sometimes you are trying to balance. Honourable minister? Then I will ask the chairperson for the time.

MS NANKABIRWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I agree with your guidance. I have a team at the bar behind there who have been recording, but we shall also use *Hansards*. We must respond to all the individual questions because they have been put on behalf of their constituencies. We will respond to them.

Secondly, I would like to use this opportunity and say that my office has been receiving individual submissions from your constituencies, and it is guiding us on the implementation.

Thirdly, in all the statements I have made before here, I emphasized prioritising the completion

of the stranded projects. It only makes sense that way. I am repeating it. Stranded projects must be our priority.

Last one, on the money that was under REA, I am in pain because that money was for a multi-year program, Shs 500 billion. When REA was transferred to my ministry, we did not get the Shs 500 billion. We got Shs 132 billion in bits, this can be discussed further in the committee. I wanted this to be captured in this afternoon's sitting.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. I would request that- you see most of the questions are repetitive only that Members were showing what happens in their constituencies. That is why I have a challenge with such a debate reason being we structure it around constituencies. Each Member of Parliament wants to speak about their area and that is how I would also submit. However, honourable minister, I request that you structure your responses under what I can call common questions.

Study the *Hansard*, look at the common questions, and respond to them, generally for the whole country. The submission you are going to submit to the committee, I would also need it uploaded on our Alfresco so that the rest of the Members can access it. When we come back here for debate, you can address issues of delayed projects, compensation and vandalism because the formula would be one for the whole country.

Honourable members, those who still have issues, I urge you, Chairman of the Committee, to publish for us when the minister is coming. All Members are ex officio Members of the committee. Those with specific questions to put to the minister, please, ensure you attend and you put them to the minister.

The Leader of the Opposition (LOP) officially made a response, we got it and it is on record.

Honourable Chairperson, I do not know how much time you would need to handle this because it is an urgent matter; Members would want it to come back here.

6.14

MR GEOFFREY FETA (NRM, Ayivu Division East, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. You had given us an early assignment and together with this- we are processing the report on the activities of going to Gulu, we would request that you give us one full month to handle it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, let them do a thorough job.

MR FETA: Give us one full month. However, I want to thank the minister and make a correction. Hon. Songa had earlier said that “100 years”, West Nile has been part of Uganda for 110 years. We became part of Uganda in 1914. It marks 110 years since we have been Ugandans, we thank the Government for connecting West Nile to the national grid.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Welcome to Uganda, honourable and to the people of West Nile.

MR FETA: Thank you very much. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS

I) REPORT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT TO THE EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT HELD IN MIDRAND, SOUTH AFRICA

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Okot-Ogong –

6.15

MR FELIX OKOT-OGONG (NRM, Dokolo South County, Dokolo): Mr Speaker, in accordance with our Rules of Procedure, I rise to present the report of the delegation of the Pan-African Parliament to the Extraordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Pan-African Parliament held on the 20th – 27th March 2024 in Midrand, South Africa.

The main focus of the extraordinary meeting was to carry out elections for the positions that had fallen vacant. The positions were that of the President of the Pan-African Parliament, the vice president, and the fourth vice president. Three positions in the Bureau were vacant. So, an extraordinary meeting was convened and elections were held in accordance with our Rules of Procedure of the Pan-African Parliament.

We adopted the principle of rotation and in that case, the position of the President of the Pan-African Parliament went to Southern Africa, the position of the first vice president went to the Northern Caucus and the position of the fourth vice president went to the Central Caucus.

Right now, our bureau is fully filled up and they are functioning well. To emphasise, the position of the President was taken by Hon. Chief Charumbira from Zimbabwe, that is for the Southern region. The position of first vice president was taken by Hon. Prof. Massouda Mohamed Laghdaf of Mauritania. The position of the second vice was taken by Hon. Dr Ashebir Gayo for Eastern Africa. The position of the third vice president was taken by Hon. Lucia Dos Passos from Cabo Verde. That is Western region and the final position for the fourth vice president was taken by Hon. Djidda Mamar Mahamat from Central Africa.

This is just for information purposes. Other details are in the report and I am going to lay the report in accordance to Rule 33 of our Rules of Procedure. I beg to lay the report of the extraordinary meeting. We have another report.

II) REPORT OF THE DELEGATION TO THE THIRD ORDINARY SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT 24TH JUNE - 5TH JULY 2024

MR OKOT-OGONG: Mr Speaker, this is a report of the Pan-African Parliament, our delegation to the Third Ordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Pan-African

Parliament, held on the 24th June – 5th July 2024 in Midrand, South Africa.

Pursuant to Rule 28 of our Rules of Procedure of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), held the third ordinary session of the Sixth Parliament of Pan-African Parliament on the 24th June – 5th July 2024 at the PAP headquarters in Midrand.

It was held under the African Union theme; “Education of an African Fit for the 21st Century: Building Resilient Education Systems for Increased Access to Inclusive, Long life, Quality Education, Inclusive Education, Accessible Education and relevant learning in Africa.”

I am going to give a summary because the details are in the report which is already uploaded and Members can read the report for more details.

The official opening of the ceremony was by the first President of the Pan-African Parliament, Hon. Adel Bin Abdul. Its purpose was to thank Members of Parliament and appraise them of the vision of the Pan-African Parliament and also to encourage Members to network and work closely with the member states to ensure that the resolutions and recommendations of the Pan-African Parliament are presented to the national parliaments so that the national parliaments can adopt or make them part of the laws that they may wish to present.

We have five Members who are in the delegation and I am the leader of the delegation. We have Hon. Achayo Lodou, who is a member from Ngora County – NRM, Hon. Caroline Kamusiime, Woman Representative for Rukiga - I think Members should know Members who represent Parliament in the Pan-African Parliament - and actually, she is the first chairperson of the Women’s Caucus of the Pan-African Parliament.

I was also elected to be the vice chair of the Eastern Region of all Members of Parliament. *(Applause)* We have Hon. Patrick Oshabe. He is liked by Members of Parliament and is very active, and he is now the rapporteur of the

committee on PAP - that is the Audit Committee - very active member of that committee. Hon. Abdu Katuntu just joined us and now he is also a member of the Committee on Justice and Human Rights. This is a committee where he was a member 20 years ago when he represented us around 2003. Now, he is going to represent us there as a member.

Pursuant to our Rule of Procedure, new Members joined and they were sworn in. In the Pan-African Parliament, Members come and go, and as we went for our session, many Members were sworn in.

Mr Speaker, many issues were presented, but the main landmark matter that was discussed was the model law on food and nutrition in Africa. That motion was adopted and fully supported by all Members of Parliament, because we realised that our people are denied food, most of our member citizens do not have quality food, we have abandoned our traditional food and we are now only eating food that is foreign to our bodies. That is why sometimes we become weak and get diseases that are not common in Africa because of the type of food that we eat.

So, we have come out with a model law that should be adopted by all countries. We are actually going to present that law here so that we can get some insight from the Pan-African Parliament.

We also celebrated our 20th anniversary. You know, Pan-African Parliament was inaugurated in 2004, so, this is our 20th birthday. It was celebrated there. The theme was; “Reflecting on the Journey and Charting the Path Forward, the path of the Union, the path of the Pan-African Parliament, and the path of the Continent of Africa.”

We came out with 12 resolutions and eight recommendations in our meeting. I would like to go through them briefly -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, we do not have that time.

MR OKOT-OGONG: It may not be possible, but just to inform you, we came out with very good recommendations and resolutions. I would like to implore the members of Parliament, who may have time, to read the report and know what we are doing in the Pan-African Parliament.

We are representing you fully, very active and Uganda is noted-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of Procedure from Hon. Taaka.

MS TAAKA: Mr Speaker, thank you. The procedural matter I am raising is that the rule requires the Honourable Member to lay and the Order Paper says lay. I do not know whether we are proceeding well.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, Rule 37(2) requires a Member to give a summary and quick highlights.

MR OKOT-OGONG: Honourable members, just be aware of that rule.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Okot-Ogong.

MR OKOT-OGONG: I take the opportunity to lay the report and the resolutions at the Table. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable. Have you laid all the three?

RESOLUTIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE THIRD
ORDINARY SESSION OF THE SIXTH
PARLIAMENT: 21 JUNE TO 5 JULY 2024,
MIDRAND, SOUTH AFRICA

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of procedure from Hon. Sarah-

MS SARAH OPENDI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank Hon. Okot-Okong for his report. However, this Parliament has 500 plus members and out of these, I do not know whether we are being fair

that one Member, I know it is the Speaker, who designates Independent Members of Parliament. Is it fair to get one Member to chair a committee and at the same time delegate him to the Pan-African Parliament?

Hon. Abdul Katuntu, I think, is the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline. At the same time, he is representing this Parliament in the Pan-African Parliament. Don't we have independents who can chair that committee?

Let us practice the four-way test so that we share responsibility. It cannot be one person. Is it procedurally right that out of 500 plus members, you have the same person in the Pan-African Parliament chairing the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline? Can't another Member handle it? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Colleague that is well noted.

MR OKOT-OGONG: The resolution is the outcome of our report and therefore, I beg to lay the resolutions of the Pan-African Parliament to this Parliament.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, the rules say; "debate shall not ensue." So, these are for information purposes. We are going to ensure that they are in the library for easy access. There are these that are uploaded so that you can read through them.

Honourable colleagues, I have a fireplace conversation with the youth of Uganda that started at 6.00 p.m. and I am already. Please let us take it on tomorrow at 2.00 p.m. The House is adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 6.29 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 15 August 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)