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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIFTH SESSION - SECOND MEETING

THURSDAY, 29 JANUARY 2026



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA
IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FIFTH SESSION - SPECIAL SITTING - SECOND MEETING

Thursday, 29 January 2026

Parliament met at 2.26 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. On a sad note, we have two colleagues who lost their parents; Hon. Tayebwa Herbert of Kashongi County lost a mother last evening, and Hon. Bigirwa Norah Nyendwoha lost a father. I talked to her this morning; she was crestfallen. It is always important for us to recognise such. I request that we first observe a minute of silence.

(Members observed a moment of silence.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate His Excellency, the President, on his successful re-election to office. I also congratulate all the other presidential candidates who participated in the election.

Similarly, I want to congratulate you, honourable colleagues, who made it to the august House, once again. Colleagues who did not make it, we know you are already leaders; you will remain a part of this family, and we shall continue working with you.

As the leadership of Parliament, we will put up efforts aimed at ensuring that, as colleagues, we remain a family, even outside here, because we have those who have been going and coming back. They lose today, the next time they win, so it is very important to remain in touch. That is why we worked out mechanisms to ensure that, at least, we give you the minimum assistance even when you are outside of this House. I hope we shall continue engaging to see which better way can be put up for this family to remain in an honourable state even outside this House, despite the challenges that might be coming up.

Honourable colleagues, last year, we were unable to hold our end-of-year party because we were all running up and down; we were busy in our constituencies. As the leadership of Parliament, we decided that we should have a party for you, so that it is a combination of the end and beginning of the year. So, we shall have it tomorrow at 5:00 p.m. at the South Wing ground parking. I, therefore, invite you to attend it so that we can shed the stress that we got from the field.

Colleagues, I will be amending the Order Paper to allow the laying of reports of the Auditor-General for the last financial year. There are some reports that came in today, and we feel we should work on them right away.

I am also happy the finance minister is here; I know we have the statutory timelines that are clearly provided for insofar as the budgeting process is concerned. Ministerial policy

statements should be here by the 15th of March, alternative statements from the Opposition, by the 29th of March, annual budget estimates together with the tax bills, by the 1st of April, and then the budget by the 31st of May.

However, as you know, we are in a transition period. A new government will be coming in soon. So, as the leadership of the House, we decided that we should prorogue the House by the end of April 2026. This means we should have finished working on the budget by then.

Therefore, honourable minister, we shall request that you go back, work in overdrive, and we see how best you can be generous enough to squeeze and get for us some time for us to prorogue the House after we have processed the budget. I know it is tough on your side, but when you bring them here, we shall also work in overdrive. We shall be giving honourable colleagues enough time by reducing the activities of plenary to help them concentrate more on the activities of the committees, to process the budget, and we come to plenary when we are just completing it. Colleagues, that is my communication. Any reactions?

2.33

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also want to join you in welcoming colleagues back to the House. I will be hesitant, for now, to pass on congratulatory messages because I believe there are still some issues to be taken care of, but anyhow, it is good that we are back - *(Interjections)* - some people are sad that I have not congratulated them - *(Interjections)* - it is okay. You have people to congratulate you.

Mr Speaker - *(Interjections)* – please, protect me from members who want me to congratulate them by force. I certainly cannot congratulate anyone by force.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, congratulations are voluntary. We have congratulated Hon. Joel.

MR SSENYONYI: Who?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have congratulated you.

MR SSENYONYI: Oh, you did? I did not hear that, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You might be having issues as the Leader of the Opposition -

MR SSENYONYI: Anyhow, Mr Speaker, I wanted to react to your communication and also seek some guidance. Last week, we were here briefly to send off our colleague, Hon. Stella Isodo. We had just come out of the election, and I did raise some critical concerns. The view of the presiding officer was that I should raise them at our next sitting, which is today, so that we can get some guidance.

We want to be able to move without baggage. When we take care of this baggage, it becomes easy to deal with the business that we have to take care of.

We have just come out of an election, and regardless of who you ask, by the way, whether it be me or colleagues on this side, whether it be colleagues on this end, whether it be bystanders, there are issues that are of critical concern that we need to address, as a country.

I am hoping colleagues have taken time to read the observers reports, because the Electoral Commission did accredit observers to observe our election, and they released reports. Please take time to read them. When you read the African Union observer report, the one by the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, and so on, you notice that they raise critical issues, which I believe this Parliament has got to interest itself in. The issues point to the credibility of our election and the brutality before, during, and after the election.

By the way, for the information of colleagues, the election is not just an event, it is a process. Campaigns are part of the election and how they are conducted, how candidates are treated or otherwise, that is part of the election itself. All those feed into the credibility issues that we are raising. The brutality, people being killed,

candidates ill-treated and so on, are critical concerns that have got to be addressed by this Parliament because people are still being abducted.

Mr Speaker, on the eve of the election, colleagues, leaders in my political party: our deputy president in charge of Western Uganda, Ms Jolly Jacklyn Tukamushaba, a lady who is well known to you, was abducted. To date, her whereabouts are not known.

Also, Ms Lina Zedriga, our deputy president in charge of the northern region, was abducted on election eve and to date, her whereabouts are not known. A gentleman called John Mary Ssebuufu, a councillor, and several others - Mr Speaker, the challenge about these issues is that we keep raising them, and some colleagues say, "but you are pestering us." Yes, we shall pester you using this platform that we have.

It is unacceptable that people get abducted and their whereabouts are not known for one day, for a week; it is now coming to two weeks. Why can't people be produced in courts? The Government needs to help us understand this. I am not above the law, and no one is. I can be suspected of having committed an offense but what does the law say? Arrest me *vis-a-vis* the law and produce me in a court of law.

Mr Speaker, when you hold me somewhere, and my family cannot access me, lawyers cannot access me - what do you want us to do? What do you want people to do? When we complain about these issues, some people think we are being too much. Perhaps, until it happens to you - and it has happened to colleagues by the way across the aisle - these are critical issues. First detach the political affiliation and whatever you think is the reason for this person's arrest. Can the law prevail? These concerns have got to be addressed.

Mr Speaker, hundreds of people were arrested, including polling agents; people are being held in police cells for more than the 48 hours that are allowed by the law. That is not proper. When we raise these issues, let us address them as people's representatives. Forget

that you are a member of the National Unity Platform(NUP)or the National Resistance Movement (NRM) because it can happen to any of us. These foundational principles have got to be respected and fought for by all of us in this room.

Mr Speaker, I can see the good doctor - the ICT minister is here with us. My party leader, Hon. Kyagulanyi Ssentamu Robert, who is an OB of this House, after the election, had his house raided. He managed to sneak away but I kept seeing the military and the ICT minister here saying, "No one is after him."

However, as they were saying that, the military continuously descended on his home; raided it, broke into it, beat up his wife and family members.

The following day, the minister and other dignitaries were saying that no one is after this man. Just like I have made it succinctly clear thus: "Look, no one is above the law."

Mr Speaker, if there is an offense that the Hon. Kyagulanyi Ssentamu Robert is suspected of having committed, whether it be running for president - some people think it is an offense to challenge the bush war General and so it is an offense - whatever offense it is, why not issue summons to him so that he is able to show up and be charged?

Mr Speaker, after the minister again said that no, all is well, people can access - but when his siblings went there yesterday, police officers, several of them deployed there said, "we do not have authority to allow anybody to access his place." I want to know: is it official that Hon. Kyagulanyi Ssentamu Robert is under House arrest and for that matter, people cannot access his family and that it shall continue this way? Why are you not summoning him if there is a particular offense that he has committed?

Mr Speaker, let us forget that this is the leader of the NUP, which you might not like; that is okay, and keep to the point that this is a Ugandan; this is a leader for all intents and purposes. Why is the law operating this way?

The good minister here has got experience with the law being absquatulated. He suffered a similar fate when he was abducted; he was taken away for days, and his family members looked for him.

Colleagues in this House spoke, on the *Hansard* by the way - they asked: "Government, where is Dr Chris Baryomunsi? Government, where have you taken him and all the others?" People fought for you. (*Laughter*) Yes, until eventually, Government, due to the pressure exerted by Members here and elsewhere, produced the gentleman in court. We were saying, why were you hiding him and treating him the way they were?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, Leader of the Opposition.

MR SSENKYONYI: Mr Speaker, the final issue, which I think this House has got to be addressed on, is: we were here a few months ago when the Government came to us with a supplementary budget, as they normally do, and we are going to have several others - I normally ask the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, why they don't plan properly because they keep bringing here supplementary budgets for obvious things, which are quixotic - Mr Speaker, anyhow, they brought a supplementary and said that they needed to purchase those machines. The *Hansard* can really bear me witness. I said, "Look, we want to purchase these machines expensively at this point in time, but what has changed?"

In the last election, we used these machines, but they failed to function. The census came around, and the machines also failed to function. Government kept telling us that this was the panacea to vote rigging. It was actually interesting that Government was conceding that they preside over a Government system that allows vote rigging and all these different things. They said, "now we have a solution, votes will not be rigged by Government officials," yet, Government is the one in charge.

Mr Speaker, when you see how much we spent on these machines - it was nearly Shs 400 billion. Part of that was to purchase the machines, and the other was to train operators. The last portion was for hiring people who were going to operate them. There were other monies, in millions, meant for integrating features on the ballot paper so that when one scanned it with the machine, it would function. All of that came at a cost. But alas, on election day, the machines failed to work. We said, "Wait a minute, how come they have been functional?"

Mr Speaker, we were here in the conference hall. The Electoral Commission officials came very excited and presented to Members of Parliament - some of you were there - the machines functioned, and Members were happy. Of course, others were sad, saying, "So if this thing functions properly, will I survive?" I read those concerns from Members, but we all agreed that technology is a good thing in this day and era.

However, when we got to election day, the machines failed to operate. By 11.00 a.m. or even up to midday, people had not started voting, and the Electoral Commission issued a statement saying, okay, let us go back to the register. I said: What happened? We need an answer because we spent billions of taxpayers' money. Is it that fake machines were procured? That means someone has got to be held responsible. Is it that good functional machines were procured but were frustrated from working? We need to know.

The interesting thing, Mr Speaker, is that two days ago, when we were voting for the last batch of local government leaders, I saw the machines were functional. I asked: What miracle has happened? The machines that failed to work at the presidential, parliamentary, district chairpersons, lord mayors, and so on elections functioned when we were doing the last leg, the final one.

The Government needs to bring us up to speed on what happened. A loss was occasioned for those first elections. All of a sudden, they

began to function. Was the problem fixed? Did we purchase new ones? Or did we say maybe for these particular elections - the last local government elections, there was no problem, the machines could work since that was not of much interest.

Mr Speaker, we want to know this because I get the feeling that the machines were conveniently made defective – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition -

MR SSENYONYI: As I wrap up, Mr Speaker, I thank you for being patient with me because these issues are of critical concern not just to us here. You are not seeing colleagues on this end; a number of them are happy I am raising these issues. They fear raising them, but they are happy I am representing them now – *(Interjections)*- are you not bothered that Shs 400 billion was misused; it went down the drain? Would that not build roads in your constituency or even fix hospitals?

Anyway, Mr Speaker, during the budget process, you are going to see Members across standing up saying, “my road has been on promise; it has been on the waiting list for a long time.” This money would fix those things. But now, it went down the drain. We need answers to these questions. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. On the Biometric Voter Verification Kit (BVVK), the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should bring a formal statement. Honourable members, some of these things raised are so critical and you do not need to just answer anyhow without very clear consultation. I heard the Government saying that they are even doing investigations. I think that would give them - it is under the Electoral Commission, so it is the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, who is in charge of the Electoral Commission, that should answer the question regarding that issue of machines.

Honourable members, I will first call the Minister of Internal Affairs, then the Minister

of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance to comment on issues raised by the Leader of the Opposition on accessibility of the home - Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you are welcome - because he was saying they went there but the police blocked them. Is Mr Kyagulanyi under house arrest or not?

The Minister of Internal Affairs can clarify on that and then the minister of information, who was rescued by this House, according to the Leader of the Opposition, sometime back –*(Laughter)* - can come and thank us.

Yes, Minister of Internal Affairs, *(Hon. Ssenyonyi rose)* Honourable member, you were telling me you had information; you have now changed to procedure. Let me first allow the ministers, then I will allow you. Yes, honourable minister.

2.46

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Mr Speaker and honourable members, I would like to also congratulate all of you who made it through, including but not limited to the Leader of the Opposition, who, by his account, said this was an unfair process, but nevertheless, he made it. *(Applause)*

He talked about many things, including the fact that the home of Hon. Kyagulanyi is a prison. First of all, a prison presupposes that there are prisoners in a premise. That home is not a gazetted prison. Hon. Kyagulanyi himself is not there. So, I would like to state categorically that the home is not a prison.

There may be inconveniences and security may have reasons for their presence there. I think we can iron out those ones, but the home of Hon. Kyagulanyi is not a prison.

Two, on abductions, we do not abduct; we arrest. If you breach the law, you get arrested and we can account for all those people under custody. We may delay producing them but we do not abduct, as Government. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister for information, then you can come.

2.48

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I also take the opportunity to congratulate honourable colleagues who went through and thank those who participated. I think the Minister of Internal Affairs has commented on many of the issues related to arrests.

Just to recap what I told the country, as the Minister of Information and National Guidance, no charges are being preferred against Hon. Kyagulanyi. The State is not looking for him; he is a free man. That is the point I made. He chose, on his own volition, to go into hiding.

The State is not interested in him. Otherwise, the State would pick him from wherever he is because you know we have technology to trace people. We are not interested in him; that is why I said that he is free to be at his home. Yes, at the moment, he is not at home, but Mr Kyagulanyi and other members of his family are free at any time to go there.

There is light deployment at his home, not to harass anybody, but for Ugandans not to use the home as a public disorder hub, for purposes of security. There are security interests. Therefore, there is some access control because again, when the head of the home is not there, you would not want the whole crowd of Ugandans to swarm there. There is some control, but it is harmless.

Leader of the Opposition, your leader is not wanted by the State and we advise him to be at home, provided he does not engage in law-breaking; there is no problem with that.

Secondly, it is not true that I have ever been abducted by this Government. In 2012, we had an issue in this House where a colleague died in circumstances that were not clear. I was

tasked by the House, as a Commissioner of Parliament, to be part of the team to find out what had happened.

Unfortunately, there was a misunderstanding between the Government and us in Parliament, and I was arrested on my way to Fort Portal and detained at Jinja Road Police Station, produced in Buganda Road Court, and given bail. For nine months, we battled with, defeated, and forgave the Government *-(Laughter)* - yes.

Actually, Gen. Kale Kayihura apologised to me officially because I also told the President that I am a qualified medical doctor and I knew what I was doing in that investigation. I remember we had an argument before, and I told him, "I will defeat you in court because I am a senior doctor, highly qualified by the way, and there is no law I have broken". Indeed, the court agreed with me.

On the insinuation that I was abducted, I know Hon. Ssemujju and the Opposition usually want to use it all the time, but that one is long past. So, I wanted to clarify. I was working as a Commissioner *-(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order.

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, first of all, I have not said anything since I came here *-(Laughter)*- but Hon. Chris Baryomunsi, who was charged for stealing Hon. Nebanda's body parts *-(Laughter)*- wants to draw me into an argument where I am not a party. I went to see him at Jinja Road Police Station, where they had denied him even sandals. I followed this matter up to court and stood with him.

Is he in order not to thank me *-(Laughter)*- but to keep dragging me in his submission and create an impression that I have said something, yet I have said nothing?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju, when Hon. Chris was presenting, I saw signs on your face which are not usual; you were not your usual self. Since he is a highly qualified doctor, he might have understood you better

–(Laughter)- that you are concerned. You should at least thank Hon. Ssemujju for what he did. Did he even bring you sandals, or he just observed and went away? (Laughter)

DR BARYOMUNSI: I would like to thank Hon. Ssemujju because he and many colleagues came to visit me. He came empty-handed –(Laughter)- but I appreciate that he was concerned. However, he even wrote a story in the *Observer*, which misquoted what he claims I had said, but that is for another day. I would like to thank him and the other colleagues.

I remember Hon. Amuria, Hon. Nabukenya and Hon. David Bahati stood surety for me in court. There was indeed support in Parliament during that time because we were fighting for the welfare of a colleague who had died in circumstances that were not clear. I have always said that if it happened again, I would still do the same thing I did then, to fight for the rights of somebody, especially someone who cannot speak for himself or herself in those circumstances.

I have no regrets for what I did on behalf of Parliament then, as a Parliamentary Commissioner. So, you should never use it to blackmail me or to think that I will feel shy because of the role that I played as a Commissioner in this House.

I would also like to put it on the record that the charges were not about stealing body parts. (Laughter) No –(Interjection)- that will be for another day. (Laughter)

Mr Speaker, my plea to the honourable members and all of us as leaders - and that is the point I have been making in the media - is that we are done with elections - the presidential, parliamentary, LC V and municipal council elections, and we are now waiting for the subcounty and town council elections to complete this process.

For whoever is aggrieved with the results, there is the channel of the courts to petition, so that if you adduce evidence, the courts can listen to you. However, inciting the public to go into

riots and violence is not helpful for both of us in the Government or the Opposition, because we want a stable Uganda.

Therefore, if you think you were rigged or treated unfairly, there is the channel of the courts, but not the uncivilised way of inciting Ugandans. The security agencies have a responsibility to ensure that you and I are safe in this country because my being a candidate, whether presidential or parliamentary, is not a license to threaten and harm your security, as a Ugandan. Therefore, whatever actions you see the security agencies taking are in line with their duty –(Interruption)

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to congratulate the honourable colleagues. Although many of us came in different ways - others came through the door and others through the window - all the same, I congratulate everyone. (Laughter)

The clarification I would like to seek from the honourable minister is that the Leader of the Opposition raised a very important concern about the NUP vice-chairperson for northern Uganda, who disappeared. The family is looking for her. What we are interested in knowing is where she is. Where have you detained her, and what charges were preferred against her?

Right now, many people are disappearing. Be straight to the point and tell us where those who are lost are. That is where we want to go. Thank you.

DR BARYOMUNSI: I thought that point had been addressed by the Minister of Internal Affairs, but –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, once it clocks 3:00 p.m., we are going back to the Order Paper. So, Minister, conclude.

DR BARYOMUNSI: The Uganda Police Force and the other security agencies are doing their work. If there are people who are breaching the law, the police and other agencies

are mandated by law to take action. We have guided security that if they arrest somebody, that person should be arrested lawfully and taken to gazetted centres and processed in accordance with the law.

For cases of those that you are saying have been abducted, I cannot confirm them here because there is a law on missing persons. If your dear one goes missing for several days, the law requires you to report to the police that your person is missing, and then the law commands the police to assist you in the search for such a person.

Otherwise, the information I have is that those who are being arrested are being processed for court, charged, and handled accordingly. We do not condone abducting or arresting people and keeping them in areas that are not known. That is not the position of the Government. However, the minister for security and the one for internal affairs, maybe later, can give us information regarding those cases that you are reporting.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, you have guided on the biometric voter verification kits. I chaired a Cabinet committee that prepared the intervention of using technology. Indeed, it is the Government that initiated it to ensure “one person, one vote”, just to supplement the efforts of voter verification. Unfortunately, on the day of voting, we got a report that there were technical hitches.

I was given a report on the phone, as the minister for ICT, but an agreement was made with the Electoral Commission that voting would go on using the manual register. The failure of the machines to work on that day did not in any way injure the integrity of the exercise.

The technical hitches were software-related, and a report will come. The voting still went on because, in any case, candidates are supposed to have strong agents to oversee whatever happens, and I think the exercise went on well. Eventually, the technical hitches were sorted out, and, in the subsequent elections for local governments, the machines were being used very effectively.

However, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs can come and give us a substantive report. It was the intention of the Government, so it cannot be the same Government to have changed their mind that we do not use them. It was not an idea from the Opposition, but from President Museveni himself. I assure you that it did not injure the integrity of the elections and, going forward, the machines shall be used for any other subsequent elections. I thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. LOP, use one minute and then we will have the minister for finance. *(Hon. Ssemujju rose_)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MR SSEMUJJU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thought I would raise it after the Leader of the Opposition, but I thank you. When you were communicating, you informed the House about honourable colleagues who have lost parents. I had thought that you were going to inform Parliament about Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi, who was arrested –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Has he died? Hon. Ssemujju, wait. I informed honourable colleagues about Members who had lost their loved ones. So, I talked about the dead.

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, it is a tradition in this Parliament – in fact, in the past, even births would be announced. When we have an honourable colleague arrested, in the past, we have been briefed, and Parliament has offered to help.

Mr Speaker, I am not blaming you, but I thought that you would inform us about the arrest of Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi. We keep reading reports that 10 people were killed in his house. Since that matter is before the court, as an honourable colleague, we need to know and demand from the Government an explanation regarding his circumstances, especially the ones that do not offend the law regarding people who are suspects. That is the procedural issue I am raising.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You scared me, Hon. Ssemujju. Usually, how we handle these matters is that we have a Criminal Investigations and Intelligence Directorate (CIID) officer attached to Parliament, who gives us a report, as the leadership, and, from that report, we can follow up.

Therefore, I am going to ask the CIID officer to share with us the report, through the Clerk, and we shall offer any assistance within our means, as the leadership of the House, as we do for other honourable colleagues.

Yes, LOP, but for only one minute.

3.05

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Mr Speaker, I think it is because the *modus operandi* is that for any honourable colleague here to be arrested, summons go through your office. However, of course, what we saw with Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi is that his home was raided by the military. Thankfully – and imagine I am saying “thankfully” – for him, he had not disappeared away. He was taken to the police and, then, the court. Never mind that the raid was outside of the law. The concern about the others is that they were taken, and we do not know where they are.

Mr Speaker, the minister for information has said that the home of Hon. Kyagulanyi is suspected to be used as a public disorder hub – those are the words that he used – and, therefore, there is access control. I think you should not operate in the dark. If you think that my home has an issue with public order or accessibility, why don't you bring me on board so that I know what to do and what not to do? Because while you say that, know this, the family does not know. Therefore, when they come banging on the doors, the wife refuses to open because she thinks, “Are these coming in good faith or not?” Eventually, they break and beat her up, yet if you informed the family that “These are the standard operating procedures; no one is supposed to visit you or bring food for you,” then we know, and we also get to see how we can challenge those. Otherwise, while

you know what you know, the family does not know.

Yesterday, his siblings went to see the family, but they were denied access. Therefore, can we know? Honourable minister, it is not enough for you to say, “We have put in place access controls”. To what effect? Because when I know, then tomorrow, if I flout what you have laid down - if it is legal, I can be held liable.

Finally, Mr Speaker, this talk of “There are people inciting violence, and that is why the state is operating that way”. Incitement of violence is an offence in this country. Why don't you charge them? If you think the Hon. Kyagulanyi has incited violence, issue him with summons.

That is what I have been saying. Otherwise, for you to say that he is inciting violence, and that that is why you shall raid his home, break things, beat up his wife; you are operating outside of the law. Issue him a summons.

And very finally, you see abductions; and why we call these abductions - the Minister of State for Internal Affairs, who was saying that, Yes, I went through, even though I am saying the process was unfair - you see, we blame Idi Amin's regime for having killed people, and yes, they did. But Idi Amin did not kill everybody who was present in the country at the time.

Regardless, let me get back to my point. The reason we are calling these abductions is that two weeks later, families do not know where they are. Honourable minister, you have said that you are aware that some of these are being processed for court.

Tell me - you quote a law, which says that you can hold somebody for seven days or two weeks when the family and their lawyers do not know, and that you can keep saying that they are being processed for court. How is that legal? How? You help me understand because if you are processing them for court, the family and their lawyers should be able to access them. If they are writing statements, they have a right

to have legal counsel with them. However, you are saying 10 days later, you are processing them for court.

We do not know the state in which they are. The family cannot access them. With due respect, the honourable minister should be ashamed of telling us things that are outside of the law. You should be apologising the same way you are saying the Government had to apologise to you, and you forgave them. You should be saying - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, honourable minister for information.

3.11

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): The Leader of the Opposition does not qualify to lecture me in this House – *(Interjections)* - you do not. I taught you at Makerere [*Hon. Ssemujju rose*]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, I have not allowed you to speak. No, I have not. Ask whilst seated - no, first seat. Because you see, when you stand up, access a microphone, and then remain standing, you need to first take your position.

Colleagues, we have been moving well. This should not be an exchange between the two colleagues. Hon. Baryomunsi, wait a bit.

Now, the problem I am seeing is that it seems we prefer talking to each other on microphones and in the public. But we are colleagues, I do not think LOP can call Gen. David Muhoozi and he refuses to pick up his call, and vice versa – or Hon. Baryomunsi.

Because what we are doing is exchanging before the public or the Prime Minister, you know - I think let us also use other means beyond the cameras and the microphone to help our colleagues. We have resolved very many issues that way, you know. So, I request - Hon. Basalirwa is telling me that accountability is on camera –please – yes, LOP.

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Hon. Baryomunsi is attempting to intimidate me - obviously, he will not succeed in intimidating Joel Ssenyonyi.

When he says that I am in no place to lecture him, but who have I lectured to here? I am only raising critical issues of concern to all of us; matters of law. Therefore, how do you say that I am now standing up to lecture you? I am quoting for you the law, and that is a critical concern.

Why do you not address it? I do not know if he is in order to try to address my person. I am not attacking you. If it were him as minister for ICT and national guidance, I would still raise the issues of concern to him.

Why do you not raise these issues of concern when we say, no, these are not arrests - can I be allowed to finish the point of order, sir? I was still processing the point of order.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, no, please conclude.

MR SSENYONYI: It is important I raise it because I do not want him to make it seem like it is a personal issue. No, it is a matter of law. Why we are concerned is because when people are abducted and for days on end, we do not see them, they might end up becoming like John Bosco Kibalama, whom the Prime Minister said was arrested, but up to now, she has never accounted for him - six years later. So, that is why we are concerned. I do not want the same thing that happened to Kibalama to happen to Lina Zedriga – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Baryomunsi, I have to rule on the point of order against you. Honourable colleagues, Hon. Ssenyonyi has made my work even more difficult in terms of ruling, because he said that he cannot be intimidated. Therefore, since Hon. Baryomunsi cannot intimidate you, let us ignore it. We take it as a passing. Yes, Hon. Baryomunsi.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I think what I said - and the LOP should listen - is: There are arrests being made and are being processed in accordance with the law so that the suspects appear in court. That is what I said.

Secondly, I said the Government of Uganda does not abduct. However, if your dear one goes missing, there is a law, which guides you on how you can report the matter to the police, and the police can assist you in finding that person.

I am alive to the law in this country as a Member of Parliament. Therefore, if you are saying there is an abduction, it is your word against ours. We are not aware of any abduction. However, if your person has gone missing, report it to the police. Then the police can help you look for the person. Otherwise, those who are being arrested are being taken to court, charged, and processed accordingly. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, honourable minister for finance.

3.13

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (General Duties) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to comment on the budget timelines. However, before I do that, let me also take this opportunity to congratulate you upon your victory in Mitooma - and I would like to congratulate all the colleagues who were able to make it back to this House.

And more so, I want to congratulate His Excellency, the President, Yoweri Museveni, and the NRM party, for the massive victory.

Mr Speaker, on the budget timelines - (*Interjections*) - can I be protected from my brother, Hon. Basalirwa?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, order.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, on the budget timelines, the law is very clear. By the first day of February, we will pass the Budget Framework Paper, which I want to believe that by the close of business today, we shall have done.

By the 15th day of February, we are required to have issued the second Budget-call Circular, which we shall issue. It is subsequent to the National Budget Framework Paper. By the 15th day of March, the ministerial policy statements are supposed to be laid in this House.

By the first day of April, we are required to lay the estimates of expenditure and revenue, which is the budget. Therefore, that is the budget, accompanied by the Tax Bills and all other compliance requirements in accordance with the law.

Mr Speaker, as far as I am concerned, any earliest opportunity past the first day of April is very good news for me. Therefore, I would like to pledge that we will give the necessary support in terms of information. We expect that at the earliest opportunity, after the first day of April, we will pass this budget because we are cognisant of the fact that this Parliament is about to come to an end.

We are also cognisant of the fact that the current Government, 2021-2026, is about to come to an end, and we would like it to close after completing most of these things, where the law requires us to do before the new Parliament comes in.

Therefore, what do I commit? I commit that I will provide timely information, especially after the first day of April, such that by the end of April, we have passed the budget and we are good to get ready for the next Parliament. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Enos Asiimwe, I had allowed you earlier. Is it related to the budget? If it is on the other comments, I do not want to reopen that debate.

MR ENOS ASHIMWE: No, Mr Speaker. Thank you very much, for the opportunity, but it has passed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, thank you. Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS

I) THE PETROLEUM FUND ANNUAL REPORT, FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, minister for finance.

3.18

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay, on the Table, the Petroleum Fund Annual Report for the Financial Year ended 30 June 2025.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, when I was preparing, I cross-checked - if I follow Rule 179, which implements Section 17 of the PFMA, then I would be referring this report to the Budget Committee. However, the report has issues, which are beyond expenditure.

There are issues of policy in nature, and therefore, I would like to use my authority to refer it to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development, not to the Budget Committee, so that it can be extensively looked into beyond budget issues. Also, so that the issues raised can be followed up by the sectoral Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development, since it is the supervising committee.

Clerk, the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline should also look at this issue; Rule 179, in line with Section 17 of the PFMA. We need to see how best we can harmonise so that the Petroleum Fund reports can be referred to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Therefore, I refer the report to the Committee on Finance, Planning, and Economic Development.

II) THE EDUCATION SERVICE COMMISSION ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT, FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Minister of Education and Sports.

3.19

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Peter Ogwang): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Let me also take the opportunity to congratulate you and all colleagues. Above all, let me congratulate His Excellency. the President, for winning this year's election.

I beg to lay on the Table the Annual Performance Report for the Education Service Commission for the Financial Year ended 30 June 2025.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The report is referred to the Committee on Education and Sports.

III) AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA ON THE RECIPROCAL ABOLITION OF VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR HOLDERS OF DIPLOMATIC, OFFICIAL/SERVICE, AND SPECIAL PASSPORTS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister for finance can lay the agreement.

3.21

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table, the Agreement between the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Government of the Republic of Uganda on the Reciprocal Abolition of Visa Requirements for holders of diplomatic, official/service and special passports.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, you should interest yourselves in this. Now you can go to Egypt visa-free.

However, honourable minister, as you go back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, tell them to negotiate for all passport holders. This is Africa; we are traveling in Africa. Exempting us while we do not help those who are doing business and bringing money to this economy is not helpful. This is for information purposes. Let it be deposited in the library so that it can be accessed by Members.

IV) ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL TO PARLIAMENT FOR THE AUDIT YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, minister.

3.22

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table, the Annual Report of the Auditor-General to Parliament for the audit year ended 31 December 2025.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The report is referred to the Committee on Public Accounts – Central, for processing.

V) ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL 2025

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, honourable minister?

3.22

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table, the Annual Performance Report of the Office of the Auditor-General for the year ended December 2025.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. It is referred to the relevant committees because we

have several accountability committees, which should be processing it from PAC, COSASE, and all that. Thank you. Next item.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE NATIONAL BUDGET FRAMEWORK PAPER FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2026/2027 TO THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2030/2031

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, honourable minister for finance.

3.23

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, pursuant to Article 155(2) of the Constitution and Section 8(10) of the Public Finance Management Act and Rule 145 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, I beg to move a motion for adoption of the National Budget Framework Paper for the Financial Year 2026/2027. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? (*Members rose*) Okay, it is seconded by the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Minister of State for Luweero Triangle, the Chairperson of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Chairperson of the Budget Committee, Hon. Omara, Hon. Masaba, Hon. Kamara and majority of the Members of the House. Thank you.

Honourable minister, do you want to briefly speak to your motion?

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you. Mr Speaker, the theme under the National Budget Framework Paper for this financial year is: “Full monetisation of the Ugandan economy through commercial agriculture, industrialisation, expanding and broadening services, digital transformation and market access.”

Mr Speaker, the 2026/2027 financial year is the second year of implementing the National Development Plan IV (NDP IV). This is the first plan to deliver the 10-fold growth strategy of expanding the size of the economy to a GDP of \$500 billion by 2040. It is also the first fiscal year of implementation of the NRM Manifesto 2026–2031, and the Charter of Fiscal Responsibility for financial years 2026/2027 to 2030/2031.

Mr Speaker, I wish to inform the House that the Budget Framework Paper has been prepared in line with the NDP IV priorities approved by this House and the NRM Manifesto 2026–2031.

Mr Speaker, briefly, I wish to state that the economy is projected to grow between 6.5 and 7 per cent. For the year ended December 2025, economic activity, as per the perceptions of doing business in Uganda, continued to strengthen. Inflation stood at 3.1 per cent, below the policy target of 5 per cent. The exchange rate remained stable and strong against major currencies, such as the US dollar.

At the end of November 2025, exports of goods reached \$12.79 billion, with Uganda registering a balance of payments surplus of \$2.37 billion, from a deficit of \$683 million the previous year. Foreign direct investment increased to \$3.5 billion for the year ended 31 October 2025, while portfolio inflows stood at \$1.7 billion for the same year.

Tourism earnings reached \$1.7 billion, while remittances from Ugandans abroad totaled \$1.6 billion, up from \$1.1 billion, in the financial year 2020/2021.

Mr Speaker, in the next financial year, Uganda's economy is expected to grow by 10.4 per cent. The GDP is expected to increase to Shs 290.2 trillion, an equivalent of \$76.7 billion, from Shs 251.450 trillion, which is equivalent to \$68 billion this financial year.

This double-digit growth will be supported by the commencement of commercial oil and gas production; strategic government initiatives, including PDM and *Emyooga*, and

infrastructure investments; increasing foreign direct investment, especially in extractive industries; agro-processing; peace and security; and political stability. It will also be supported by continued strong export growth and a stable macroeconomic environment favorable to private-sector growth and profitability.

Mr Speaker, the preliminary resource envelope for the Financial Year 2026/2027 amounts to Shs 69.399 trillion. This comprises domestic resources, both tax and non-tax revenue, grants, and borrowing.

Mr Speaker, briefly, the key investment priorities for Financial Year 2026–2027 include maintaining peace, security, and rule of law; human capital development including provision of health care, delivery of free universal education, water for human consumption and production, and social protection; monetization of the economy through wealth creation initiatives that contribute to lowering the cost of money like PDM, *Emyooga*, UDB, and UDC, among others.

Other priorities include infrastructure development with a focus on the standard gauge railway, the meter gauge, road maintenance both paved and unpaved, affordable electricity, water, and ICT; strengthening regional integration to guarantee market access; irrigation to stabilise agriculture; industrial parks for manufacturing including agro-processing; eliminating corruption; environmental conservation and the protection of wetlands and forests; and the vertical and horizontal integration of the economy.

Mr Speaker, I wish to thank Parliament and the committees that have considered this Budget Framework Paper. We welcome all comments and commit to considering them at the next stage of this process, especially at the issuance of the second budget-call circular.

I beg to move, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister, for that brief. Chair of the Committee, please present the report. Thirty minutes will be enough.

3.33

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON BUDGET (Mr Remigio Achia): Thank you, Mr Speaker and honourable members. This is the Report of the Committee on Budget on the National Budget Framework Paper for the Financial Year 2026/2027.

Before I proceed to read the report, I beg to lay on the Table the minutes of the Committee meetings that were held while processing this Budget Framework Paper. Mr Speaker, also accompanying this report is a minority report that Hon. Ibrahim Ssemujju, Member of Parliament for Kira Municipality, prepared. Accompanying this report are annexes and a copy of the report that I will lay on the Table.

Mr Speaker, since you have given me 30 minutes, I will take the discretion to be brief in certain areas while highlighting some of the important aspects of this Budget Framework Paper.

Introduction

Mr Speaker, in accordance with Section 8(5) of the Public Finance Management Act 2012, CAP 171, and Rule 151 of our Rules of Procedure, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development presented the Budget Framework Paper for the financial years 2026/2027 to 2030/2031 to Parliament on 6 December 2025.

Mr Speaker, you subsequently referred the Budget Framework Paper and attendant documents to the Committee on Budget and the respective sector committees of Parliament for consideration.

In accordance with Section 8(9) of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 and Rule 152 of our Rules of Procedure, the Committee on Budget, in consultation with the sector committees of Parliament, scrutinised the Budget Framework Paper and now presents its findings for consideration and approval by this august House, as required by Section 8(10) of the Public Finance Management Act, Cap. 171, and Rule 152(3) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament. Mr Speaker

On page 4, the methodology and the documents that the committee used and took into consideration in processing these documents are there. The stakeholders consulted were largely the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the National Planning Authority, and the relevant MDAs.

Mr Speaker and colleagues, this Budget Framework Paper (BFP) report is divided into two parts. Part one considers the legal compliance of the Budget Framework Paper, the economic and budget performance, preliminary resource and expenditure framework for the Financial Year 2026/2027, and the strategic policy direction for this Budget Framework Paper.

Part two is a report on the sectoral committee vote by vote, considering the observations and recommendations of both the sectoral committees as well as the committees' and comments and harmonisation by the Budget Committee.

2.0 Legal Compliance

Mr Speaker, the committee undertook an assessment of the compliance of the Budget Framework Paper against a number of legal provisions as highlighted below.

2.1 Compliance with section 8(3) of the Public Finance Management Act, Cap. 171

Section 8(3) requires the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to prepare a budget that is consistent with the National Development Plan (NDP) IV and the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility.

The committee observations are that the strategic policy direction of the Budget Framework Paper is consistent. This BFP is consistent with the NDP IV strategic direction.

- i) The Budget Framework Paper's strategic policy direction is focused on four priority growth drivers. That is agro-industrialisation, tourism, mineral-based industrialisation development, science, technology and innovation.

- ii) The BFP's economic growth projections, as mentioned by the minister, is projected to be 10.4 per cent going forward.
- iii) The BFP programme budget allocations, as highlighted, fall far below the corresponding NDP IV budget allocations. With notable shortfalls in the key areas of Agro-Industrialisation, Human Capital Development, Governance and Security, Energy and Innovation. While Private Sector Development, Sustainable Urbanisation and Housing, Regional Balanced Development and Administration of Justice are indicative allocations above the NDP IV targets, most of these have fallen short in terms of the allocations indicated in NDP IV.
- iv) In addition, the programme expenditure prioritisation or budget allocative efficiency of the Budget Framework Paper is not fully consistent with the NDP IV. The NDP IV envisages higher budget allocation ratios for the Agro-Industrialisation Programme, Human Capital Development and Development Plan Implementation programmes, respectively, as highlighted in Table 1.
- v) The consistency of the Budget Framework Paper with the Charter of Fiscal Responsibility is currently not possible because the current Charter of Fiscal Responsibility expires in June 2026. We, therefore, wait for the new charter from Parliament, hopefully to be presented to Parliament not later than three months after the first sitting of the next Parliament.
- vi) It is important to note that the Government has encountered consistent challenges in meeting the fiscal rules or benchmarks it has been setting in the past charters. We implore the Government, therefore, that the fiscal deficit to GDP that they are going to set in the coming budget be consistent with the projections in the Charter of Fiscal Responsibility.

Our committee recommends, therefore, that:

- i) Enhance revenue mobilisation efforts to effectively implement the NDP IV interventions and ensure allocative efficiency and consistency of the Budget Framework Paper and the NDP IV.
- ii) Ensure the new charter that is being developed is based on realistic benchmarks that will ensure fiscal sustainability and promote economic growth.

2.2 Compliance with section 8(4) of the Public Finance Management Act

Section 4 requires the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to prepare a Budget Framework Paper in a format as prescribed in Schedule 3 of the Public Finance Management Act.

Mr Speaker, the committee observations on this matter is that:

- i) The BFP largely conforms to the requirements of schedule 3 of the Public Finance Management Act. However, the alternate fiscal framework on the fiscal risks is not provided. This has been a perennial problem on the Floor of Parliament over the last few years. The flow of government investments in the financial year is not provided either. The rate of employment and unemployment for the Financial Year 2026/2027 and the medium term is also not provided.
- ii) In addition, it is important to note that the aforementioned BFP information has consistently not been provided in the past to Parliament.

The committee recommends that the BFP should be amended to include all the requirements as per schedule 3.

2.3 Compliance with section 8(5) of the Public Finance Management Act -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure?

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, the minister who has moved the motion asking Parliament to approve it has, for the last 15 minutes, been involved in a deep discussion with the Leader of Government Business, yet the matters being raised in the report will need his response. Is he in order, Mr Speaker? Is he procedurally right - *(Laughter)* - to move Parliament to consider a very serious matter and as Parliament is processing it, he is in a deep discussion, laughing widely with the Prime Minister? Is he procedurally right to do that, Mr Speaker?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, this worries me because the minister for finance is busy concentrating somewhere with the Prime Minister. Listen, the Shadow Minister for Finance is also busy concentrating on the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and what he is doing. None of them is focusing on what is on the Floor. *(Laughter)*

Now, I request the two of you to concentrate on what is going on, on the Floor. Hon. Ssemujju, stop concentrating on Hon. Musasizi and Hon. Musasizi, stop concentrating on the Prime Minister.

Please, honourable chairperson of the committee.

MR ACHIA: You are right, Mr Speaker, the issues raised here about the consistency and provision of important information, which I thought the honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should give an ear to.

2.3 Compliance with section 8(5) of the Public Finance Management Act

This section requires the minister to prepare a Budget Framework Paper with the approval of the Cabinet and submit it to Parliament by the 31st of December of the financial year preceding the financial year to which the Budget Framework Paper relates. This requirement was fulfilled. It was submitted in the stipulated time.

2.4 Compliance with section 8(6) of the PMFA Cap. 171 -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, will you use 30 minutes if you proceed like this, because these are areas of compliance that are clearly defined? Let us go to the critical issues of money.

MR ACHIA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your guidance. In that spirit, on the economic and budget performance, the honourable minister referred to that. On inflation and exchange rate, he touched on that matter, and also on the financial sector developments.

I only want to note the average on the non-performing loans. The average ratio of non-performing loans to total gross loans declined to 3.86 per cent in June 2025 from 4.95 per cent in June 2024. This is a good indicator for the economy. The decline was particularly evident in sectors benefiting from recovery in trade, manufacturing, construction and agriculture. This decline in Non-Performing Loans (NPL) trend signals a healthier and more resilient banking sector, capable of extending more credit to support private-sector led growth. This is a very positive development, Mr Speaker.

On the external sector developments, commendably, our export earnings for goods and services grew significantly by 31.6 per cent, increasing from \$10.025 billion to a record of \$13.19 billion. This strong performance was largely attributed to our high export of coffee and gold, as the international prices of gold and coffee increased significantly.

This has actually given us a surplus and a 3.8-month cover for the first time. This is very good for - So, the country has recorded an overall balance of payments surplus of \$1.029 billion, a major turnaround from the \$995 million deficit registered in Financial Year 2023/2024.

Mr Speaker, a positive balance of payment signals that Uganda is earning more foreign exchange than it is spending, which supports

current stability and enhances the country's global financial standing.

Public debt, including Bank of Uganda outstanding debt of Shs 1.8 trillion and excluding domestic arrears rose by 14.6 per cent to Shs 118 trillion, which is about \$32.9 billion by end of Financial Year 2024/2025. This is up from Shs 103.0 trillion in the Financial Year 2023/2024, raising the debt to GDP ratio from 50.5 per cent to 51.8 per cent. So, our debt sustainability strategy needs to be taken into consideration in this.

On domestic arrears, in the current budget, Shs 1,400 billion was allocated in the Financial Year 2025/26 and in the coming financial year, it is proposed that we are going to revert to Shs 200 billion annually in Financial Year 2026/2027.

The committee observations, recommendations are outlined there but briefly to reiterate the fact that we need to reign in on our debt. Hopefully with the coming one on the 31st of July, this year, the economy will be healthier and stronger going forward.

On the fiscal and budget performance, Mr Speaker, this is a matter that has been extensively considered by committees. Our recommendation is that there is a need for sustained oversight on project readiness, procurement timelines, and contractual performance to avoid incomplete or idle infrastructure. The government should prioritise resources for operationalising already constructed facilities before approving new capital projects.

Counterpart funding has been a problem across the board and in many Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). I think this is becoming a serious problem which, is attracting a lot of interest payments for unspent monies, loans. Government should ensure that there is a continuous collaboration between project affected persons, representatives, government officials and local leaders to identify gaps and resolve delays in compensation of ongoing projects. In addition, Government should

prioritise allocation of funding for payment of right of way. This has been a major problem.

On the preliminary resource and expenditure framework, the resource envelope the minister has referred to it. I do not have to go there but what is worth noting is that the decline in both domestic and external borrowing suggests a decline effort to contain debt accumulation in line with the fiscal consolidation agenda.

A declining trend in domestic borrowing over the medium term reflects the Government's intention to reduce crowding out of the private sector, curb the rising debt to GDP ratio, and address the growing burden of interest payments to revenues. Our recommendation is that the Government should strengthen the resolve on concessional borrowing and not domestic borrowing over the medium term. This will bring down the cost of debt service and improve the fiscal space for increased service delivery in the country.

The expenditure allocation for Financial Year 2026/2027 for domestic arrears should be at least Shs 450 billion, which is consistent with domestic arrears strategy and the PDM/MF 2023 strategy.

On expenditure, Mr Speaker, the minister has already highlighted the key areas for implementation. That is the Artemis. I would want to go to the priority areas that are mentioned in the Artemis. Let me go to the committee observations and recommendations on strategic policy directions.

On Agro-industrialisation, the committee observes that Uganda's agriculture is standing on the shoulders of smallholder farmers.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you can just give a small synopsis, on page 22 before going there; on the resource envelope.

MR ACHIA: Yes. Our resource envelope for Financial Year 2026/2027 is Shs 69.399 trillion but only Shs 22.47 trillion representing 32.4 per cent is for discretionary expenditure. The balance of Shs 46.92 trillion is non-discretionary

or mandatory expenditure. Colleagues, if you note on that table under column 26/27, domestic revenues are Shs 40,090.43 billion.

That is from tax revenue, we are going to get Shs 36,806.27 billion. Non-Tax Revenue is Shs 3,284.16 billion. Budget support that is from loans is Shs 330.97 billion. So, there is a significant reduction in budget support as a result of reduced borrowing. We do not expect any grants.

The total resource envelope is Shs 69,399.95 billion. Less our wage bill, is Shs 8,582.93 billion. Less external debt repayments, amortisation of Shs 4,833.16 billion. Less project support of Shs 10,018.45 billion. That is for external financing. Less domestic refinancing of Shs 9,678.55 billion. Less domestic arrears which is budgeted for Shs 200 billion. Less appropriation in aid, that is the money we return to local governments - of Shs 328.67 billion. Less interest payments, which are mandatory, of Shs 12,734.64 billion and less domestic debt repayments of Shs 547 billion. So, the discretionary envelope available to us is Shs 22,476.56 billion. That is what we can spend at our discretion-.

Mr Speaker, I beg to proceed so that I can go to part two.

On 5.4 on the strategic direction of this budget. On Agro-industrialisation, the committee recommends that further strengthening harvest and post-harvest handling, enhancing production and competitiveness of agricultural products for domestic, regional and external markets, strengthening specialised extension services, strengthening the adoption and integration of STI in agriculture, strengthening farmer field schools and cooperatives, de-risking agro-industry, eliminating counterfeits, and low quality agro inputs and strengthening coordination legal and institutional framework for agriculture would go a long way in helping to further deepen growth in this sector.

There are observations on the extractive industry. Members, I beg you as you read them. There is also tourism development,

Science technology, but let me be specific on part two. Mr Speaker, I beg to move to page 40 for some highlights on vote observations and recommendations.

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Vote 006: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The committee is gravely concerned about Uganda's persistent failure to fulfil its financial obligations to organisations as listed above. As of December 2025, Uganda's arrears stood at Shs 90.231 billion. No funds have been allocated for clearing the arrears for the eight organisations, that is;

1. Commonwealth Foundation and Secretariat,
2. United Nations Secretariat,
3. Organisation of Islamic Cooperation,
4. International Conference on the Great Lakes Region,
5. African Union,
6. Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD),
7. World Food Programme, and
8. UN-Peacekeeping and Tribunals.

Additionally, no funds have been allocated for the annual assessment contributions totalling to Shs 25.54 billion.

The committee notes that failure to pay subscriptions to international organisations adversely affects Uganda's international standing, undermining her voting rights and full participation in meetings, and limits employment opportunities for Ugandans within the intermediate international organisations.

Our recommendation is that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs be allocated additional funding of Shs 90.231 billion to clear the outstanding arrears and the Shs 25.54 billion for payment of Uganda's annual assessment contribution obligations to international organisations.

On the enhanced pension and gratuity for the retiring officers in the ministry, the committee recommends that the ministry be provided

additional funding of Shs 2.1 billion and Shs 200 million for enhanced gratuity and pension payments for its staff, to avoid accumulation of arrears and delayed payments of terminal benefits for retiring officers.

On Vote 501: Missions Abroad, we generally recommend that the Government should provide additional funding of Shs 1.2 billion to the mission in New Delhi and Shs 200 million to the mission in Kuala Lumpur, to facilitate the repatriation of trafficked Ugandans in their respective countries of accreditation.

Missions in countries with a higher number of Ugandan migrant workers, such as in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh, should each be allocated an additional Shs 500 million to enable them establish rescue shelters and provide the requisite consular support to distressed Ugandans. This funding could be availed to them every financial year, as this is a recurrent issue.

Additional funding for the Consulate in Arusha

The committee recommends that the mission in Dar es Salaam be allocated an additional Shs 710 million in the Financial Year 2026/2027 as a subvention.

Funding for maintaining operations in the Mission in Kinshasa

We pray that the Mission in Kinshasa be allocated Shs 672 million for the rent of temporary offices with adequate space to accommodate all staff in one location, since our embassy was burnt down during the riots.

Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development

Vote 124: Equal Opportunities Commission

On the renovation of the dilapidated Equal Opportunity Commission headquarters, the committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development provide funds of Shs 1 billion to enable the committee renovate the building at Bugolobi.

This would enable the staff to relocate from the expensive rental offices at Kingdom Kampala and save money, which would be used for other critical activities. Right now, they spend up to a tune of Shs 4 billion in rent at Kingdom House.

Committee on East African Community Affairs

Vote 021: Ministry of East African Community Affairs

They have a wage gap. The committee recommends that a wage gap of Shs 165 million be provided to the budget for the ministry.

On participation in regional and international agreements, the committee noted that the Ministry of East African Community Affairs is required to participate, on a number of occasions, in different negotiations. However, it has failed to participate in key regional meetings due to lack of funding. Attending regional meetings, participation in bilateral engagements and trade negotiations is a key part of their mandate.

The committee noted that the ministry requires Shs 3.6 billion, which has not been provided. Therefore, it recommends that the ministry for finance provides Shs 1.8 billion for the participation of the Ministry of East African Community Affairs officials in regional and international engagements, which are critical to our integration process.

On visibility and communication of the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, the committee recommends that the ministry be provided Shs 1.2 billion to create awareness on the importance of East African Community (EAC) integration. There are recommendations on retooling.

Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development

Vote 108: National Planning Authority (NPA)

There are local government development plans. The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance reinstate NPA's full Shs 5.4 billion

non-wage allocation under the sustainable urbanisation and housing programme. This will ensure that local government development plans are developed to avert delays in infrastructure coordination and compliance with the Physical Planning Act.

Vote 141: Uganda Revenue Authority (URA)

Domestic revenue mobilisation initiatives

The committee recommends that URA needs Shs 40.78 billion in order to undertake the above domestic revenue mobilisation. This resource could be provided so that they can achieve the targets that they are expecting to bring in.

Vote 131: Office of the Auditor-General (OAG)

The committee noted that over time, their scope of audits has expanded due to the growing number of administrative units in emerging areas such as the Parish Development Model (PDM), oil, gas, and extractives, and increasing demand for public works audits, value for money audits, special audits, and forensic investigations.

The Auditor-General is unable to cope with the expanded scope due to limited budgetary allocations, resulting in a backlog. In addition, the adoption of thematic reporting and ISSAI-140 has heightened the need for additional resources.

The committee recommends that Shs 12.053 billion be provided to the OAG to enable it execute its expanded mandate.

Inadequate staff numbers

The committee was informed that the Office of the Auditor-General employs 605 staff out of the required 1,890. The limited staff numbers have impaired the office's ability to fully execute its mandate.

The committee recommends that Shs 10 billion be provided to reduce the staffing gaps in the institution in order for them to execute their mandate.

The Office of the Auditor-General also reported an aging fleet of vehicles. The committee recommends that Shs 7 billion be provided to procurement of field vehicles to replace the aging fleet.

Financial Intelligence Authority (FIA)

On implementation of strategic actions in preparation for the 2028 Mutual Evaluation of Uganda, Mr Speaker, you know that we have been on this grey list and got off. Now, we have a problem. We need to do something.

The committee was informed that the Financial Intelligence Authority plans to implement strategic actions in preparation for the 2028 mutual evaluation of Uganda. This is critical to permit adequate preparation towards the realisation of positive mutual evaluation results, to deter the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) listing Uganda again on the bad list.

The specific target actions relating to the regulatory and legal requirements, self-assessments, on-site activities and face-to-face meetings will require Shs 4.5 billion. The committee recommends that FIA be provided the money worth Shs 4.5 billion to undertake the necessary actions in preparation for the 2028 meeting, in order to keep Uganda off the FATF grey list.

Committee on Physical Infrastructure

Vote 016: Ministry of Works and Transport

On the reduction in the national roads budget, the committee noted that the National Roads Maintenance and Construction Department budget is projected to reduce by 12 per cent (about Shs 301 billion) from Shs 2,502.7 billion to 2,201.7 billion in the coming budget.

The committee was informed that the projected reduction of the National Roads Maintenance and Construction Department budget by 12 per cent will have significant adverse implications across maintenance, rehabilitation, and upgrading of interventions as specified in the budget.

- a) There is also further deferment of periodic maintenance and expansion of backlogs.
- b) There is a slackening implementation of ongoing rehabilitation projects.
- c) There is a scaling back of planned rehabilitation and upgrading of some works. These are challenges.
- d) There is a shift from preventive to reactive maintenance regimes.
- e) There is increased contractual and financial exposure.
- f) There is a deterioration in road safety.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, the committee further recommends that reinstatement of the national roads budget by Shs 301 billion towards national roads is needed in order to mitigate the resultant factors that are costlier in the long run, as listed above.

On road safety:

- a) The committee notes that the Government has in place a comprehensive action plan geared towards road safety improvement in the country, although enforcement is lacking. Hence, the recommendation that the Government prioritizes enforcement as outlined in its National Safety Plan, as it will go a long way in reducing road fatalities and other resultant factors, apart from collecting more revenue from errant persons.
- b) The Government should also gradually increase allocations towards road safety interventions.
- c) The Government should also allocate Shs 1.7 billion for the recruitment of staff under the Motor Vehicle Inspection (MVIS)

The delayed upgrade of Isingiro-Mutukula Road

There is that concern - the Isingiro-Mutukula Road corridor is among many other roads.

It is 135 kilometres from Rakai through Isingiro District, Mutukula and crossing into Tanzania.

The committee, therefore, recommends that Government fast-tracks upgrading of Isingiro-Kigarama-Kashumba-Kashese-Mutukula Road, Nakapiripirit-Amudat Road, and Namalu-Lolachat-Lokapel- Nabilatuk Road as specified in the resource envelope, which was got recently from the Islamic Development Bank.

The committee also notes that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) signed a country engagement framework for Uganda for the period 2025 to 2027 to support economic resilience and sustainable human development.

The IsDB group allocated a resource envelope of \$800 million for the three-year duration for this Critical Economic Function (CEF).

The major projects to be funded include the ones I have mentioned, that is upgrading Nakapiripirit-Amudat and Namalu-Lolachat-Lokapel- Nabilatuk Road and Isingiro-Kigarama-Kashumba-Kashese- Tanzania border/Mutukula Road.

Committee on Presidential Affairs
Vote 001: Office of the President

Constrain the operation of the Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation.

The committee recommends that Shs 30 billion be identified and allocated to Vote 001 to facilitate the acquisition of modern equipment to enable the Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation to align with modern technological and production standards.

Vote 002: State House

Inadequate budget provision for the wage expenditure category

The committee recommends that Shs 4.28 billion be allocated to Vote 002: State House, to provide for the wage shortfall in the Financial Year 2026/2027.

Support to the graduates of the skilling programme

Mr Speaker, we know the skilling hubs across the country, but most of those people who go to the skilling hubs come without any support. Therefore, the committee recommends that Shs 140 billion be allocated to State House to facilitate the setup of one common user facility per zone for these trainees.

Vote 107: Uganda AIDS Commission

Intervention to reduce HIV and new infections in Uganda

The committee recommends that Shs 6 billion is needed and be provided to Vote 107 to facilitate scaling up of the HIV communication campaign and research against HIV.

Establishment of HIV and AIDS coordination zonal offices

The committee recommends that Shs 3 billion be provided to Vote 107 to enable Uganda AIDS Commission establish the six additional regional offices so as to take preventative measures on HIV spread.

Vote 159: External Security Organisation (ESO)

Coordination of external intelligence management

The committee recommends that Shs 12 billion be provided to enable ESO to efficiently and effectively maintain foreign diplomatic stations, foreign strategic areas of interest and field stations.

Construction of ESO headquarters

The committee recommends that Shs 32.55 billion be provided to Vote 159 to kick start the construction of ESO headquarters.

Vote 167: Science, Technology and Innovation
The committee recommends that Shs 10 billion earlier earmarked for sericulture interventions

implemented by TRIDI be maintained for the same purpose for 2026/27.

Vote 004: Defence and Veteran Affairs

There is a shortfall in foodstuffs. The committee recommends that the required Shs 112.2 billion should be given priority in the coming budget to prevent the need for supplementary allocations during the budget implementation.

Vote 120: Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control (DCIC)

Border automation systems

The committee recommends that Shs 1.02 billion be given to DCIC in the Financial Year 2026/2027, aiming to boost efficiency and revenue at all our border service points.

Vote 144: Uganda Police Force

Uganda Police Force wage bill

The committee recommends allocating an additional Shs 28.016 billion to the Uganda Police Force wage bill for Financial Year 2026/2027 to cover salaries for the 10,000 Probationer Police Constables (PPCs) recruited last year.

Vote 145: Uganda Prisons Service

Uganda Prisons Service needs relocation of prisons headquarters.

The committee recommends that Uganda Prisons Service be provided Shs 32.56 billion to construct a new prison facility at its land in Luzira. We need our building back.

Vote 135: Directorate of Government Analytical Laboratory (DGAL)

Operationalisation of DGAL regional laboratories

The committee recommends an additional Shs 1 billion to construct a regional forensic laboratory in Hoima and operationalise the regional forensic lab over the medium term.

There is also need for modern scientific equipment, which needs Shs 1.8 billion for the maintenance of scientific equipment during the Financial Year 2026/2027.

The Directorate of Government Analytical Laboratories also needs laboratory reagents, chemicals and consumables worth Shs 5.4 billion for the procurement of these reagents. The committee recommends that this money be provided.

This directorate also needs money for staff training worth Shs 540 million. The committee recommends the same.

The laboratory needs Shs 650 million for accreditation internationally.

Let us go to the Ministry of Health.

Committee on Health.

Vote 014: Ministry of Health

Operationalisation budgets

A number of public health facilities were upgraded to new statuses but there was no equivalent increment in their budgets. The committee therefore recommends that Shs 20 billion be provided for the operational costs for 300 road ambulances and 14 boat ambulances that were given across the country.

Equipment and maintenance costs

Inadequate funds for servicing and maintenance of medical equipment and other equipment in health facilities. As a result, hospitals and health centres often have idle and non-functional diagnostic, oxygen and life-saving equipment due to a lack of maintenance contracts, spare parts, utilities, biomedical engineers and so on.

The committee recommends that Shs 2.1 billion be provided for the procurement and installation of ultrasound scan machines in 84 public health centres IV at a cost of Shs 25 million each.

Human resources for health

Mr Speaker, inadequate human resources for health at different levels due to inadequate wages, recruitment delays, and failure to attract some cadres, which affects service delivery. The committee recommends that this coming financial year, Shs 132.6 billion be provided for the recruitment of at least 16,963 staff in the Financial Year 2026/2027 in various public health facilities, to increase the staffing level to at least 45 per cent.

Operationalisation of the organ transplant

Funds are required to support the organ transplant programme: pre-transplant, transplant and post-transplant services in the country. The committee recommends that Shs 8.598 billion be provided to operationalise the organ transplant activities since we now have the facilities here, and an additional Shs 7.4 billion for the organ donation and transplant council.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable chairperson, we have this report that you are reading. I think it is important for Members to have time for debate because the report is available.

Honourable chairperson, what you are presenting is a wish list. Otherwise, from here, we are going to issue the second Budget Call Circular. Then, get the ministerial policy statements, which again will come back to the committee. At that level, the finance minister will have captured maybe additional financing if they get the resource envelope, from your recommendations. From there, they will bring the budget estimates by 1 April.

Honourable members, we requested the finance minister to bring the budget estimates and tax Bills much earlier so we can scrutinise them. Since we already went through all this, I think we'd better open up the debate so that Members can discuss the critical areas. For now, let me allow the chairperson to conclude this. Honourable members, we also have a minority report, and then we shall debate.

MR ACHIA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me a minute to sit down. I needed it.

Committee on Environment and Natural Resources -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, I said, “conclude”.

MR ACHIA: Oh!

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. Conclude so we debate because we have the report. The whole report will be captured on the *Hansard* for record purposes.

MR ACHIA: Mr Speaker, in conclusion, from the debates across the different submissions from the different committees, what was really important was the question of health, the question of rural electrification, the question of water, the question of ambulances, and the question of primary and secondary schools. It is about service points.

Considering this Budget Framework Paper, I think, colleagues, we need to pay attention to points that provide services to our people, especially water, electricity, roads, and health facilities. If we can do something about health and education, then we will have done something that our people sent us to do in this House.

Mr Speaker, I would like to conclude by saying that the committee recommends that this august House adopt the recommendations highlighted in this report and consequently approves the Budget Framework Paper (BFP) for the Financial 2026/2027 to 2030/2031 with amendments containing a summary of additional funding requirements in annex one, annex two, and annex three. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable chairperson. I have been following up with the committee; Hon. Isiagi and team have been working in overdrive. I also know that all sectoral committees worked on a public holiday; they even worked on Sundays.

Therefore, I really want to appreciate you, honourable colleagues, for the concentration and the time you have put in to catch up with the requirements of the law.

Honourable members, we have a minority report. Hon. Ssemujju, please, if you can also summarise it.

4.18

MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mine is not very big. The Budget Framework Paper and the main report have most of the issues. We have only disagreed on what to do with them. I will straightaway go to compliance.

Mr Speaker, Section 8(3) of the Public Finance Management Act states that “*The Minister shall, for each financial year, prepare a Budget Framework Paper which shall be consistent with the National Development Plan and with the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility*”. Consistency with the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility and the National Development Plan is a legal requirement that even this Parliament cannot waive.

One of the fiscal rules in the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility is reduction of public debt to below 50 per cent of GDP in nominal terms by the Financial Year 2025/2026.

Mr Speaker, you have been presented with Shs 69 trillion proposed budget, which of course, all of you know will keep rising to the final day of appropriation. Revenue collection is projected at Shs 40 trillion and the rest of the money, Shs 28 trillion will be borrowed from domestic and external sources. The proposal to borrow is captured on page 23 of the Budget Framework Paper. The amount to be borrowed is nearly 40 per cent of the budget.

Mr Speaker, if you approve the Budget Framework Paper, which essentially is a draft budget, it means you have authorised the Government to borrow the sums captured in the draft.

The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the mover of this motion is warning you that by approving the Budget Framework Paper, you are actually authorising them to breach the law. Their warning is captured on page 26 of the BFP. Mr Speaker, this is what they are saying. “For instance, the share of the public debt to GDP is projected to surpass the 50 per cent target for the Financial Year 2025/2026, and the ratio of domestic debt interest payment to total revenue is also projected to exceed the 12.5 per cent benchmark. Additionally, the targets on fiscal deficit and revenue growth are also likely to be missed”.

Mr Speaker, the reason these rules exist is to ensure the country’s macroeconomic stability. This is like a hump in a road whose aim is to physically stop reckless drivers from over speeding. The law wants to stop the NRM Government from reckless spending.

Mr Speaker, therefore, you cannot proceed with this BFP unless the Public Finance Management Act and the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility is amended or both. And it is not only us Parliament who are required to adhere to the law. Section 5 of the Public Finance Management Act says, “Cabinet shall, in making decisions with implications on public finances, or in determining, formulating, and implementing Government policies as well as in performing any other functions conferred on it by this or any other Act, adhere to the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility and other requirements.”

Mr Speaker, Section 6 of the Public Finance Management Act provides circumstances under which we may deviate from the objectives in the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility. They include natural disaster, an unanticipated severe economic shock, or any other significant unforeseen event that cannot be funded from the Contingency Fund. This is done with the approval of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I am asking: is Parliament being given the right GDP figures? Schedule 3 of the Public Finance Management Act sets out

areas the BFP or the draft budget must address. One of these areas is the average and year-end gross domestic product figures. Sharing the right GDP figures with Parliament is a legal requirement.

Just to refresh the mind of honourable members, GDP means the monetary value of goods and services produced in a year. It is these goods and services that we will tax to raise revenue to finance the budget. You must, therefore, have the right GDP figures at all times to determine how much borrowing you are going to authorise and the right revenue collection projection.

Mr Speaker, in the BFP, the GDP figure is not explicitly stated. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is stated in the Budget Framework Paper on page 15 as Shs 251 trillion - that is what the minister said - which is an increase from Shs 202 trillion in last year’s BFP.

Mr Speaker, in his written submission to the Budget Committee dated January 20th, the Minister of State for Finance, Planning and Economic Development (General Duties), Hon. Musasizi, states on page 2 that GDP is estimated to grow, to Shs 251 trillion. The GDP figure given by Hon. Musasizi is just a forecast. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) puts the GDP at Shs 226 trillion as of last year.

Mr Speaker, when you calculate the debt to GDP ratio of 51 per cent given on page 20 of the Budget Framework Paper, it gives you Shs 226 trillion as Uganda’s GDP, which is \$63 billion. It is, therefore, wrong for the finance ministry to give Shs 251 trillion, which is a forecast, as the GDP figure.

Mr Speaker, there is always a desire by the NRM leaders to exaggerate the country’s growth, which is the reason they recalculate the GDP unnecessarily.

Conflicting Public Debt Figures

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development gives the total public debt figure as Shs 116 trillion, which is \$32 billion, on page 20. This, the finance ministry

says, is an increase from Shs 94.7 trillion, which is \$26 billion, translating into a debt-to-GDP ratio of 51 per cent. This debt-to-GDP figure is calculated using the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) Shs 226 trillion, what they give in the Budget Framework Paper, as the true GDP figure. Just for emphasis, the stock of public debt is Shs 116 trillion, and GDP is Shs 226 trillion. Those are the figures that the finance ministry is using.

However, the Bank of Uganda, in its December 2025 State of the Economy report on page 10, puts public debt at Shs 124 trillion, translating to a 54.8 per cent Debt-to-GDP ratio. You can see the trick here. You lower the figure of public debt and exaggerate GDP to present a lower debt-to-GDP ratio. Then you ask Parliament to authorise more borrowing on the pretext of a sustained public debt stock.

Mr Speaker, public debt is plunging Uganda into a crisis. The NRM Government plans to borrow over Shs 18.5 trillion from the domestic market (commercial banks) to finance the budget. The Shs 8.9 trillion will be new loans to finance the budget, and Shs 9.6 trillion to roll over maturing debt. The Central Bank is concerned with the domestic debt to private sector credit. By over-borrowing from commercial banks, the NRM Government is crowding out the private sector.

The concern of the Bank of Uganda is captured on page 10 of their December State of the Economy report. If you look at the private credit now, I think it is about Shs 21 trillion, and the Government is borrowing sometimes up to Shs 19 trillion. You are competing with the citizens that you want to empower; you remove all the money, and they have nothing. Overborrowing from commercial banks starves the private sector, which is employing more than 85 per cent of the population.

Ratio of interest to revenue collection

One of the fiscal rules in the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility is the reduction of total domestic debt interest payment to revenue (excluding

grants) to 12.5 per cent. The Government plans to spend Shs 28.6 trillion on debt servicing next financial year, of which Shs 12.7 trillion is interest payment. The interest payment for the domestic debt is Shs 10.7 trillion, which is 26.7 per cent of the projected Shs 40 trillion revenue collection.

The target is 12 per cent, but you are going to pay interest of Shs 26 per cent. This is a matter of law. The rule in the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility is the reduction of interest payments on domestic debt to 12.5 per cent of revenue. The Budget Framework Paper interest payment will instead rise to 26 per cent. I hope Parliament will resist this.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development also agrees that such an elevated debt service burden shrinks fiscal space, leaving fewer resources available for discretionary spending in high-multiplier, growth-enhancing sectors. The committee noted that.

Proposals in the Budget Framework Paper offend even common sense. If you look at page 19 of the Budget Framework Paper, the NRM government minister is praising here, wants to borrow from external sources Shs 10 trillion to finance various projects. Certainly, that will increase our debt stock as a country and will violate the rules we set ourselves out in the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility. The question is, have we utilised the numerous loans we have contracted to finance various projects for us to contract more? The answer is a big no.

I want to thank the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. They have been very generous with information. If you read a July 2025 report on the performance of Externally Funded Projects, you will know why we have remained poor. You will also know the dangers of employing old people in critical offices knowing their biological inadequacies. When people grow old, every part of their body slows down naturally. Even the thinking slows down. They begin to think in instalments. *(Laughter)*

Many of the projects for which we have borrowed gross sums of money are either behind schedule or have completely stagnated. Here we are being asked to recklessly approve further borrowing.

I now turn to the ministry of finance report on externally funded projects. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has been monitoring performance of these projects and done some reports. The latest report samples 66 externally-funded projects, as the table below illustrates. We have borrowed money to finance projects. Even in this budget, they are saying we should borrow another Shs 10 trillion. But look at the table.

The projects in Agro-Industrialisation; seven projects here, only two have been completed. One is on track, others behind schedule.

Digital Transformation: two projects, one on track.

Human Capital Development: 14 projects, only one completed, one on track, 12 are behind schedule.

Integrated Transport Infrastructure and Services: 12 projects for which we have borrowed money, only two completed, one on track, 18 behind schedule.

I do not need to go on, but the total below is that you have a total of 66 projects sampled by the finance ministry. Only six are completed, five are on track, 55 of these projects are behind schedule, including the ones that you will see that have stagnated.

I will give a list here. I will be very brief because this is not my list, it is a list of Hon. Musasizi: Kampala-Jinja Expressway. We borrowed money to do this road. Let me go to the last line. This is how the finance ministry has assessed this. The physical progress of the project is zero. Money borrowed; progress is zero. They are saying let us borrow more. That is what is in the Budget Framework Paper.

Busega-Mpigi Expressway. Construction is at 46 per cent. This road was supposed to have been completed years ago. They are at 46 per cent. Part of the reason you will see, they are saying they do not have counter-funding, and then they are saying let us borrow and begin more projects. That is why I said you even offend common sense.

Entebbe Airport Rehabilitation. This one, there is progress but the point is because of the delays, we are now required to pay to the contractor the total sum of \$34.9 million because we delayed. The contractor says you delayed here and here, pay me money. Even this one, although progressing, it was never delivered on time.

The Development of the New Bukasa Port Project. This one has not started at all, still in the preliminary.

Kampala Flyover Construction. The Finance ministry says it has stagnated.

Kampala City Roads Rehabilitation Project. They are now revising it. Time elapsed. They are revising it, yet you know each revision comes with money.

Multinational Kapchorwa-Suam-Kitale and Eldoret Bypass Road Project. This one has almost been completed but after a delay.

Kyenjonjo-Hoima-Masindi-Kigumba Road. The project has not been completed; more money is needed.

Multinational Lake Victoria Maritime Communication and Transport Project. Here, the overall progress is from 37 per cent by the end of April. All these projects have delayed, no counter-funding, they are contracting more.

Luweero-Butalangu Road. Work is at 67 per cent. A road that they started nearly 10 years ago, they have not completed a short stretch.

Moyo-Yumbe-Koboko Road Project, and you keep asking why the President repeat these roads in every budget? The progress, as you have seen, on some projects, is zero. Every

year he repeats, you think the Government is working.

Namagumba-Budadiri-Nalugugu Road Project. The progress of the project was at 4 per cent against a plan of 4.3 per cent. This one is still in its infancy.

The North Eastern Road Corridor Asset Management Project. Maybe I do not have to read each and every project that is here, but you need Members to interact with these projects and I am saying in this minority report, as I try to conclude, that we borrow money to do projects for which we pay a lot of money in interest, but we never complete the work. Part of the reason is that there is no counterpart funding. Anyone who is sensible would not be contracting more loans when they do not have counter funding to finish the ones that they have undertaken.

You will see there is one here for the private sector - I think I will stop with that one - which is project 22: Investment for Industrial Transformation and Employment Project. The Investment for Industrial Transformation and Employment is a collaborative programme between the Government of Uganda, represented by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Bank of Uganda, the private sector and development partners.

We borrowed \$218 million for this project. The idea was that the project would start in 2022 and end in 2027. However, due to delays in approval, the project effectiveness date was 13 November 2023 and the closing date is 31 January 2027.

The project targeted 140,000 medium, small and macro enterprises and 120,000 refugees. Of these, at least 40,000 were expected to be women-led macro enterprises. The larger-sized firms will also benefit from the intervention.

The overall project performance was poor, at approximately 0.3 per cent and significantly behind schedule. Even when you want to borrow money to help companies that are

employing people, you do not utilise it and then you come to Parliament to say: "Can we borrow more?" I do not know, but maybe Hon. Musasizi enjoys the word "borrowing". If he ever brings a report that does not have the word "borrowing", he will feel very bad.

You have the Electricity Access Scale-Up Project with the same problem. The upgrade of health centres II to III has the same problem; it is behind schedule. Money was borrowed for Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project, but the project is not making progress. I am saying in this report: do not allow them to borrow until they have completed and made progress on these ones, or else, you will be enlarging the list. You borrow money, you pay.

When you look at the report on loans, you will discover that we pay commitment fees on money unutilised, which money we need to do other things that are being listed here -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju, can you read the report?

MR SSEMUJJU: If I read the report, I will delay because I am now concluding. If you want me to, Mr Speaker, I can read the report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you had read it, you would have already concluded.

MR SSEMUJJU: I am concluding now. *(Laughter)* I am on page 15, which is the last one, on the rate of employment and unemployment. The committee notes that this information is not given, yet it is a requirement by the law.

One of the economic variables the Budget Framework Paper is supposed to address is the rate of employment and unemployment in the country. This is what schedule 3 of the law demands.

Without providing any basis, the ministry of finance states, on page 16 of the framework paper, that one of the macroeconomic objectives of the Government, next financial year, is to increase the stock of new jobs to

about 800,000. The figure of how many jobs they created this or last year is not given; they are just throwing figures around.

The target of the Government, in the NDP III, was to create 512,000 jobs annually. Like other NRM targets, this was never met. They have maybe only met the one of staying in power. The National Planning Authority, in an Employment and Skills Status Report 2022, reported that the yearly net job creation averaged 320,000 against a target of half a million. This is too little, considering that every year, 700,000 Ugandans join the job market.

If you look at the figures of PAYE and NSSF, there are just about 2.5 million formal jobs, which numbers keep fluctuating. The public sector, as you are aware, employs just 400,000 and the rest are in the private sector.

The National Planning Authority estimates 15.8 million to be of working age and 13 million of these are in the private sector. The UBOS census report puts the figure of the working age, going by the Labour Policy of 2011, to about 24 million.

The planning authority says the quality of jobs in Uganda remains low, with 78 per cent of the labour force engaged in vulnerable employment, characterised by low pay and job insecurity.

Uganda, according to NPA and World Bank reports, has the lowest business survival rate in the world. Only one out of four firms remain operational after the first year of existence. This is what the budget must address, but it is being mentioned in passing, in the usual NRM business-as-usual casual manner.

Younger people need jobs and you cannot respond to this demand by violence and prison. Hundreds demanding quality life have been brutalised and imprisoned during this electoral period. Mr Speaker, we have been told that Sam Mugumya is being held by the army and is very sick. We are not even sure if he has not died. So, this is the response of the NRM. When people are demanding for work, prison.

The NPA notes that while official figures show that unemployment reduced from 11 per cent to 9 per cent and 8.8 per cent, in absolute terms, underemployment and unemployment persist as a result of many Ugandans engaged in vulnerable employment, which is often characterised by low productivity. That is why our girls, mainly, are being trafficked to the Middle East to work as housemaids. The boys who remain here are being marched to Luzira, Kitalya and Kigo for disturbing the *jajjas*.

The World Bank, in its July 2025 Human Capital Development and Growth Review, says Uganda is failing to harness 61 per cent of its human capital for socioeconomic development.

Mr Speaker, I am only emphasising the information which Hon. Musasizi has given – and I thank him – and which the committee has also given, but they are shying away and saying that regardless of the non-compliance, please, approve the Budget Framework Paper. These are the dangers that you face.

I ask you, honourable members, to reject this framework paper, so that they go and redo it, first, to comply with the law and secondly, to comply with common sense. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable Shadow Minister. I invite the minister for finance, if he has any responses he would like to make, which can guide us during debate.

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the majority members of the Budget committee and the other sectoral committees for the deep analysis they have done on our Budget Framework Paper. I also wish to thank Hon. Ssemujju, the Shadow Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, for strengthening and emphasising some of the points which we made in our report.

It is true that our public debt is projected to go beyond the 50 per cent minimum target, but this is not a problem. Why? It is because our numbers continue to show that our debt

obligations are manageable now and in the long term. We have not failed to pay on our commitment as and when it falls due.

Mr Speaker, on debt, the focus of all of us should be: what are we borrowing for? If we are borrowing to invest in the economy, there is no problem. If we are borrowing to grow our GDP, there is no problem. It becomes a problem when we are borrowing for luxury. That is the borrowing we should all be concerned about.

On the GDP numbers, our source of information is UBOS. Mr Speaker, we should trust the authorities we put in charge of these numbers. If we come here and begin questioning the numbers that UBOS has given us on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), then which other authority will we rely on?

On debt numbers, our difference with the Bank of Uganda (BOU) is mainly on the timing. Whereas we report as per June, sometimes BOU captures as per December. This creates the small variance you see, like now you are seeing 116 by us and 124 by BOU. If we go into June of 2026, you will see our number capturing what BOU has captured.

The charter of fiscal responsibility is our guiding tool, together with the National Development Plan (NDP) and the manifesto. However, consistency does not mean exactness. Consistency means whatever you are doing should be close to the guiding principles. When you deviate from the charter this year, as long as you commit that within a specific period, you will come back to the charter, this explanation is acceptable.

Therefore, my friend, Hon. Ssemujju, I wish to invite you to look at these things squarely. We have been together in this. I am going to miss you because you have been keeping me awake. Sometimes you go deeper into inviting me to do a deeper analysis of some of these things. However, I invite you to always look at these matters squarely.

Lastly, on the projects, yes, we have a number of projects which we have borrowed for and that have not taken off. But where have we

come from? In 2012, the situation which was there - some of you honourable colleagues who have been here with us know that we would borrow for a project even when there is no appraisal of feasibility study being done. You find Parliament approving funding for a project where no process has taken place.

However, now, I wish to inform the House that for a project to come here, it must pass through our Public Investment Management System (PIMS) process. We are now saying that where there is no money for counterpart funding - (*Interruptions*) - no, I am not accusing Parliament, I am accusing both of us. I am saying that this used to happen previously.

However, for now, what have we done? We have subjected rigorous approvals, PIMS process, and also for a project to succeed, we must confirm that there is counterpart funding in the budget.

Honourable colleagues, I am sure this is why most of our stakeholders come to lobby you. Why is our project not moving? Why is this and that? There are now serious restrictions. Going forward, I commit that this weakness of delayed projects will not continue happening.

I want to use the example of the Busega-Mpigi Road. This is one of the projects I found in the ministry when the borrowing had been done. You approve a request for borrowing, no feasibility study has been done, nobody has even gone on the ground to assess where the road is going to pass, and by the time we go on the ground, we find that the cost, which was initially borrowed, is not even half of what is required. You ideally need another amount amounting to 100 per cent or so.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, for clarification, I was part of the Committee on National Economy when we approved that loan. We went on the ground and we saw where the road was going to pass. I remember the committee was chaired by Hon. Syda Bbumba. I want to absolve myself. If the Government did not do its part, I want to tell you where the problem came from.

You told us, as the Government, that we will have around 14 kilometres of swamp, and we are going to build above the swamp because we were concerned about environmental degradation. I had Hon. Alex Byarugaba, Hon. Ariko, and Hon. Okupa; we were all members of that committee. We asked many difficult questions, and they presented the feasibility study. Eng. Patrick Muleme presented a full design, and we spent days. We had a robust debate here because Hon. Katuntu - I remember when he was talking about the cost of the road.

The problem came when they got to the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA), changed the design and decided to backfill the swamp. They had told us in the design that they had included connecting to the Entebbe Expressway and the bypass. In the design they gave the contractor, there was no connection to the expressway.

Therefore, what is important, honourable minister, and why I brought this up, is that it is very important for you to inform Government agencies that what you bring to Parliament for approval is what should be implemented. Otherwise, the project ended up costing more than double. I just wanted that to go on record. Otherwise, I could not sit on a committee that would approve a loan where there was no feasibility study.

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for that institutional memory. However, we have struggled to correct those past mistakes. *(Interruptions)* - No, there is nothing. The Speaker was enhancing my submission. *(Laughter)* Mr Speaker, I wish to inform the House that all these mistakes have been corrected, and now we are at the point of take-off of the Busega-Mpigi project.

On the unemployment rate, this is a big concern to all of us as Ugandans and representatives of the people, but the question of focus should be, "Where are these jobs?" The jobs are mainly in Agro-industrialisation, Tourism development, Mineral development, and Science, Technology & Innovation (ATMS). When you look at the priorities I highlighted in my motion, I am

requesting Parliament to appropriate money in these key areas, which bring jobs to the people of Uganda. I think this is what we should be most concerned about. I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, we are going to have a debate on the report because the reports are together. We have seen the issues raised by Hon. Ssemujju; consistency with the requirements of the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility. I think we are going to get a new charter soon. Isn't it? The three months after?

MR MUSASIZI: Yes. Mr Speaker, I wish to inform the House that we are preparing a new charter. It will be coming before this House is prorogued.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think that is three months after the election, as per the law. We are going to ensure that this is followed.

Honourable minister, on the issue of deviation, we need to agree. Maybe you can always engage with colleagues - even off this platform - on these matters. For example, when you look at Section 7 of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) on deviation, we had COVID-19, which hit you hard and could have been one of the reasons for you to revise the charter. The moment we keep interacting, even off here, some of the deviations - because some of the pressures you are facing were due to natural disasters and unforeseen circumstances. Then, we can come here, debate and see how best we can move.

However, on the issue of loans, honourable colleagues and honourable minister, in the budget, we shall need more clarity and commitments. We shall see in the ministerial policy statement and in the budget estimates the commitments you make on counterpart funding. This is because the Committee on National Economy always gets the commitment in writing but the money is not in.

Therefore, when we are scrutinising the budget, honourable Chairperson of the Budget Committee, we shall need to focus much on

counterpart funding, but also the completion of the projects.

Honourable minister, also, the issue of land acquisition before taking off of these projects - because it is a very big concern. Someone is given - they commence the project when land is not available. One says, "I mobilised it so I need \$30 million because my equipment was idle." I think you need to be much stronger on that.

Otherwise, honourable colleagues, I would like to guide our debate because the Budget Framework Paper is not about the road that is not in your constituency. It is not about the classroom that has not yet been finished. No, it is linking national development objectives to the proposed expenditure in a national framework manner, not just your constituency. The moment we take that route, it will be much easier.

Chairperson of the Budget Committee, I do not know how we shall narrow down because everything that was captured when I was reading though the report seems to reflect nearly over Shs 200 trillion of unfunded priority. Hence, we are throwing what the agencies had thrown at the ministry - the ministry said, my resource envelope is Shs 69 trillion, and we are throwing it back again.

You need to guide the committee to reduce at this level of the Budget Framework Paper. We do not capture whatever they brought as unfunded. Chairperson, Budget Committee, did you want to comment on that and then we continue with the debate?

Lord Mayor-elect, we welcome you - *(Laughter)* - honourable colleague. We shall support you from here to make our city work. *(Applause)*

4.58

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON BUDGET (Mr Patrick Opolot-Isiagi):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. We only have these issues because of the way we do the budget, but I would like us to agree with our colleagues in the sector committees not to receive the

budgets from the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) without cost work plans.

I agree that there is a lot of redundant money within the budgets, which cannot be justified. However, we now need to drill down to the last shilling. By all these MDAs providing cost work plans, you will find the money being abandoned. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairman, Budget Committee, can I guide this way? That you hold a meeting as the Chairman of the Budget Committee with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and his team - He will determine who to come with - and chairpersons of committees to agree on how you are going to process this budget from the Ministerial Policy Statements so that we make your work easy? Would it help?

MR OPOLOT-ISIAGI: Yes, most obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, arrange and coordinate with all chairpersons since they are members of your committee. You can have an in-house meeting. Yes, Hon. Teira?

5.00

MR JOHN TEIRA (NRM, Bugabula County North, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On that matter, there is an unsettled debate, which could probably guide this House. We have had issues on what amounts to budgeting and appropriation.

At every time on the request of cost work plans, the response from the ministry for finance, usually the PS/ST, is that we are going into budgeting and not appropriation. Therefore, we have not settled that discussion between the technical team of the ministry for finance and this institution. That is why, in the last budgeting cycle, we had issues which led to the challenges we had on the processing of the budget.

It is my humble prayer that we have that matter settled, appropriation and budgeting *vis-à-vis* the responsibility of the House. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Where is the problem? This is because appropriation is what we do on the Table - here on the final day. Appropriation is a law, where we are passing the Appropriation Bill, which has very clear figures that would say go here or there. However, now, the process to reach those final figures that will go into the Appropriation Bill that we will consider here on the Table is what is very critical.

Honourable minister, isn't what Hon. Teira is raising an issue which you can guide your technical people to reconcile with our committee?

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, I do not know what Hon. Teira is trying to drive at, but as far as we are concerned, we have no problem with this process at the finance ministry. It is a consultative process between Parliament and the ministry for finance and we have always agreed by consensus on these issues.

That is why even in the House, unlike in the previous - I remember in the Ninth Parliament, there are times when we would have a lot of back and forth, even to the extent of voting on the budget. Here, we always harmonise and come when we have really synchronised.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, as far as I am concerned, I do not know what the Chairperson of the Budget Committee and Members think, but from our side, as Finance, we really appreciate the working relationship on the budget with Parliament; both from the leadership and the committee members and all committees of the House, because we always consult each other in these processes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let all issues to do with the process be handled in that meeting between the leadership of the Budget Committee, the leadership of sector committees and the ministry for finance so that you go in-house, see where there are challenges, harmonise and come up with a budget and process that is acceptable to all of us. Thank you.

Honourable colleagues, the debate - Hon. Isaac, Hon. Enos, Dr Bhoka, Hon. Annet, Hon. Pacuto, Hon. Chemonges, Hon. Nakimwero. Take three minutes each.

5.04

MR ISAAC OTIMIGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Chairperson of the Budget Committee for the presentation of this initial Budget paper.

I acknowledge and appreciate the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Of course, we can see he has presented the budget, the National Budget Framework Paper, which is less about Shs 2.9 trillion to the 2025-2026 budget of Shs 72 trillion. That means they are acknowledging what we always call for in this Parliament; a reduction in expenditure.

However, I hope the number will not increase by the time we reach the final budget estimates. There is the issue of water. Water is indeed a cornerstone to national development. It is a driver in terms of health, and in terms of national development. Therefore, what we have done in this Parliament is that in the beginning we still had over 20,000 villages not connected to safe water.

It is sad that even at this point, there is not much emphasis being made in terms of providing safe water to most of our communities, despite water being one of the major, crucial drivers in terms of health and ensuring that we have safe water for our areas. Most of our villages are still not connected.

Therefore, I hope this is a matter that can be taken up very seriously in the next budget cycle. It is a bit saddening that the money for the ministry of works in terms of maintenance has been reduced by about 12 per cent. This is a bit sad because one, we know very well what is happening on most of our roads. The condition of our roads needs a lot of money and if right now we are starting to see reduction in the budget which is supposed to be used for maintaining our roads, it is something we need to actually look at very clearly.

Mr Speaker, I also think that it is crucial for the entities, especially for the Ministry of Works and Transport, that we ensure that the money which comes for maintenance is increased. We are focusing on new roads but forgetting the already existing ones. So for every three steps we move forward, we move backwards. We should try to make sure we have enough money for the maintenance of our roads.

In terms of electricity, this is another key in the national development programme and as the Chairperson of the Budget Committee informed us, the issue of rural electrification is something that has always come up every year regarding the money.

Ever since we closed the rural electrification company, things have stopped going right in our rural settings. I hope something comes out clearly from the finance ministry regarding what plans they have in making sure that our sub-counties in the villages that are not yet connected to electricity can be connected.

In order to improve PDM as a national development programme, we need access to electricity in our rural areas so that we have enough small-scale factories coming in.

Mr Speaker, I also noticed that in the ministry of education's Vote, the money for enhancing the salaries of arts teachers - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

5.07

MR ENOS ASIIMWE (NRM, Kabula County, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team. Specifically, I support the motion that we pass the Budget Framework Paper.

However, I would like to get some clarification from the minister. On page six, the committee captures the allocative efficiency of the Budget Framework Paper. The policy preamble is very beautiful; it smartly addresses our policy direction. However, when it comes to allocation, it does not reflect the policy direction.

For example, they have preliminarily allocated Shs 84 billion to UDB from Shs 414 billion. I seek clarification from the honourable minister on what the reason could be.

Number two, we talk about the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility. It does not have a transitional period. The Public Finance Management Act lacks the transitional period because when you check - now we are going to pass the budget without the charter. The charter is going to come after the budget.

I am seeking clarification because some time ago, we had asked for amendment of the Act. Possibly we would have amended that Act to capture that transitional period. When do you plan to bring an amendment to the PFMA so that we deal with most of the loopholes there?

Number three, Mr Speaker, on page 18, they are talking about moving the poverty rate from 38 per cent to 33 per cent and that comes from the PDM intervention. Mr Speaker, when does the minister intend to bring us a review of the performance of the - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Were these three minutes?

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am seeking clarification from the minister about when we intend to have the review of the PDM to understand whether it is actually effective or not. We are adding in more money but we have not had any serious report or discussion on the performance of this programme.

Number four, the last question to the minister would be on- actually this should be to the Prime Minister, because on page 29, they are talking about project execution being affected by land acquisition. Some time ago, we mentioned having an amendment to the Land Act to help the Government deal with project execution, mostly for areas where people refuse to give way to projects. When shall we have this amendment brought to the House so that we can deal with this once and for all? Thank you so much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, but Hon. Enos, for the record, we have a charter. A charter is five years and when you go to Section 5 of the PFMA, the minister shall have not less than three months after the first sitting of the Parliament after a general election to bring a draft charter. This means that we are still in this current charter. Okay?

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: Mr Speaker, the same Act talks about the charter taking five years, being renewed every five years but when you look at the five years, it started with the budget of 2021/2022. So when you do the calculation, it actually ended with the last budget. The budget we are dealing with of 2026/2027 will come into effect before the charter. Actually that particular charter expired.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I did not perform well in mathematics, but is yours really - *(Laughter)*

Honourable, we have a charter and that is why it is designed that way. So you have discounted one year if you do five years, okay? Yes, we have a charter and we expect the minister, three months after the first sitting of Parliament, to bring a draft charter which we must process so it can guide the next budgeting cycle.

Hon. Didi, Hon. Nakimwero then I come back to Hon. Siraj.

5.12

MR GEORGE DIDI BHOKA (NRM, Obongi County, Obongi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to support the motion for approval of the Budget Framework Paper. I have three observations.

Observation number one is related to the performance of externally financed projects. Whereas on the one hand we blame ourselves, the ministries, departments, agencies and Parliament, on the other hand, there are certain practices within the donor conditions that constrain us. A case in point is the World Bank-funded projects.

An example is the Uganda electricity scale-up project that was supposed to extend power to a number of communities that have not been connected. A case in point is Obongi constituency where the project started two to three years ago and a resettlement action plan has to be approved by the bank. The ministry is waiting for that approval from the bank, which to me is micromanagement. As Government, we need to sit down with our partners to review some of those micromanagement conditions.

Two, external financing to the humanitarian community has grossly reduced, especially in refugees hosting districts. This has resulted in laying off of many Ugandans in the social service delivery sector. Our schools and health facilities are understaffed because UNHCR, OPM, and many international and national organisations have laid off staff. We would like to see, in the Budget Framework Paper and the ministerial policy statement, the ultimate allocation of resources for wages to recruit staff who have been laid off or made redundant.

Last but not least, Mr Speaker, while the President was traversing the country, he made many pledges; for example, he promised a hospital for Obongi District. These are social contracts that should be considered in the annual work plan and budget, in the ministerial policy statements, and in the Budget Framework Papers that we look forward to. I thank you.

5.14

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, we would like an explanation of the targets we set for ourselves, especially in the charter versus the convenience at the moment because if we deviate from what we set out to do, it disturbs our thoughts.

Along those lines, we developed the National Development Plan IV, which set a number of targets but you find that most ministerial statements do not recognise these targets. We wonder what directs our concentration, submission, and allocation of resources.

Mr Speaker, compensation issues delay projects. We need to investigate landowners prior to project activities, especially in swamps. Nobody is supposed to have a title in swamps, but the moment a project is going to take place, ownership prevails, and new titles come up.

I wonder why they are heavily compensated, taking a lot of project money, and we end up losing on electricity and water distribution; several projects remain unfinished.

Mr Speaker, the issue of market access remains unresolved. We are trying to encourage our people to produce, but people are not certain of the income from what they produce. This is what makes our people very poor.

We stay here claiming that the GDP has improved, we are performing well, but the actual pockets of our people are empty and people are crying in absolute poverty. Why aren't these documents and observations tallying with the pockets of our people?

We need to explain this and it needs to come out very well in our submissions but based on the recently concluded campaigns, you can see that there was a lot of explanation on whether the government is for the people or not, based on the service deliveries – *(Member timed out.)*

5.18

MR SIRAJI EZAMA (NRM, Aringa County, Yumbe): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

The Budget Framework Paper emphasised the issue of employment opportunities and the agro-industry. Mr Speaker, we talked about how our youth have gone to the Middle East to find work. They could have easily been absorbed into the industries established in Uganda.

There are regions in Uganda where industries have not been built, yet people have given land for their construction. In West Nile, you will find that people have given land for industrial parks, and these lands have remained there for a long time unutilised.

Since the Budget Framework Paper has discussed the issue of agro-industrialisation, I will request that action be taken to ensure industries are located in areas where industrial parks are gazetted so that our youth are employed in those areas. That could be the point at which we provide employment opportunities for our youth. Thank you very much.

5.19

MS IRENE LINDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Fort Portal City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to seek clarification from the Minister of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development, especially regarding the conditions that have been set and affected project implementation.

A case in point is the Uganda Learning Acceleration Programme (ULEARN) where we approved a loan last year to rehabilitate traditional schools. There is a condition that these traditional schools must have titles. These schools have been in existence for more than 100 years, but the project cannot take off because the traditional schools sit on church land titles.

It is a very big problem. Now we are almost half a year in, and these schools may not benefit. I would like clarification to see what we can do. Otherwise, these conditions will continue affecting budget performance.

Second is the issue of stalled projects. There are bridges that have been constructed and are not completed. We have roads that have been under construction for the last seven years and have never been completed. Please, can we give these projects priority so we can complete the work? Thank you.

5.20

MS ANNET KATUSIIME (NRM, Woman Representative, Bushenyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to approve the Budget Framework Paper. However, permit me to raise an issue regarding abandoned electricity poles installed by the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) 10 years ago.

Last year, around this time, we were here and as the 11th Parliament, we unanimously agreed that we prioritise connecting the electricity poles to the grid across the country. Up to now, nothing has been done and we are not being brought up to speed.

Mr Speaker, during my campaign trail, voters raised pertinent questions about electricity and we told them that there is money for electricity in the budget and that the poles would be connected to the grid. However, I am surprised that electricity is nowhere to be seen in the Budget Framework Paper we are about to approve and yet again, the 2025-2026 financial year is coming to an end. We need the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development to bring us up to speed and provide an update on progress.

Mr Speaker, it is a very serious issue. We are failing to legislate and represent our people. Therefore, we need a very authentic response so that when we go back to our people, we actually also tell them what is going on. Otherwise, the situation is as bad as that. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Pacuto, Hon. Chemonges and then Dr Opio. Colleagues, I have finished this side. I have now moved to the other side.

5.22

MS JANE PACUTO (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to congratulate you and all other Members here who participated in the recent elections.

I want to commend the Committee on Budget for the good report and the minority report. In a special way, allow me to commend the managers of this country, especially those in charge of the economy, whereby in the BFP, it has been reported that there is a positive Balance of Payment arising from the great support that the Government has given and attention paid to coffee growing and gold.

I also want to commend the budget committee for recommending that there has to be a budget enhancement for the fishing sector to about Shs 48 billion.

Mr Speaker, I think that apart from coffee and gold, our next economic activity that can really even make our BOP much better is the fishing industry. I know that the Budget Committee has recommended Shs 48 billion, but having come from the fishing communities, I would like to persuade the House and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to increase the amount to about three times what the Budget Committee has reported. The fishing communities have gone through hell in the last five years and they are all waiting and looking forward to the budget for the next financial year to salvage them from where they have been.

Mr Speaker, I would like to comment on the Budget Committee's report where it is stated that the BFP is not consistent with the NDP IV. This implies that the planning for this country is not compatible with the strategic goals of this country. I, therefore, would like to - and this could be largely due to insufficient allocation to the National Planning Authority (NPA).

For that reason, Mr Speaker, I recommend that the ministry reconsiders strengthening NPA further so that our budgeting and planning are in tandem.

Mr Speaker, on the issue of wage bills, I want to support that - (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I had forgotten that Hon. Chemonges was supposed to be the next one, and then I come to Hon. Lucy Akello.

5.26

MR WILLIAM CHEMONGES (NRM, Kween County, Kween): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I would like to support the BFP, however with some recommendations or seek clarification. When you listen to the presentation, you feel that we are really on the right road but with the

experience of the four years I have been here, honourable minister, you know.

I have read and understood it, but we need clarification on education majorly. For example, the coding of primary schools. We have many parishes that do not have primary schools - many of them.

Then, on issues of water, you find we have districts with town councils. Personally, Kween District has three town councils without water. They should actually be closed.

Then, we have issues of power. This is a very serious issue. We have invested money in industrial skilling centres. We are now thinking about many other ways of creating jobs, like we talk about industrialisation. However, the issue of power - Even in the seed schools where we have invested money, you find we have computers, but we do not have power. We have health centre IIIs without power. For the last three years, we have been talking about power. We have gotten money from here, but Members, there is nothing like power in our areas.

Therefore, I want to say - this is where I almost agree with Hon. Ssemujju. For example, when he talked about roads, we have the Kapchorwa-Suam Road. They are saying the road is complete, but there are many components that came with the road that are not complete - the town council roads.

In my town council, that is Binyiny, we were given three kilometres of town council roads. They have only done one, and everybody is worried. They even prepared the roads that we had to be tarmacked.

Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity. I, and even Members, would be happy if such things were clarified. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Lucy Akello?

5.29

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to thank the committee and also the minority report. I want to start with what my colleague stated about the seed schools. I had actually noted it here. For some time, we have been talking about this and if we are talking about employment, just like you said, honourable minister, this is one area that would find many of our people employed. Unfortunately, the primary schools which were coded are not operational up to now.

Secondly, I would like to applaud you. The policy on SAGE was amended and the age was reduced to 65 years. That is really a plus and my people are very happy about this. I am also happy that it has been accompanied with some funding. I hope it goes up to the end.

Mr Speaker, our policy on health centres is very clear. Unfortunately, this is not being implemented. Many of our sub-counties in Uganda still do not have health centre IIIs. This should be also implemented.

Finally, Mr Speaker, if we are talking about agro-industrialisation, we cannot leave out the issue of our roads. I remember there is a time we sat here as Parliament the whole day and we were talking about the state of our roads. If I remember vividly, we talked about the machines which are missing. It is my wish that our BFP really captures this and also increases funding to the road sector, especially at district level. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Dr Opio. Honourable colleagues, I finished this side. You know, when we were starting, I picked colleagues from this side and then I went here. I am sorry.

5.31

DR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the report. Within this Budget Framework Paper, one of the key issues is the level of alignment with NDP IV. When you look at Table 1.18,

under NDP IV, it lists the core projects under NDP IV indicating the start date, the end date, and even the funding.

However, when you look at the report, there is no provision for some of these core projects. For example, the construction of the Karuma Bridge which connects us to South Sudan and even to Congo. Last year, we had serious issues on it and we were told the repairs will only be temporary. However, we do not have any provision for this core project. My request to the minister is to have this considered under the second budget call circular.

The second issue is that this budget is also an AFCON budget because it is the last budget before we host AFCON next year in June 2027. However, one of the critical infrastructure projects, the construction of the Corner Ayer-Corner Aboke-Bobi Road which is supposed to connect Gulu City to Lira City has not been considered. Again, I would like to request that that is considered in the second budget circular.

Last is the NRM manifesto. After approval of the NDP IV, there were new commitments that came up. For example, in Lango, Acholi and Teso, the issue of cattle restocking came up towards the campaign period. Whatever has been provided is not really substantial to address the commitments. Therefore, again, I appeal that let us have this aligned to some of those post-NDP IV commitments that came in during the campaign period so that there is full alignment with the National Resistance Movement (NRM) Manifesto, the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) requirements and the NDP IV. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssewungu and then Hon. Muruli Mukasa.

5.33

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): Thank you, Mr Speaker. As the Leader of the Opposition (LOP) who has been left behind, I would like to thank the minister for his presentation and the chairperson of the committee. However, I have a humble prayer before I look at the issues.

Honourable minister, when you look at the minority report, it is now four years since Masaka Road was closed at Mpigi. There is no work going on the Busega Express-way. Can I make a humble plea, through the Speaker, that since there is no work going on, kindly open this road for a time being? When you resume work then business will go back to what you want.

Imagine, for four years we are going through Mpigi. The tarmac within Mpigi will not be given consideration when the road is worked on. What do we lose? They have put permanent fixtures on the road and vehicles which have had accidents are placed there. Within your powers and the Ministry of Works and Transport, sit and agree and open for us this road. Otherwise, the traffic jam we are facing is too much.

Mr Speaker, since the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the shadow Minister of Finance, Hon. Ssemujju Nganda agree on some of the areas in the minority report, why don't you sit and agree on some of the issues raised in the minority report? The moment you do that, you will solve the problems of this institution.

It is very painful that budget proposals are brought here but after passing the budget, nothing is implemented. The challenge goes to the Members of Parliament saying they did not support the budget yet as an Arm of Government, we give you all the support you want. What makes you fail to get counter funding? Is it Parliament or the weakness is on your side? That question is between you, your office and the ministry for finance.

I do not know how much I can talk about borrowing and non-performing loans. I am very interested in talking about teachers and their salaries with the commitment given by the Government. However, should I come on the Floor and say we should also borrow money for financing salaries? It should not be me in this suit I am wearing.

Mr Speaker, I do not have more to say about the minority report. It is the duty of the Ministry for

Finance and your team. Look at what is in the minority report and what Members have raised so that we avoid going for supplementary budgets every time, yet the planning is on your side. That is what I can say.

Mr Speaker, on the issue of Masaka Road, since both of us use it, there is nothing wrong with opening it up for a time being. When you resume working on it, you will close it as you work -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, we have provided the money. They should now resume work and finish it. Remember, we passed a loan here. Yes, honourable minister Muruli Mukasa.

5.37

THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE (Mr Wilson Muruli Mukasa): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate you and the rest of the Members here for having gone through a very hectic election exercise. For those who succeeded, congratulations. Those that did not, there is still another time.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for presenting this Budget Framework Paper. It is very good. However, when I looked at it, I found there was one big element, which was not included - maybe by oversight; maybe not. That is the enhancement of salaries, particularly for the Arts teachers and the local government workers.

We have been here many times on the Floor of Parliament over this issue of enhancement. As the Government, we made commitments to the teachers, their unions, and so on that come the next financial year, there would be some enhancement. However, when I saw it here, there was nothing. I saw nothing and that does not augur well.

We presented a budget to the ministry of finance, not only for the teachers, but for the entire workforce. Some of the workers there have not been enhanced since 2014. Actually, the category of workers we have enhanced

is about 34 per cent of the entire workforce. Sixty-six per cent has not had an enhancement yet, the public servant, if we look at the whole thing as a machine, is the software.

If we want all these programmes for economic development, very fast ones, I think we cannot afford to ignore the public servant who is going to put all these things into effect. Let us have a service that is well remunerated and properly motivated and then some of these developments we want will move very fast.

I wish to implore the ministry for finance that in the next budget circular that is coming, surely that aspect of enhancement, particularly of the teachers and the local government workers is not left out. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, I do not know whether the second budget circular comes to Cabinet but I would urge that you be alert there. Whatever comes here is from the Cabinet. Ensure we do not miss out.

MR MURULI MUKASA: Thank you very much for that prompt. I have actually been alert. My honourable colleague here is aware that when it comes to that, I have never slept. However, for some reason or the other, they promise that they are going to do something but when it comes here, there is nothing. One thing must be clear and let it be known. The remuneration of workers is important. If we are going to have this rapid economic development, we must have a properly remunerated workforce and then we shall see the results.

Challenge us. Let us have this money, and you will see our performance. If we do not perform, then you will be right not to raise our money. I promise; give us this money and the performance will be superb. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, count on us here. We shall join hands with you and the minister for finance to ensure this is achieved. Honourable minister for

finance, if you could start with that point, we would be even the happiest.

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The issue of salaries for teachers and other government workers is a matter dear and known to us. However, the President has always asked, in a situation where we cannot do everything at a go, what do we start with? The prioritisation element in budgeting. Do we borrow to pay teachers? Hon. Ssewungu was asking.

My main role in the budget is to show you how much money I have in a given financial year and together we agree on how to spend it. After the next stage, we will go back to Cabinet to seek approval of estimates of revenue and expenditure. By that time, we will put to its attention the concerns Parliament has raised and get their guidance. At this point, I cannot commit. I will make a commitment after the Cabinet has given me authorisation.

Mr Speaker, there are mainly three things. One, Hon. Isaac is concerned that the resource envelope has declined to 69 per cent and he hopes this will not change. In my motion, I said this is a preliminary resource envelope. Preliminary means it can either increase or reduce, depending on the circumstances that will come as we finalise the budget.

Most important is that on 16 December 2025, I came here and presented a supplementary budget. In this supplementary was, for example, money for maintenance of roads, Shs 1.6 trillion. Maintenance items are recurrent in nature. This will still come back.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, there are items that have not yet been captured at this stage, especially the recurrent ones. I am sure you heard the chairperson mentioning something about the arrears. We have the commitment to make good on all the arrears in three years, and when we look at our numbers, that requires about Shs 1.4 trillion per annum. Therefore, the budgets for works arrears, education, health and others will definitely change as we finalise

the budget so that we take care of the recurrent items which we will not avoid during budget implementation.

Mr Speaker, there is an issue; why is the Charter of Fiscal Responsibility coming after the budget? We are preparing this budget and the speech will be read in June. This budget will become effective on 1 July. Until the end of June, the charter we have is still effective and valid. I will lay proof of consistency to the charter when I bring the estimates on 1 April.

On the Parish Development Model (PDM), Mr Speaker, this is also a matter which requires Cabinet approval. We have all been to the field and the President has also been to the field, and his findings are that within the next three years, all our households should benefit from PDM.

For example, in my constituency, where I have been campaigning, I have parishes with over 1,500 households and other parishes with less than 300 households. All these households are getting Shs 100 million per annum. I am of the opinion that the big parishes get more than Shs 100 million. However, this will require me to go to the Cabinet and seek the President's guidance about it. Subsequently, it will require me to get the input of Parliament about it, but colleagues, if this comes, I ask that you support the idea of big parishes having increased PDM financing.

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: My question was on whether we have done any review to see how effective it is and not on the allocation. The allocation is very good, the disbursements are okay, but how effective is the programme *vis-a-vis* the money we are injecting in?

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you so much, Hon. Enos Asiimwe. I was trying to answer in a more practical way because I have been in the field and I know where the problem is. The problem is the failure to give money to those who want it. It is not because – (*Interjection*) (*Member rose*) – no, not impersonation. That one is also there, but can we give money to all PDM beneficiaries who want it?

Mr Speaker, I will conclude like this: at this stage of budgeting, this is part of the consultations we make in the budget process, and we have taken all the input from both the committee and the plenary. It will all form part of the recommendations and comments by Parliament on the National Budget Framework Paper.

I want to commit that we will try, as much as possible, to capture your input in the second budget call circular and in the policy statements, funds permitting. I want to invite you and ask for your continued support in this budget, especially considering that your timelines, Mr Speaker, are a little bit stringent, and that the term of Parliament is coming to an end. I want to appeal to you that we all sacrifice our time so that we are able to perform this constitutional mandate given to us by the people of Uganda. Thank you so much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister.

Colleagues, I put the question that the motion for the adoption of the National Budget Framework Paper, Financial Year 2026/2027 to Financial Year 2030/2031 be approved by this House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was one very loud ‘Nay’ which should be captured properly.

Honourable colleagues, I want to congratulate you on this task. I want to repeat that we are going to give you enough time to focus on the budgeting process and on the preparations. This being a transition year, we need to prepare very well so that we finish the budget by the end of April.

Our plan, as the leadership, once again, is to prorogue the House at the end of April so that we prepare for the swearing-in of the new Parliament, which will be on 13, 14 and 15 May. The President will be sworn in on 12 May, and we want to take the opportunity to

host the people invited to attend the President’s swearing-in, including you in Kampala, so that it is done at once. We have already agreed with the President about this. The House is adjourned *sine die*.

(The House rose at 5.51 pm. and adjourned sine die.)