**Thursday, 30 September 2021**

*Parliament met at 2.07 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

*(The Deputy Speaker, Ms Anita Among, in the Chair.)*

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER**: Honourable members, I welcome you to this sitting. The World Teachers’ Day is held annually on 5th of October to celebrate all the teachers around the world and to acknowledge the value of teachers in the community; UNESCO adopted this in 1966 and recommendations concerning the status of the teachers were determined at that time.

We are supposed to celebrate this day on the 5th of October. However, the President, who is supposed to be the chief guest on that day, will be committed to other duties. Therefore, the day will instead be celebrated on 12th October.

I would like to thank you for coming. During the celebrations, we shall make sure that COVID-19 standard operating procedures are followed.

There were matters of national importance.

2.10

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance. On 24 March 2021, the President of Uganda -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Members do not squeeze yourselves; we have free sitting - feel free to sit wherever you want.

**MR SILWANY**: On 24 March 2021, the President of Uganda gave a directive and wrote to UNRA to enter into an agreement with Power China International Group to pre-finance the following roads –

The letter reads - for the record of Parliament - I will just go through it briefly;

*“This company, in partnership with my good friend Kore-Kore, has approached me with a proposal to pre-finance and build a number of roads;*

1. *Nabumali-Butaleja-Namutumba (72km)*
2. *Fort Portal-Kijura-Kyarusozi-Katoke (83.8km)*
3. *Atiak-Kitgum (108km)*
4. *Luku-Kalangala-Mulabana (66km)*
5. *Ntusi-Lyatonde-Rakai with a spur to Rushere (140km)*
6. *Katunguru-Ishaka (88km)*

*I, therefore, direct that you discuss the proposal with the company with the aim of entering into contract for the construction of the roads provided they fully pre-finance the design, construction work for two years and Government will begin paying them from its annual budget in the third year if their terms are acceptable to the Ministry of Finance…”*

Madam Speaker, this company that the President is writing about is the same company that was given a promissory note by the 10th Parliament, as requested by hon. Bahati, for constructing Lubowa Specialised Hospital –*(Interjection)*– it is the same company; they just differentiate the names. They call themselves China Power International Guangzhou and China Power International Beijing. We committed ourselves and gave them the contract but to date, nothing has happened.

When you do research about this company, they deal in furniture and toilet equipment. They have not constructed even a murram road either in Uganda or in any other part of the world - they have never done this.

Madam Speaker, Lubowa Specialised Hospital that was given to them has never been started. They were also given a contract to pre-finance Mbulamuti Road. This is the third year and this company has not done any work. They always disguise themselves and when you ask for work from this one they say: “This is Power China International Guangzhou” and the next time they say, “This is Power China International Beijing” but all the directors are the same.

Madam Speaker, this company rents a single room. When you go to their premises - to show that they have no capacity, a company given a business of this magnitude is renting a single room – it is evident that there is nothing that the company can do.

There is a lady called Kore-Kore that the President refers to in the letter. I think this person has been taking to the President these companies to ask them to pre-finance and the President does it with good intentions but always, the projects end up being messed up.

My prayers are:

1. The Minister of Finance gives the President information and asks the President to withdraw his directive because this company is incompetent and cannot do work.
2. The Ministries of Finance and Works get involved in investigating this company and knowing what they do because this company is engaged in petty activities and cannot do work of such magnitude.
3. The Minister assures this House that there is no further contract or dealings that will be entered into with this company until this investigation is done.

According to the research that I have done, I found out that they are even going to give this company another letter - they are in waiting before they even do these projects. When you calculate, these are about 400 kilometres of tarmac roads. They have not done anything; Mbulamuti has failed and Lubowa Hospital is in shambles, they have never reported to this Parliament but they are expecting to get another commitment from the President.

This Parliament takes a decision that they do not enter into any further dealings with this company until this investigation is complete and a report is given to this House.

I beg to move, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, hon. Solomon Silwany. Hon. Bahati, is that the company working on Lubowa; I have heard your name being mentioned?

2.17

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati):** Thank you, Madam Speaker and hon. Solomon Silwany for that matter of national importance. The company that this House approved was different but so much has happened overtime and this particular issue on Lubowa was asked about in this House a few weeks ago. Madam Speaker, I think you were in the Chair and you directed that the Ministry of Health should come and update the House on how far the Lubowa project has moved.

I am standing in for the Government Chief Whip and we shall take the matter that hon. Silwany has raised to the Ministry of Works and Transport regarding the pre-financing of these contracts and then update the House accordingly. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is the Minister of Works and Transport here?

**MR BAHATI:** He is not here but as the House progresses, we shall inform him. If he comes before the House adjourns, he will be able to make a statement.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay. Clarification -

**MR SILWANY:** The clarification I would like to receive from the honourable minister is, what is the name of the company that is constructing Lubowa Hospital? I know it is Power China International Limited.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, can you give us an update on which specific China company is working on Lubowa vis-à-vis the company that has been granted responsibility to work on the roads that hon. Silwany is talking about? You can give that to us on Tuesday.

**MR BAHATI:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker. I will be able to name the company that is now working. As I said, very many things have happened since we came to the House to seek for approval on the promissory note. Thank you.

2.19

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank hon. Silwany for that useful information. We handle these projects together with the Ministry of Works and Transport and a lot of scrutinising takes place before a company is appointed.

I would like to mention that in these pre-financing contracts, it is a company that commits its resources in the first two or three years when a contract is awarded. On the part of Government, we have to wait until the road has been delivered before cash begins to flow to the company. Therefore, there is a minimum amount of risk that is involved on the side of the Government. We set the standard and it is on those standards that the road is constructed by the company, based on those agreed designs and supervised by Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA).

I am talking about the amount of risk that is involved in terms of loss of funds; the risk is almost zero because you have to deliver the road before payments begin.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, you cannot say the loss is zero. The company that hon. Silwany is talking about does furniture making in China, as per what he has said. It does not do road works. At the end of the day, after they have done the works, in one or two months, you will find the road in a bad state.

Therefore, we will need to redo that road. The issue of saying that “there is no financial implication” is wrong. We need to do due diligence on a company before we ask the President to give directives.

**MR SILWANY**: Madam Speaker, the honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is misguiding this House and I am going to lay this letter on the Table.

The letter reads: *“I therefore direct you that you discuss the proposal with the company with the aim of entering into a construction for the road to fully pre-finance the design of construction for the first two years.”*

The Government will begin paying them from its annual budget in the third year. There is no road that can be done and completed; 140 kilometres in two years and they hand over completed work. It means you are going to start funding them in the middle.

Is it procedurally right for the honourable minister to give the House information that is not factual, that they are going to give us a fully completed road and that is when Government will go ahead and pay?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Of course the information that the minister has given us contradicts what is in the letter. You can lay that letter on the Table.

Honourable minister, we need a comprehensive report on that company. We need to do due diligence on that company. When the President gives directives, he gives them in good faith. He leaves it to the technical people to take action and advise whether it should be done or not. Therefore, when we start just giving out the roads to people who are selling toilet parts in China and people who are working on furniture then I do not think we are doing favour to Uganda.

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the letter from the President dated 24 March 2021 to Ms Allen Kagina, the Executive Director of Uganda National Roads Authority.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can we have a report on Tuesday, to that effect, Government Chief Whip?

**MR BAHATI:** Madam Speaker, we will have a report on both the Lubowa project and the pre-financing of this particular road and any other relevant information to the people’s representatives.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

2.24

**MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on an issue of national importance in relation to the operation of Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) in Arua District.

On 12 September 2021, when URA officials were on duty, they drove through Arua District heading to Paidha. When they reached one of the trading centres, they got youth who undertake boda boda business. In a short while, as they were driving, they stopped and fired a bullet. It caught one 21-year-old youth called William. They shot him on his thighs and took off.

When the community called the local government authorities, they tracked them and they were got in Paidha, Zombo District. This gentleman was taken to Arua Hospital, treated and he was recently discharged.

Madam Speaker, on 20 September, as URA officials were on duty at 9.00 a.m. in one of the trading centres in Arua –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, it is free sitting.

**MS PAPARU:** In one of the trading centres as early as 9.00 a.m. - normally they go to intercept motorcycles said to have no original number plates. In the process of executing their duties, they fired another bullet using a machine gun and this bullet got two people. One of them is a boy aged 22 years. He was fired in the chest and died on the spot. The bullet also got a mother of two, aged 22 years, who was heading to the market within the same trading centre. One of her arms was shot at.

This is not the first incident, which has happened in the process of URA officials executing their duties in Arua and West Nile at large.

This has angered people; when they shoot, they take off. They do not care whether somebody has died or whether the person could be assisted and their lives saved. I bring this issue here because it has created – *(Interruption)*

**MR ATIMA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The information I would like to give to this House is in relation to what hon. Lilian Paparu is raising. The activities of URA in West Nile have not only been this particular one; in February this year, URA officials, in trying to intercept a boda boda rider who was carrying a bag of rice, hit a Congolese businessman and he died on the spot. From that time up to today, the business community and the people of Congo are looking for a prominent businessman, a Ugandan, to kill to compensate for that gentleman.

In March this year, URA officials carried out an operation in Ayivu East, around the airport. In the process of the operation, they hit another boda boda rider with a vehicle and he fell down and was taken to the hospital. Little did they know that the road they were using had no passage across because the bridge had collapsed, yet there was a crowd following the officers who were conducting this exercise.

When they found that the bridge had broken down, they returned, only to meet a charged crowd. After the vehicle of the URA officials passed, two army officers were beaten to death. They were airlifted to Kampala. One of them is still in the hospital; he has not yet recovered.

The activities of URA in West Nile Region have become terrible. This is the information I wanted to give.

**MS PAPARU:** Madam Speaker, as you have heard from my colleague, this issue has been recurrent and it has created enmity between the community and the URA officials. If you ask the URA officials working in Arua, they do not go to social places because there is no cordial relationship. People look at them as enemies. This is not good because it is painting a negative image of the Government and the UPDF because the ordinary person cannot differentiate people in uniform.

On this fateful day, when the brigade commander who sits in Arua went to see the situation on ground, they could not differentiate the UPDF designated under URA and the ones who have come to help or calm the situation down.

This issue should be addressed and URA should explain and account for the lost lives because we would not want collecting a tax to be an equivalent of a life.

We lost this young man who has just one child *–(Interruption)*

**MR PETER OKEYOH:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The information I would like to give to this House is that the issue concerning URA cuts across all border counties and districts.

In Bukooli Islands, what constitutes smuggling is a question to our people. When our people go to Kenya and come with just a packet of wheat for home consumption, it is looked at as smuggling. The engine is impounded and the local people are charged. For a packet of wheat, which costs about Shs 6,000, one is supposed to pay between Shs 2 and 3 million. The boat and the engine are impounded. It is a question that the minister concerned should look at.

I was in Busia over the weekend. A disabled person carrying three packets of wheat was impounded by URA, beaten and the wheat confiscated. What really constitutes smuggling? A bundle of wheat? The issues concerning URA cut across all constituencies and I pray that a comprehensive report is brought by the minister regarding URA.

**MS PAPARU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. He has made my prayer. For West Nile subregion, we urge URA to engage the communities, sensitise them and rebuild the cordial relationship because we need taxes for nation building.

2.33

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANNCE, PLANNING AND ECONNOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank hon. Lilian Paparu and other colleagues for raising this matter of national importance regarding the operations of URA, particularly during tax collection exercises along the border areas. It is a very regrettable state of affairs and we are deeply concerned by that information.

I would like to request that we be given time to respond to this matter. We need to gather the necessary information from URA and other stakeholders involved and get back to this House.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We need a comprehensive report on that issue. Really, why that excessive force on the locals? We need to build that cordial relationship with the locals because URA cannot exist in an area where people are hostile.

We need a comprehensive report on that and that should be brought on Tuesday.

2.35

**MR THEODORE SSEKIKUBO (NRM, Lwemiyaga County, Ssembabule):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of public importance. We operate under a multiparty political dispensation, where all parties are represented in this House.

We follow the Commonwealth parliamentary system, where for the proper constitution of the House, we must have the Speaker, the Clerk, the Government on the right side and the Opposition on the left side. However, the events preceding the empty benches on the left side have left us all wondering what is happening.

Yesterday, the Speaker in the Chair informed this House that the ambulance of Parliament had been dispatched to Masaka to take care of the health situation of one of our Members, hon. Ssegirinya.

I have heard you guiding on free sitting but the House must be fully constituted. If there are issues, I hope, as Members of Parliament – the Government cannot sit and talk to itself. We cannot debate amongst ourselves as if everything is normal.

I am, therefore, seeking your guidance, Madam Speaker, as to what could be the issues causing this paralysis in the House and how they are being handled? You have never failed to handle any crisis in this House. For us to go on record as a one-sided House, talking to ourselves and passing issues by ourselves, negates Articles 71 and 75 of the Constitution. Otherwise, this is a constitutional matter.

Madam Speaker, if anything, effort must be taken to get to the root of the matter. I can see my colleagues on the side but however much they occupy those seats, they cannot speak authoritatively from those very seats they are seated on. At worst, in a parliamentary system, crossing is losing of a seat –*(Interruption)*

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, with all due respect to my colleague and one of my mentors in this House - hon. Macho Geoffrey is authoritatively the elected Member of Parliament for Busia Municipality.

Madam Speaker, you ruled earlier that we should have free sitting. Therefore, I believe my colleague is not in order to say that when I stand up to talk, I will not speak authoritatively. I do not know whether the senior legislator is in order to say that when I speak, I do not speak with authority. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssekikubo, the person who has just stood up is an Independent Member of Parliament. I have seen a member from the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) here. I have seen a number of them. I have seen the youth Members of Parliament and the army representatives. I do not think it is only one party that is in the House. The House is represented. *(Applause)*

As far as I know, there is no issue that has been raised in my office. The issue which is at hand is that they wanted the Members to be produced in court, which was done. We cannot interfere with the court process.

Our interest was that Parliament should be informed of what is happening and we were informed. Whenever the Members want any assistance from Parliament, we are available to provide the assistance we can give. However, let the law take its course for now. *(Applause)*

**MR SSEKIKUBO:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker. Although I over beg your indulgence, you must bear with us because these are very difficult circumstances. It should be on the record that as Parliament, we give our support for the law to take its course. Only that as it turns out, that law taking its course is being abused. The Members were released but they were grabbed and taken back for the same charges. By the time justice is done, this human being has suffered –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssekikubo, I am not aware whether the charges were the same. I do not know whether you – You do not know how much we are really supporting our Members. We would not want our Members taken in the way they were taken. I thought this issue ended yesterday. I do not know why we are bringing it back on the Floor today because it ended yesterday.

We are saying that where our Members, who were in custody want our support, we are available as a Parliament. Do not push us so much to do what we cannot do. There is independence. This is Parliament; the court is handling it and we will wait for feedback. I do not want you to feel like it is only you who is feeling bad. We all feel bad for our Members. Maybe we feel worse than you do.

2.42

**THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr. Chris Baryomunsi):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. This matter was discussed yesterday. The Speaker guided the House appropriately and hon. Ssekikubo was in the House. So, there is no need for us to revisit it.

However, Madam Speaker, I have risen to make a comment. The Constitution, in Article 88(1) speaks about quorum of Parliament and it says, *“The quorum of Parliament shall be prescribed by the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, made under Article 94 of the Constitution*.”

Indeed, this Parliament made rules and quorum is defined by numbers, not political parties or shades of opinion. So, what constitutes quorum in this House are the numbers. Even if it is only FDC in the House and they constitute quorum, the House shall proceed. If it is only NRM or Independents, as long as the numbers are there –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Anyway, we had already ruled on that.

**DR BARYOMUNSI:** Secondly, Madam Speaker, the rules also speak about sitting arrangements and it is the Speaker to reserve seats for Members of the House. Therefore, hon. Ssekikubo should not derail this House on matters which are very clearly written in the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure. I just wanted to clarify that. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssekikubo thought I had not seen him, so he needed to say something for me to know that he was around. Now that I have seen you, you can take your seat. *(Laughter)* Hon. Kabanda.

**MR SSEKIKUBO:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker but –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** One thing I need to assure you, hon. Ssekikubo, is that as Parliament of Uganda, we would not love to see any of our Members of Parliament – even if it was you – to go through whatever they are going through.

As I have said, we have a responsibility to support our Members where we can and we will always support them. The Rt. Hon. Speaker talked about the ambulance. We have told the doctor to be on standby 24/7; that whenever we need help, the ambulance will be available. If any of you wish to go and visit the Members, you can go and visit. I can even go and visit. So, they are not yet criminals until proven guilty; the assumption of innocence.

**MR SSEKIKUBO:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker and I rest my case. I am happy it is in good hands and I would urge Members’ silence. It is much louder than you think it is silent. However, I thank you, Madam Speaker and I thank you, once again, Members.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I also thank you for rising for me to see you.

2.45

**MR DAVID KABANDA (NRM, Kasambya County, Mubende):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I am very grateful for this opportunity.

Madam Speaker, as you know, I am a member of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure. Yesterday, as I was moving with my colleagues, the members of the committee – as I came in, I found hon. Peter Okeyoh talking about UNRA. I do not know whether the issue I am going to raise is the same issue he was talking about. My issue is also about UNRA.

When I was moving on a road called –*(Interjection)*– I know the road, hon. Margaret. What is your problem? *(Laughter)* As I was moving, Madam Speaker, I was told by the District Chairman of Lira that His Excellency, the President, gave a directive to UNRA to assign the construction project of the road to a company called Matrix Construction Company Limited. The due process was followed and the construction work was underway.

The information I received from Lira as of yesterday – as you know for one to undertake road construction successfully, they need hard core and aggregate materials from a rock – is that Matrix Construction Company Limited purchased the rights over Ibuje Rock. They even obtained an Environment Impact Assessment Certificate from NEMA to use the rock for the road project. All the project-affected persons were compensated.

However, due to the failures by some public officers in Government to appreciate the importance of Government projects, they have frustrated the contractor from progressing with the work. I got this information from the ground as a Member on the Committee on Physical Infrastructure *–(Interruption)–* I take the information.

**MS ALYEK:** Thank you, my colleague, for giving me way to give some information. Madam Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to give information on what hon. David Kabanda is raising. The road that hon. David Kabanda is talking about is the one that stretches from Rwekunye to Apac-Lira up to Puranga. It is 190 kilometres.

I am a Member of Parliament from Kole District and I am also the Chairperson of the Lango Parliamentary Group. I am giving this information because this project is in my region.

Concerning the Ibuje Rock, it is true that some people have denied the contractor access to this rock to get materials for the construction of this road although some others, around the area where the rock is, have already been compensated.

This has been a long awaited road and as it has been said, it stretches from Rwekunye up to Puranga. It was a presidential pledge. The President himself launched the construction of this road in October 2020. The contractor had started the preliminary work on the road. Both Apac District and Ibuje Subcounty had already allowed that this rock be used by the contractor.

As I said, there is already a blockage and we do not know why. As the Lango Parliamentary Group, since this issue has already been raised on the Floor of Parliament by a member of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure, we request for an investigation into this matter because we want the road to be constructed. We have waited for the road for a long time. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. David Kabanda, can you give us your prayers please?

**MR DAVID KABANDA:** It is true that construction work on this project has stopped. I pray that the Minister of Water and Environment prevails over NEMA to allow Matrix Construction Company Limited to access the Ibuje Rock so that the work can resume and continue.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It should actually be the Minister of Works and Transport. Since you are saying the Environment Impact Assessment Certificate by NEMA is available, then the Minister of Works and Transport should investigate the reasons pertaining to the company’s denial of access to the said rock and report back to the House.

2.53

**THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Gen. Katumba Wamala):** I will take up the matter with UNRA and find out what the impediment is, in terms of the contractor’s accessibility to the said rock since NEMA had given a nod on environment issues. I will get back to the House next week on Tuesday.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. We expect a report on Tuesday. We actually need an action, not just a report. We need to know what you have done.

**MS NAJJUMA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am happy that the Minister of Works and Transport is present in the House - it is overdue – I raised the issue about the road from Matugga to Kapeeka here but I have never got any response. When you read the UNRA reports, they say that the road was punched, but the potholes were only filled with murrum, which has been washed away in this rainy season. That is the shortest route to my district headquarters.

I wish the minister goes through that road. It is really shameful. That road leads to Nakaseke District. I am happy that you are here. Maybe I can get your response. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Sarah Najjuma, there is an item on a report from the Ministry of Works and Transport regarding the status of the roads in the country.

**MS NAJJUMA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I hope my road will also feature in the report. *(Laughter)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** On that note, there is also an issue about the road from Mityana to Fort Portal. The road is really terrible. Honourable minister, you will have time to give a response to what they are raising.

2.55

**MS LINDA IRENE (NRM, Woman Representative, Fort Portal City):** Madam Speaker, I rise under Rule 54(1) and (2) to present a statement on a matter of urgent public importance.

I refer to the 2018 Beijing Summit and the Seventh Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) where the Government of the People’s Republic of China pledged $60 billion as a financing package to African countries to undertake various projects of which two were selected, and the construction of an Olympic stadia - the Buhinga and Akii-Bua Olympic Stadia.

Madam Speaker, these two stadia were pledged by His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Uganda and the two projects were scheduled to take place between 2018 and 2021. The feasibility studies and detailed proposals for both stadia were submitted as required, to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, by the Minister of Education and Sports.

However, both projects have not commenced yet their deadline is coming to an end.

Madam Speaker, this matter is not coming to Parliament for the first time. It was earlier raised by hon. Alex Ruhunda and the Minister of Finance promised to give feedback, which up to date, we have not received.

Madam Speaker, you will agree with me that the country is in dire need of these facilities. We do not have regional stadia and yet this is one way of promoting sports in the country - by providing facilities to enable our youths develop their talents and compete favourably at international level while also attracting the international community to come to Uganda, thus boosting the economy.

Mr Speaker, my prayers are that:

1. The Ministry of Finance fast-tracks the implementation of the project as soon as possible, since the deadline is this year.
2. The Ministry of Finance also gives a statement as to why the project has stalled.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remember this issue came up in the House and I gave the minister two weeks to give us a statement. The two weeks have since then become two months. Minister of Finance, can we have a statement on this? And just to find out; was it a loan that was given to us?

2.58

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi):** Madam Speaker, first of all, let me thank hon. Linda Irene for the question. I cannot state that it was a grant or a loan. Please allow me to report back on Tuesday –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Minister of Sports, is it a loan or grant given to your ministry?

2.59

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Hamson Obua):** Madam Speaker and honourable colleagues, the honourable member is 100 per cent correct in that out of the 27 projects that the Government of Uganda presented, two of them were sports stadia; Muhinga Stadium and Akii-Bua Olympics Stadium.

These two stadia were earmarked to be constructed by a grant from the People’s Republic of China under the Forum on China-African Cooperation abbreviated as FOCAC.

The role and responsibility of the Minister of Education and Sports was to conduct detailed feasibility studies, environmental and social impact assessment - a mission we executed and submitted our comprehensive report to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for further management in terms of securing the grant to enable the country to construct the two stadia.

In a nutshell, it is a grant that does not even require counterpart funding as of the commitment in 2018. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister of Sports. Sincerely speaking, if it is a grant and you have been given a feasibility study and an environmental impact assessment report, why would you be slow to follow up a grant and yet we are very fast to get loans? Why would we be slow to follow-up on a grant; something given to us for free?

Honourable Minister of Sports, on Tuesday, lay on Table the feasibility study report that you gave to the Ministry of Finance. Ministry of Finance, we need a report to that effect.

**MR LUGOLOOBI:** I am most obliged, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We are suffering here looking for where our people can play from and paying a lot for them to play in Kenya as if we cannot host games in Uganda. It is a total shame.

3.02

**MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia):** Madam Speaker, steady progress calls for integrity and a corruption-free Uganda.

I rise on a matter of national importance. On 29th of this month, there was a message that circulated around the country that the Minister of Disaster Preparedness was crying that out of the Shs 15 billion that was given to him, Shs 5 billion went missing.

I have found it better, as a legislator from Busia, one of the places hosting refugees, to find out from the Minister of Disaster Preparedness the facts of this matter. This Shs 5 billion is a lot of money to a Ugandan taxpayer.

Therefore, that is why I would like to pray that:

1. The Minister of Disaster Preparedness comes and clarifies to the House the matter of the missing Shs 5 billion.
2. He should tell us whether the Shs 15 billion that was given to his docket of Disaster Preparedness had been well utilised since right now most places in this country are facing disaster.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Minister of Finance, is it true that you disbursed Shs 15 billion to the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness?

3.04

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR RELIEF, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND REFUGEES (Ms Esther Anyakun):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, I would like the Member to withdraw the words, “The Minister of Disaster was crying.”

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Esther Anyakun of Nakapiripirit, Minister of Disaster Preparedness and Refugees.

**MS ANYAKUN:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. There was no crying but there was a request forwarded by my senior colleague to the Minister of Finance on the contingency budget to be able to support our issues because you have been seeing how much the House has been bringing issues. *(Interjection)* Yes, it is true.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Kindly let the minister finish her statement, hon. Ssekikubo.

**MS ANYAKUN:** We had an amicable meeting in management to be in position to discuss why the Prime Minister wanted to remove part of the money to manage other disaster issues and so she wrote –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Which part of the money?

**MS ANYAKUN:** The Shs 5 billion.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** From where?

**MS ANYAKUN:** The money was requested by the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness. We actually requested for Shs 30 billion and we were given Shs 15 billion. From the Shs 15 billion, my ministry received Shs 10 billion and that is what we used so far for buying relief items.

We had a meeting with the Prime Minister –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Did the Ministry of Finance approve Shs 15 billion and you got only Shs 10 billion?

**MS ANYAKUN:** We requested for Shs 30 billion and they gave us Shs 15 billion. We had a meeting with the Prime Minister and she had other plans to manage other disaster-related issues; so, Shs 5 billion was removed.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Did she have other plans within your money?

**MS ANYAKUN:** Yes, within the relief money on disaster-related issues.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, when you look at the Public Finance Management Act, that is what is called virement. You are making a virement from one vote. These are two different votes; one of the Office of the Prime Minister and another of disaster. We may need to know where that money went, what it was used for, whether the money was approved for two different activities - I am looking at the Public Finance Management Act.

3.07

**MR WILLIAM CHEMONGES (NRM, Kween County, Kween):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to know where the Shs 15 billion came from and where the Shs 10 billion that has been spent on emergencies in this country went. For example, from Sebei Region, when you go to the other side of Ngenge-soi, we have had many disasters beginning with drought.

We asked Government for support but got nothing. We even had floods but nothing came. Birds affected us so much and we have been crying all along but we have never seen money. Now when you hear people talking about Shs 15 billion, you get shocked.

Members, let us be fair to our people. Even now, they have been texting me from there saying, we are hearing that money was released. Where did it go? I want our minister to tell us - *[Dr Baryomunsi rose]*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: You will come last, honourable minister.

**MS ANYAKUN**: Madam Speaker, the money is going to be spent on disaster related issues so, it is not diverted to another activity *–(Interjection)-* That is why I am saying that the Member should withdraw; we did not cry.

3.09

**MR GERALD NANGOLI** **(NRM, Elgon North County, Bulambuli):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. With due respect to the honourable minister here, he should be clear and tell us exactly how much he got from the Ministry of Finance. Was it Shs 10 billion or Shs 10 billion out of the Shs 15 billion? If it was Shs 10 billion, who took the Shs 5 billion? This is the time when we need this money, especially people from Bugisu sub-region.

We have many disasters, people are affected and need assistance and you do not have money to buy non-food items like blankets, hoes, *pangas* and the rest. This is the time that you needed to apportion this money - you say, let Shs 5 billion go for food and other things, then Shs 10 billion for non-food items. Now you have been given Shs 10 billion but you are saying the Shs 5 billion is for some other things. Which are these other things? We need to know so that we plan accordingly. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MR AMOS OKOT:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was watching the way the minister was doing ‘body gymnastics’ while he was explaining about the Shs 5 billion and Shs 10 billion but I am not convinced.

In the first place, she did not want to commit that Shs 5 billion was removed but later, she said it was removed -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: You are just speculating, honourable.

**MR AMOS OKOT:** No, Madam Speaker. We are in this country and we want to see how the money moves. There is an outcry about where the Shs 5 billion has gone. We have raised matters here that needed the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness to come on board.

In my constituency, this Parliament directed the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness to go and handle the disaster that took place - the hailstorms. It is coming to one month and a half but no response has taken place. Now we hear that regarding the money that is meant for disaster, there is a clash between the Prime Minister and the Senior Minister of Disaster Preparedness. We cannot sit and see things like that.

3.12

**MS HOPE NAKAZIBWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Mubende):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am dismayed to hear that Shs 5 billion has been diverted from disasters yet on a number of occasions, we have written to the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness and we have been told that the budget to that ministry is not sufficient to cover all the disasters that happen in our country. This is not good.

We request that, that money be pushed back to the right ministry. For example, we wrote a letter from Mubende in March when a school was de-roofed. People lost their gardens and houses but nothing was done.

I wrote to the Minister of Luweero Triangle then and to the Prime Minister’s Office but we have never got a response in that regard. Now if that Shs 5 billion was meant to cater for disasters, let it be pushed back so that we are helped.

For example, when we talk about schools, they are yet to open. When they open, we have a school in Makukuulu in Kitanda, which caters for almost four villages in that parish but it is in a total mess; it is not habitable for the children. This school needs a lot of help from the Ministry of Disaster or from the Ministry of Education. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Regarding the issue of schools, there is a Ministry of Education. If they are issues of disaster, they should be issues of disasters where people need food items, non-food items or where you are going to rescue a situation. However, if it is a matter of a school then the Ministry of Education must cater for that.

3.14

**MR DAVID KABANDA (NRM, Kasambya County, Mubende):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is very unfortunate to hear that Shs 5 billion was diverted from the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness to the Office of the Prime Minister *–(Interjection)-* It is not the same, yours is different from the other one. You are a Minister for Disaster Preparedness the other one is the Prime Minister.

Madam Speaker, what I wanted to know from Government - When did the Office of the Prime Minister turn into a disaster that it must be taken care of? This money was to take care of vulnerable people. When the Prime Minister says, give me Shs 5 billion - When did the Office of the Prime Minister become a disaster so that the Government needs to take care of that office? Thank you.

3.15

**MR DAN ATWIJUKIRE (NRM,** **Kazo County, Kazo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. As a country, we are facing a very big challenge with the change in environment and the weather. When you are interacting with Members here, everyone is crying because of the hailstorms, bad winds and floods.

I thought, at this point, the Ministry for Disaster Preparedness should be consolidating itself unless they want to tell us that all the ministers in the Prime Minister’s Office have no work. Otherwise, this is a clear diversion. You cannot get money that is appropriated and released for a specific activity and you take it to another activity.

Madam Speaker, running the Government cannot be like running a kiosk that at every point, you transfer tomatoes from Basket Y and put it in Basket X. I think it is very important that the responsible ministers and the Prime Minister clarifies to this House, in specific terms, how they would divert Shs 5 billion when we are all in dire need of relief. We have turned into ministers for disaster in our respective constituencies.

Madam Speaker, with your hand, we should not take it lightly. We deserve serious explanations and Ugandans will not take us seriously, if we do not get this explanation. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

3.17

**MS SUSAN AMERO (Independent, Woman Representative, Amuria):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The issue of diversion of money from the Office of the Prime Minister is not a new thing.

As far as I know, the Office of the Prime Minister is supposed to be a coordination office for all ministries. However, to the best of my knowledge, the Office of the Prime Minister wants to be an actor everywhere, implementing all programmes that have money. That is the reason why we are failing. Look at the Ministry of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees. It is a whole ministry with a Cabinet minister but they are sharing one Permanent Secretary, who is actually indisposed.

Who is going to manage these resources that we are pumping into that ministry? At the end of it all, money gets diverted. A lot of money is being lost in the Office of the Prime Minister, especially from these affirmative ministries; it gets “legs” to another place, where it is not meant to go. Disasters are prevailing everywhere; people are in dire need and we need money to support our people but then money is diverted for petty things.

Madam Speaker, unless this House stands up and disaggregates all the ministries that are under the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and leaves OPM to do the coordination work of all the ministries here, we shall continue losing a lot of money *–(Interjection)–* I am more informed.

My prayer is that this House stands up and all these ministries that are under OPM remain as ministries on their own and let OPM do its role of coordination. You cannot oversee what you are implementing. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, hon. Amero. Can I have a statement from the Prime Minister on that matter?

3.20

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Madam Speaker, there is no money that has been diverted. I wrote to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development requesting for Shs 30 billion because of the magnitude of the disasters that have befallen our country. On the 13th of this month, we managed to get Shs 15 billion.**

**On the 14th, we had what they call “Senior Top Management Meeting”, where all of us - ministers under the Office of the Prime Minister - sit. Hon. Anyakun and hon. Hillary Onek were there. You realise that we have been traversing the country and seeing the disasters that have befallen this country.**

**We agreed in the meeting that, now that we have got only Shs 15 billion, let us use Shs 5 billion to handle some lasting solutions. For example, Kasese District has been facing floods year in and out and the floods have been killing people. However, we only need Shs 600 million to buy land. Now, we agreed to use Shs 600 million to buy land so that these people can go off our back, once and for all.**

**The Prime Minister’s Office has been feeding those people for now close to two years. Colleagues, there is a tendency in the Office of the Prime Minister of suppliers and people who want to, all the time, remain in business: putting their umbilical cord in the Government. If we give these people of Kasese land, just Shs 600 million, they will go off our back and they will sustain themselves. We then agreed in the meeting to have this. *(Applause)***

**We then went to Buliisa. In Buliisa, thousands of people got displaced. The lake claimed over five kilometres inside the main land, including a health centre, which had just been constructed by the Ministry of Health.**

**By the way, these floods have not happened today but was there since 2019 and these people have been feeding those people and sometimes not giving them enough. They would give them two kilogrammes and then do accountability. Now, we agreed to use Shs 800 million, as guided by the Ministry of Health, to construct a health centre. Those people have nowhere to go. They have the medicine and health staff - everything.**

**Now, we agreed to use Shs 800 million to construct that health centre III. This money is still with the Ministry of** Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees. They have been constructing houses but this time round, I said let us help these people. There are two land grabbers who took all the land from the community.

I am struggling with the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to reclaim that land so that we can settle people there. Therefore, that place does not need land.

We then went to Nakasongola District. In Nakasongola District, there is a school called Mone - over 5,000 people got displaced and they are in a camp. How do we help these people in order to go off the back of the Prime Minister’s Office? We said, let us buy for them land. An acre of land there is Shs 1.5 million but I hear that some people are entering and want to put it at Shs 5 million. At least, we have the Chief Government Valuer and he will do the needful. We then said, let us settle those people.

Again, Mone Primary School, which has over 1,000 pupils, got submerged. You see it deep, three kilometres inside the water. What should we do? Should we eat all these money? I have been engaging district officials, including my sisters and brothers. We then agreed that we also resettle that school and conclude it once and for all because this disaster has been on.

We then went to Rwampanga Health Centre. I do not know whether I have Members of Parliament from those areas I am talking about. Rwampanga Health Centre got submerged, including the maternity unit. They only have one store which is operational. We said, what should we do? I contacted the Ministry of Health on what we should do. They have the staff, medicine and everything but they have no shelter. We then said, no, we can still use Shs 800 million to settle those people, once and for all, and life continues.

We then went to Kayunga District. In Kayunga, you saw me on a boda boda and it was not by design but that place is inaccessible. The floods cut off almost seven kilometres from the main land but Kawongo remained the other side. Those people are needy and, now, schools are about to open but they do not have any secondary school the other side of Kawongo. The secondary school is in Galiraya. Now, what do we do? This water will not go tomorrow. It has been there for almost three years now. We need to buy them a boat. We agreed to buy small boats of at least Shs 10 million each, with an engine. That is Shs 40 million. *(Interjections)* Can you give me time, my brother? Please protect me, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the Prime Minister finish and then you can speak.

**MS NABBANJA:** Those people need land in a place called Kyedikyo. Over 2000 homesteads are stuck on a small piece of land and that is Kyedikyo. We agreed to buy land for those people, worth Shs 800 million. Each acre of land is Shs 2 million. If we can give at least two acres to each family, they can start –*(Interjections)* Let me explain.

Colleagues, I went to Amolatar and we found a subcounty there with a health centre III but it remained under the water. The mainland does not have a health centre. The business I found in the Prime Minister’s office is that the suppliers need money and they are overwhelming –*(Interjections)–* Let me give Parliament information. (*Mr Kaberuka rose\_)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. James, what are you rising on?

**MR KABERUKA:** I thank you, Madam Speaker. I am pressed to put my Rt Hon. Prime Minister to a point of procedure. It is in good faith because the Prime Minister is mentioning a lot of things, which require somewhere to refer. We at least need a reference.

I am looking at reallocation of money from vote to vote. We need to have a reference such that we correlate the information to what is laid down, as per the procedure constitutionally. It is in good faith that she is doing all that.

Madam Speaker, wouldn’t it be right to have the Rt Hon. Prime Minister have a paper indicating all that she is mentioning such that we can interrogate the report in relation to what is procedurally laid down in the Public Management Act and other laws of Uganda. Are we proceeding well?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I must commend what you are doing. You are doing a good job for the people of Uganda. *(Applause)*

Secondly, these Members have a role to play; the oversight role. I request that you give us a document that we can refer to. You will give us further information on Tuesday, putting in mind section 20 of the Public Finance Management Act, on reallocation of funds from one vote to another.

When we are talking about disaster, it must be a disaster aspect. When we talk about schools, we must talk about education, same as hospitals, which must fall under health. Members, we will defer this debate to Tuesday. You need information to be able to talk. Hon. Ssekikubo, please leave the minister.

**MS NABBANJA:** Madam Speaker, I have the information.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** They need information.

**MS NABBANJA:** I have it and I can provide it.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Provide before we debate it.

**MS NABBANJA:** Okay. Colleagues, I was told there was a lot of lobbying – *(Interruptions)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can we have the information uploaded on our iPads?

**MS NABBANJA:** Madam Speaker, allow me to give you information. Colleagues, allow me to give you information. It is the ministry of finance that allows virement among committees. This was done and the letter to that effect is here –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, can we have this debate on this issue on Tuesday, when everybody has the information? *(Applause)* Next item.

STATEMENT ON THE CELEBRATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS

3.32

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (ELDERLY AFFAIRS) (Mr Dominic Gidudu):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to address Parliament in your presence for the first time. I am standing in for the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development. I am here to give a statement on the celebrations of the International day for older persons, which is on 1 October 2021.

As you are aware, every 1st October, Uganda joins the international community to commemorate the International Day of Older Persons in line with the UN General Assembly Resolution 45/106.

The commemoration of the International Day of Older Persons is one of the advocacy activities of our ministry in fulfilment of the constitutional mandate on protection of the aged.

The United Nations General Assembly, on 14 December 1990 under Resolutions 45/106, designated 1st October the International Day for Older Persons. This day was observed for the first time throughout the world on 1 October 1991. As a country, Uganda started commemorating the day on 1 October 1999.

The main purpose of the celebrations is to recognise the contributions made by older persons towards the national development and to create awareness among the population on the rights and needs of older persons.

Further to this, the Government and other stakeholders take stock of what has been achieved, the gaps and possible solutions to address challenges faced by older persons.

The theme

The theme for the International Day of Older Persons 2021 is “Digital Access for All Ages: A tool for Inclusive Development”. The theme predicates the need to access and meaningful participation of older persons in the digital world.

The selection of the theme is to emphasise the importance of inclusion of older persons in digital platforms, especially with the increase in demand and use of digital platforms in delivery of services and programmes, more so, during the COVID-19 pandemic, where physical contact among persons is limited.

As the world adopts more digital operations, it should be noted that technological advances offer great hope for accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. However, this growth cannot be evenly distributed if access to basic digital platforms to the population is limited. This can lead to exclusion of vulnerable people in access to services and opportunities provided through digital platforms. Therefore, older persons should not be left behind. It is in the Government’s interest to ensure all its operations are inclusive for Ugandans.

As a sector, programmes for older persons are using digital platforms. For instance, the Senior Citizens Grants beneficiaries access funds through Agent banking and NIRA registration of beneficiaries. Madam Speaker, the task at hand is to support older persons in every way possible to appreciate the advancement in technology and learn how to utilise the available digital space.

This theme, therefore, will highlight the efforts Government needs to undertake to provide inclusive access to digital space for all persons and encourage inter-generational support towards older persons to utilise available digital options in Uganda.

Preparations

Madam Speaker, Uganda has been organising the day on a rotational basis across the country. However, with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, this day has been commemorated at State House, where older persons requested for their representation in Parliament and this has been duly achieved, in addition to other achievements. That is why you see me here addressing you. *(Applause)*

For instance, since the last commemoration, allocation to SAGE increased from Shs 62.88 billion, in Financial Year 2020/2021, to Shs 120.7 billion, in Financial Year 2021/2022 to cover 340,000 older persons.

The venue for this year’s national celebration will be State House, Entebbe and pre-event activities are ongoing. These include television and radio talk shows, media briefings and social media publicity. I hope you have been watching television stations and have seen this. Note that His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Uganda, is expected to preside over the celebrations.

Conclusion

I would like to invite you, honourable colleagues, to join the older persons in your respective districts, cities and municipalities to commemorate the International Day of Older Persons. Let me also take this opportunity to wish you all a happy International Day of Older Persons celebrations.

For God and my country. Madam Speaker, I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister in charge of the elderly. In the beginning, SAGE was only covering a few districts. We must thank Government for what it is doing though we want it to cover all the districts of Uganda to support the elders.

Since you have given your statement, and as Government adopts the digital transfer as a method of transmitting the SAGE money, we also request Government to protect the beneficiaries from digital fraud. This should be done by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology and National Guidance, under NITA-U; they must ensure that safeguards are in place.

3.40

**MR MICHAEL TIMUZIGU (NRM, Kajara County, Ntungamo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the minister for bringing the statement, concerning the celebration of our elders and parents who have done a lot for this country and generally in the whole world.

Madam Speaker, as we commemorate the International Day of Older Persons –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Prime Minister, I want you to listen to what the honourable member is saying.

**MR TIMUZIGU:** Our elders in Uganda are living in fear at the moment. In Masaka and everywhere, they have been killed by people who attack them with *pangas*. Their children are killing them because they want land from them, yet these are the people who have made us succeed, as a country.

Honourable minister, you know that the police have been making reports about children killing their fathers and mothers over land and money. I want to know from your ministry how you are preparing to sensitise the youth in Uganda and generally all Ugandans, as far as protecting elders is concerned.

As I talk - and as we prepare to commemorate their day - most of them are not going to be with us because they are living in fear. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. There is the issue of the youth killing the elders over a number of things.

3.42

**DR CHARLES AYUME (NRM, Koboko Municipality, Koboko):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the minister for his presentation. It is good that we have our colleagues from the Ministry of Health here.

I am a bit concerned about the end game of the health of the elderly persons. In medicine, we call it “geriatrics” and since we have –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Esther, go back to where you were seated. *(Laughter)*

**DR AYUME:** Madam Speaker, since we have our colleagues from the Ministry of Health, I do not know if it is within their strategic plan to have health services for the elderly persons availed because that is our destiny – all of us. It is relatively specialised. They need the attention.

Recently, we were a bit concerned when they released the figures on the uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine, I think about two weeks ago and it was eight per cent amongst the elderly persons. However, I am very happy that the minister took it on with the Ministry of Health and I think they have been able to scale it up.

So, it is my prayer that we have this also incorporated. The two ministries can sit and talk because we are all going that way and so, the earlier we prepare, the more equipped we will be. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

3.44

**MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I thank the minister for the statement that has informed the country that tomorrow, we will mark the International Day of Older Persons.

Madam Speaker, I just want us, as a House, to reflect on the SAGE programme that the minister has alluded to. I say this because the package that is being given is so eliminative and discriminative, as far as the age bracket is concerned.

The other day, I had a consultative meeting with my constituents and I got to realise that in the entire sub-county, the people who have clocked or attained the age of 80 are very few. I remember the older arrangement was to do with 60 or 65 years but this one has left out so many older persons who cannot fend for themselves.

So, I appeal to our Government to reconsider or to review that because we are all moving towards that direction – *(Applause)* – and we need to make proper preparations for our people. Otherwise, we will be sort of condemning them to death because they cannot provide for themselves.

Madam Speaker, regarding some other programmes like *Emyooga*; when they were designing such packages, they ought to have categorised them among the 18 or 19 and this gave them hope that we are thinking about them. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

3.46

**MS FLAVIA KABAHENDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kyegegwa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Minister of State for Gender, Labour and Social Development (Elderly Affairs) for the presentation he has made and the statement on the International Day of Older Persons.

I have a few issues that if they were handled on this day, we would be ready to celebrate. Otherwise, tomorrow may be a mourning day and not a celebration.

As we speak now, the older persons are in arrears on the SAGE money. For six months, most of the districts have not been paid and the older persons are complaining because no communication is being given on what is happening.

When the current budget was passed, it was short by Shs 36 billion. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development promised here to come up with a supplementary budget. Can we know when that supplementary budget will be brought to Parliament so that the older persons can be paid their money fully?

We want to know the Government’s commitment on reducing the age eligibility from 80 years downward. It was a Government’s assurance that they would do that. The Minister of State for Gender, Labour and Social Development (Gender and Culture) promised in this House that in the next three financial years, from the time the 80-year eligibility was passed, they would go on reducing the age eligibility. We can excuse them for the two years of COVID-19. Can we, however, see the next budget reducing this age eligibility at least to 75 years as a show of Government’s will to reduce this age eligibility so that another year, they can reduce it to 70 years until it comes down to 65 years?

I would like to see the Government encouraging the older persons to enroll using alternative identification documents because the national IDs have become so discriminatory that most of them cannot enter the payroll. As a result, they cannot access the SAGE money. Why should we use national IDs when we know that the biometric machines cannot read the thumbprints of these older persons, and when we also know that some of their names were wrongly spelt on their IDs and many other flaws that are on IDs?

So, Madam Speaker, can they be allowed to use alternative identification so that all the older persons that are eligible can access this payroll?

I wish all the older persons a good International Day of Older Persons. Thank you.

3.49

**MR JAMES KABERUKA (NRM, Kinkiizi County West, Kanungu):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you, honourable minister, for this statement. You ought to know that Uganda’s policy on SAGE is helpful, but a lot is also needed to be done. It is because apparently, none of the Members of Parliament representing the older persons is 80 years old. However, the older persons down there –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Kaberuka, was that a requirement for one to be elected?

**MR KABERUKA:** No, Madam Speaker;I am trying to bring out a point. Why can’t an older person access SAGE before they clock 80 years? We need to address that. I think it is in your interest as Members of Parliament representing the older persons and as this House to make sure we correct that anomaly. The Prime Minister should take this one up because the older persons at the grassroots are suffering.

We also need to correlate the policy with the life expectancy of Ugandans. What is the life expectancy of Ugandans? *(Interjection)* It is 63 years. So, why should we subject these people to that suffering?

Another issue is, as we celebrate – We are surely happy to celebrate these elderly people because they have produced and nurtured us and we are here. It is this time that we need to think as a Government how we can safeguard these people through health insurance. Many older persons are suffering. A colleague has mentioned how the children are also disturbing them because of poverty. How are they accessing health services?

The older persons are suffering because they are the most vulnerable when it comes to the costly health services in Uganda.

I want to also bring another point. It is at this point that the Government, while we are celebrating the International Day of Older Persons, to look at how we can prepare the youth and the middle-aged people to have a sustainable life. For example, as we celebrate the older persons, we need to remember that the youth will eventually take their place. We have now opened markets and churches but the schools are locked down. Can we also think about how our future can be secured if our children have a dark future?

I thank the minister for bringing this report such that we discuss it in relation to Uganda’s present situation. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.52

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The older persons are our grandparents and parents. I have been watching with a lot of concern and also interacted with the older persons. The money we are giving these older persons as SAGE is demeaning. As Parliament, we must take a decision to support these people. Their vulnerability at an old age is too much. They have issues with security and health, but the SAGE money is little. When you look at the amount, it cannot even support somebody for a month and yet the money is given quarterly.

Some of the elders walk long distances to get this money. You find a person who is old and crippled, and yet the money can only be given out at a sub-county level. Why can’t the minister tell his people to deliver the money to the older persons since they are few and known in the community? Why do you make them walk for long distances?

I want to give you a rare testimony that shows how much vulnerable the older people are. There was a community where three elders came and told me that young men have reached the extent of saying that they are looking for older persons to cut off their grey hair and smoke it. Just imagine that. This is like human sacrifice. When these older persons heard this sort of things, they were traumatised.

Honourable minister, when you are handling this matter – I am going to give you that information and even the area. I do not want to say it here on record because the older people came to me in person.

When the country celebrates the International Day of Older Persons, we should commit that we are going to tackle the issue of vulnerability of older persons in Uganda because if you sit on the shoulders of the old, you are able to see far. The older the person is, the farther he/she sees. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

3.56

**MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, I would like to refer you to rule 52 on debate on a statement of the minister. We should limit the debate.

**MS APOLOT:** I appreciate the report presented by the honourable minister. Madam Speaker, the national rollout for payment of older persons was done in Kumi District. I am in support of both submissions in terms of raising the pay and having considerable approaches.

I would like the honourable minister to give us specific information on when the arrears of the older persons will be paid. I thank my colleague because she raised it. As representatives of the people, they have been asking us when this money will be paid. My prayer is that the payment is handled as soon as possible. We are all aware of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on families.

The other challenge I realised was on enrolment of the older persons because of demand in the area of national identification. As we speak, NIRA is not as effective as it used to be. We have older persons that have clocked 80 years and have nowhere to go. Madam Speaker, I would like to plead with your office that this matter is handled.

The bank was also changed but there was inadequate sensitisation of the older persons and the caretakers on change of the bank; from Post Bank to Centenary Bank. I have also been getting those questions. How I pray that the ministry spares some resources to give adequate sensitisation on change of the bank.

Finally, as we now use Centenary Bank, I would like to plead that the bank uses adequate staff because what always happens is when the payment is done, these people leave before completing the payments. They force the older persons to move to a different sub-county in order to get this money.

We know that these are vulnerable people; so, let us do what is possible to ensure that they access this money in a simple way. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.58

**MR PIUS WAKABI (NRM, Bugahya County, Hoima):** Thank you, Madam Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, it is now 4.00 p.m. and it is Prime Minister’s Time. Kindly bear with me. We will only have one submission and then we will continue with the other debate.

**MR WAKABI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Government for the good programmes and interventions they have for the elders. My simple concern is that recently, I was in my constituency and I interacted with a gentleman of about 40 years. He said that as Government, we have good programmes for the youth, elderly and women but how about the men between 35 and 60 years? I had no answer for him.

I think, as the Government, we also need to plan for this age group because it is the one which looks after the elderly. I call upon the Government to come up with good programmes for this age group; men between 35 and 60 years. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, it is time for Prime Minister’s Time. Prime Minister, I would like you to know that many elders, especially the men, are suffering silently with prostate cancer. They cannot talk.

On that note, we need to provide free health services to the elderly because they cannot afford them. *(Applause)* We need to look at SAGE; how much money is it? Why can’t we increase it? We should be able to increase that money and pay it timely for these elderly people as we celebrate them day to day. There must be something that we should do. We should be able to increase SAGE.

There should also be inclusiveness in all Government programmes; *Emyooga*, Parish model or whichever one is there. The elders should also be included. As one Member said, among the 18 groups or categories, one or two categories should be the elders. That is institutional memory; we need that blessing from the elders. We need to work together with them. We need safety for them.

You heard what hon. Solomon said; these elders are not safe. The killings in Masaka started with elders; so, we need sufficient security for them and we need to eliminate segregation when they are being registered.

Most importantly, we should reduce the age requirement. There are very few people aged 80 years; if even our President is not 80 years – We should be mindful of the age of the people because it is hard for them to reach 80 years, especially with these sicknesses of today. We should do that. Thank you very much for that debate. We wish the elderly a happy celebration but the Government should take note of the resolutions on that.

PRIME MINISTER’S TIME

4.03

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Madam Speaker, since it has been our practice for the Prime Minister to bring a statement of business for the proceeding week. Allow me, under rule 28 of our Rules of procedure that requires me, as the Leader of Government Business –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Prime Minister, after you make your statement, continue with your responses.

**MS NABBANJA:** Yes, Madam Speaker. Rule 28 of our Rules of procedure requires the Leader of Government Business to make a statement to the House regarding the Government Business for the succeeding week. I am, therefore, submitting the following Government business for the succeeding week; 5th October to 7th October 2021.

1. Introduction for first reading of the following Bills:
2. The East African Crude Oil Pipeline Special Provisions Bill, 2021
3. The Mining and Mineral Bill, 2021
4. The Income Tax (Amendment) No. 2 Bill, 2021
5. The Public Finance (Amendment) Bill, 2021
6. The Succession (Amendment) Bill, 2021
7. A statement on Government interventions to curb cattle rustling in Karamoja;
8. A statement on the 59th Independence Day Celebrations.

Madam Speaker, I beg to submit.

Madam Speaker, this time round, the questions were a bit lengthy and you will bear with me but my answers are quite short.

Hon. Veronica, Woman Member of Parliament for Bukomansimbi District says that since 2012, many foreign business and multi-nationals have closed business in Uganda and many others are projected to follow suit. Among these are Shoprite, Game, PEP stores, Etihad Airways, Nakumatt, Gulf Air, Uchumi, Steers, British Airways, Shell, Barclays, Nandos, Tuskys, Orange and Africell, all leaving the Ugandan market since 2012.

The said companies have been at the forefront of offering employment to Ugandans, especially the youth, and have been a source of revenue for the economy. Her question is; why are these multinationals closing business en masse?

My response it that it is not true that businesses are closing en masse. Each of these companies has peculiar reasons for their closure. First, owing to the shutdown of economic activity after the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been reduction in demand, which affected over 50 per cent of the existing companies.

In addition, a mini-survey conducted by key private sector players identified that the main crosscutting cause for these exits is that the market size and the characteristics of the affected sectors in the Ugandan economy have not evolved fast enough to support sustainable operations of the business model of a number of big multinational operations. As a result, many of these enterprises failed to get profitable niches within their sector of operations.

The other reasons include bankruptcy, stiff competition within sectors and internal management challenges.

The other question from the same honourable member is: what is the state of the economy as we speak?

Honourable colleagues, this is a big question but the answer is that the economy is on a recovery path. In the Financial Year 2021/2022, economic growth has been revised downwards from 4.3 per cent to 3.8 per cent, mainly due to the impact of COVID-19, including the second lockdown that is affecting sectors such as education, transport, trade, manufacturing and construction.

The economy is projected to recover from the effects of the pandemic and attain a growth trajectory of six to seven per cent in the medium term.

To sustain our economic growth, the Government will provide support to the priority areas for import replacement and expansion of export in the following areas;

1. Food production for domestic consumption and export.
2. Agro-based industrialisation, that is to say, bananas, maize, Irish potatoes, cassava, sugarcane, tea, coffee, livestock and their products, fish, to mention but a few.
3. Textiles for clothing, using inputs such as cotton and inorganic petroleum products (when oil and gas are exploited) and leather goods using locally available hides and skins.
4. Shelter (housing) focusing on production of cement, glass from sand, production of granite and marble using our vast reserves, particularly in Karamoja, steel from iron ore and nickel, titanium and manganese, copper, etc.
5. Mineral development such as cathode copper used to make transformers, electric cables and meters, alloyed steel for rails roads, power dams and eventually turbines for power generations and oil and gas production.
6. Production for human medicine (pharmaceuticals and veterinary drugs for livestock and fertilisers/pesticides for crops).
7. Production of defence and security equipment, including CCTV cameras.
8. Enhancing, further, our physical infrastructure and transport platform, including support for local production of transport and other strategic vehicles.
9. Human development in areas of education with emphasis on science and health.

However, the Government’s economic policy framework in the short to medium term focuses on restoring economic activity to pre-pandemic levels and accelerating.

The third question from the same Member is that there is an assertion that these companies face a lot of extortion from Government officials; what is your take on this? Madam Speaker, the Government is not aware and in case the Member has information, I request him to bring it to my attention.

Hon. Dr Abdulhu Byakatonda, the Member of Parliament representing workers, says that on Monday, 29 January 2020, H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni attended the UK-African Investment Summit in London hosted by the UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, to showcase and promote the breadth and quality of investment opportunities across Africa, including Uganda.

His Excellency addressed the UK-Uganda Business Forum, graced by the chief executive officers of over 70 British companies, where he made the case for them to come and invest in agriculture, mining, tourism and the service sectors.

He went ahead to say the President, under his wisdom, is desirous of propelling growth of the country from subsistence farming to commercial agriculture, value addition and export-led growth, among others. However, since March, at the advance of the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of small and medium multinational companies are closing in Uganda.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has predicted a Shs 2 trillion budgetary deficit and this is expected to further dwindle if not arrested. Furthermore, high levels of job losses have been registered. The question is; how many industries have been affected under this?

Madam Speaker, a mini-survey carried out revealed that in the last three years, Nakumatt, Tuskys and Uchumi in retail, Smartcom and Africell in telecommunication, and AIG in the insurance sector closed; these are foreign firms that closed.

The fifth question is; what is the Government’s strategy on regional industrial points/clusters in doing inclusive sustainable industrial development, integration of local SMEs into global value chains, export support tools for medium and high-tech industrial sectors?

Madam Speaker, the answer is:

1. Developing industrial parks at each of the zones across the country like we had before. This will include preparing zonal economic plans for priority commodity value chains.
2. Promoting equity investment and creating partnerships with local firms.
3. Implementing the BUBU policy to support local manufacturing and supply of locally procured raw materials in foreign-owned firms.
4. Construction of border export zones and logistics hubs.

Question No.6 is from the same Member, hon. Byakatonda. It reads: “How does the Government intend to address cessation problems of enterprises and multinational companies namely Uchumi, Shoprite, Game, British Airways, Pep Stores, Barclays, Etihad Airways, Nakumatt, Orange, Africell, Gulf Air ,Steers, Shell, Nandos, Tuskys and ensure financial predictability to maintain enhanced and sustainable growth?”

Madam Speaker, the response is that the Government will implement a number of strategies:

1. Minimise macroeconomic risks, which is continued commitment to maintain macroeconomic stability and an enabling business environment with policy consistency and predictability. This will reduce the level of foreign exchange risk, and attract more investors with a long term investment horizon.
2. Strengthen the non-lax investment incentives regime and strengthen Uganda Investments Authority’s, (UIA), function of foreign investor facilitation and aftercare. This will enable continuous monitoring and proactively addressing investor challenges before they get out of hand. This also includes conduct of periodic review of incentives given to investors to avoid abuse of these investment promotion initiatives.
3. Leveraging local knowledge. This is to facilitate local investors to partner with foreign investors along the selected commodity supplier value chains, in order to build resilient joint venture investments and support local content. The firms supported by UDC and UDB should be reoriented towards delivering this objective through improved governance structures and not to just give financing.
4. Speedup regulatory reform by fast-tracking the enactment of the competitive Bill into law for a more levelled playing field between SMEs and Corporate Uganda.

Question No. 7 was raised by the same Member. It reads:

“How much money and how many jobs has the country lost as a result of the cessation or closure of these companies?”

My response is:

Whereas we do not have an exact estimate, we do not expect a significant number of job losses. This is because Uganda continues to be an attractive investment destination and, therefore, more businesses are expected through different arrangements.

Shoprite, for example, is exiting but its business is being taken over by Carrefour, which is one of the new entrants; while Africell seems to be a victim of strategic alliance with a 98 per cent share of local content in its 2,000 product offering, Carrefour could become a game changer for local suppliers working to formalise and professionalise their products and marketing strategies.

In the telecommunications sector, Smart Telecom failed to penetrate the market as they were Kampala based. Africell was concentrated mostly in the data market but faced serious competition from Airtel and MTN, which have wider network. In addition, a new company Tangerine, trading as Lycamobile, has already entered the market.

In addition, Madam Speaker, in the medium term, opportunities for import replacement are likely to increase, boosting local companies’ resilience to expand and take on emerging opportunities for those exiting.

Question No. 8 is still from the same Member. This time round, I decided to answer all the questions that I came across. The question is: “How can the Government focus on providing targeted support for our local industries from enhanced employment opportunities and GDP?”

My response is:

1. Increasing market access to locally manufactured products.
2. Lowering cost of production by investing in infrastructure such as electricity, road network, railway systems, and reducing the cost of credit.
3. Investing in skilling, training and capacity building through business development services.
4. Creating linkages with anchor investors.

Question No. 9 is still from the same Member. This Member showered me with questions and the question reads: “Has Government analysed, audited and appraised the internal and external systems with a view of identifying the gaps for enhanced industrial development?” If so, what are the findings?

Yes, through the background and comprehensive studies that informed the recently passed National Industrial Policy, 2020.

The same Member asked: “What is the available regular feedback to facilitate the Government’s decisions on the subject?”

Madam Speaker, my response is: we shall be updating the House on the regular basis.

Another question came from hon. Timothy Batuwa, Member of Parliament, Jinja South Division West, Jinja City. He said that there is a President’s directive to the effect that smallholder rice farmers should stop growing rice in wetlands. In issuing the directive above, the President is concerned about possible environmental degradation.

Mindful that the affected farmers do not use fertilizers, mechanisation, herbicides or any other chemical inputs, which would otherwise distort the ecology of the wetlands as the case is in developed rice growing countries like India, China, and Pakistan. Given that the threats to the environment are obstruct and non-exist because the farmers use traditional farming methods –

The question is: “Can the Government vacate the directive and instead issue a mitigation protocol that allows for both rice growing and the protection of the environment since this activity is a major livelihood stream in these sub-regions; the UBOS report rightly states that these are the poorest sub-regions in Uganda.

According to the UBOS 2018 Annual Agriculture Survey, the national production of rice was estimated to be 199,300 metric tonnes from an estimated planted area of 199,500 hectares.

The production of rice is significant in 12 out of 14 sub-regions. Busoga, with 55,200 metric tonnes, registered the highest rice production, followed by Bukedi at 31,700 and Acholi at 27,100 metric tonnes.

The above Government report implies stoppage of rice growing in Busoga and Bukedi would leave a grave scarcity of rice. Given that the current rice demand is approximately 230 metric tons, which is five kilogrammes per person - this translates into an expenditure of Shs 805 billion per month. The stoppage will distort the country’s balance of payment, thereby lowering the strength of our currency against the dollar. It will also distort Uganda’s balance of trade to a large extent by close to Shs 10 trillion.

Therefore, isn’t it time for Government to formulate a Rice Bill that harmonises and regulates all the activities relating to rice?

Government has undertaken the following steps to ensure sustainable and resilient wetland ecosystems:

1. Restoring degraded wetlands and their eco-system services by enforcing resilient and sustainable agricultural and land management practices as well as reforestation;
2. Supporting alternative livelihoods including fish farming in the paddy fields for communities living in these areas to reduce the pressures on the wetlands; and
3. Strengthening climate information and early warning systems to support these communities to make climate resilient decisions.

In conclusion, an Environment Impact Monitoring Plan will be developed, which the district local governments should monitor regularly. In line with the above steps, there is no need for a Rice Bill.

Question 13 from hon. Kaaya Christine Nakimwero, Woman Member of Parliament, Kibogo District said that on 23 August 2021, they visited Bukomero Technical Institute and found out that the technical school that was established in 2015 has its infrastructure construction contracted by Complant Engineering Company Uganda Limited (of Chinese origin) under the Ministry of Works and Transport, that is the Saudi Fund.

The contract was to be fulfilled in three phases and the first phase was scheduled to have been accomplished in 2016. As of today, however, the phase is not yet complete. The ceiling has a lot of cracks and has started sinking in. This is evidenced by the company itself establishing ceiling supporting poles on the ground floor.

The board resolved to have their contract ended with the first payment and recommended to the ministry. However, the same company has been awarded to continue with the work by the ministry. The community leadership is disappointed. The computer laboratory power points were well established with no network cables to support computer operation making computer unusable for the last three years.

There were machinery incompatibilities, that is, when the tractor was first brought, the planters brought later could not be fixed on the same tractor.

Some of the machines brought have never been used by the teaching staff as they were also not oriented in the use of the same. They have lied idle for the last three years and the technical school is devising private means to train instructors.

She continues to say that the transport facility for the institute was planned for the third phase which, according to her, is far and renders poor performance on the technical staff. At least a motorcycle could be availed to the principal in the last three years.

The technical institute was destined to host 500 students but based on the last records, there are only 149 students, making it a monster in the community. This is due to the fact that Government only sponsors students who have passed sciences. For rural communities, this is still a dream to realise the desired number.

The girls’ dormitory was not a priority yet they need safety more than boys while attending these technical studies.

Some intending funders such as Baylor cannot proceed without the girls’ provision.

If we are to fulfill the skilling Ugandans vision, her prayers are:

1. Follow up with the accomplishment of contractual obligations at least near the agreed upon timelines;
2. An independent monitoring audit firm to review the performance of Complant Engineering and recommend to the ministry appropriately before they continue with their shoddy work in Kiboga, Lyantonde, Adjumani and other similar facilities in Uganda;
3. The ministry to follow up with the appropriate establishment and performance of the computer lab. This will also motivate private sponsorship to institute;
4. Send instructors to orient the teaching staff in use of all delivered machines at the institute;
5. Review plans to incorporate provision of transport to the institute, management leadership to improve performance in the institute;
6. Review the Government scholarship plan for technical institute to consider arts based students as well; and
7. Consider the establishment of the girls’ dormitory at the earliest phases because they face a lot of insecurity while travelling to the technical school.

My response is that the vocational education and training project for the Ministry of Education and Sports is financed under a loan agreement between Government and the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD). Following an international procurement process launched in 2013, the Ministry of Education and Sports signed an initial contract for the construction of Bukomero Technical Institute with M/S Shengyuan Group of Companies limited on 06 March 2014.

This Chinese contractor attained practical completion in March 2016, after two years. However, over their one-year “Defects Liability Period”, they were unable to attend to a long list of noted snags and hence failed to achieve “Final Completion”. Their retention sum was, therefore, not paid to them.

Following a retender process launched in May 2019, the ministry signed a new eight-month contact with a different Chinese contractor, that is M/s Complant Engineering & Trade (U) Ltd on 4 December 2019, to complete outstanding works at Bukomero Technical Institute, as well as Lyantonde, Amelo and Bukedea technical institutes.

Due to COVID-19, the contractor was negatively affected due to cash flow restrictions from their head office in China. The contract was hence extended twice up to 30 June 2021.

The Ministry of Education and Sports team and infrastructure-related consultant, that is MBW Consulting Ltd, are aware of the mentioned cracks on the first floor of the main administration/teaching block.

Accordingly, in June 2020, the Ministry of Education and Sports instructed MBW to carry out a structural integrity analysis of the affected area. The report submitted by the consultant in August 2020, indicated that the cracks on the first-floor walls and related ceiling had been caused by a slight deflection in the fully reinforced first floor slab above the ground floor staff room.

The report further showed that the degree of deflection was within the allowable structural limits, meaning the slab will not collapse. Therefore, only remedial works to the unsightly cracks were included in the ongoing scope of works.

Government’s policy is to promote science-related courses in order to improve skills and job creation. However, Government has noted the need to reconsider sponsoring arts-based students in the medium term. The Ministry of Education and Sports has noted the need to establish the girls’ dormitories and it will budget for it this financial year.

In conclusion, Government, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, provides capitation grants to all Government institutes every year to meet their requirements.

The last question is from hon. Mbwatekamwa Gaffa, Member of Parliament for Igara County West in Bushenyi District.

He says that in the 10th Parliament, Government got a loan from World Bank to upgrade some health centre IIs in all districts of Uganda to the level of Health Centre III. The loan was called UG-GIFI, with an intention of improving maternal mortality.

Government went ahead and advertised and procurement for construction of those health centres was done centrally. Some of the contractors that were awarded contracts, as we speak now, have abandoned the sites.

For example, in his constituency, the construction site of Kibazi Health Centre II in Kyomuhunga Sub-county was abandoned, even after shoddy works were done and many other health centres, which were due to be upgraded in Western Uganda were equally abandoned.

The question is that I should bring a comprehensive statement on why some sites were abandoned and the way forward.

Question 15 is that the Ministry of Health should be investigated and that a select committee should be set up to find out the cause.

My response - and the last one - is that the contract for upgrade of Kibazi Health Centre II was awarded to B&D International Co. Ltd at a contract sum of Shs 467,067,969 million.

The contractor’s performance was very poor, right from the beginning, in terms of speed to delivery of works. To this effect, the Ministry of Health advised the district to terminate the contract and procure for new contractor. The contract was terminated and a new contractor was procured.

At the end of the Financial Year 2019/2020, the unspent funds amounting to Shs 149,131,658 million meant for the completion of Kibazi Health Centre II upgrade was returned to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

The fund has never been re-voted, making it impossible for the district local government to sign a contract with a new procured contractor. This position is not an isolated case; it has affected many local Governments.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has confirmed that the above unspent funds will be captured as a supplementary and will be submitted to Parliament for approval.

Regarding the investigation of Ministry of Health, Madam Speaker, allow me to inform Members that the contracts for the upgrade of health centres II to health centres III are awarded by local Governments. Local Governments receive the funding directly from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, sign a contract with the contractors directly, supervise the works, certify and pay for the works.

Therefore, the Ministry of Health is responsible for:

1. Provision of the designs;
2. Carrying out joint evaluation of bids with local Governments and
3. Oversight monitoring and supervision.

In conclusion, I have informed the Minister in charge of Economic Monitoring, hon. Ogwang, to evaluate the performance of these projects - that is the Uganda Inter-Governmental Fiscal Transfer Programme (UIGFT) - in the entire country and update the House on the progress.

Madam Speaker, I am within time. I thank you and today, I do not have any other question. I am up to date. Thank you very much for listening. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Members, I request that next time when you are asking questions, do not be academic; ask questions that affect our communities. When you ask something that is academic, I do not know how it benefits the population.

Before you leave, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I want to refer you to the issue of the technical schools. I got more interested when I saw Bukedea; they said that they had extended the time up to June 2021. What I can report to you is that the technical school is not done. I wish you could one time visit it and see so that you see what to do with it. Thank you.

*(Mr Okot rose\_)* Yes, hon. Okot; is it on the Prime Minister’s Time? I want to refer you to the rules that we should not handle that issue for over 45 minutes. We have actually spent over one hour on it. So, can we look at the tobacco issue; a statement on tobacco?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF PAYMENT OF TOBACCO FARMERS IN BUNYORO SUBREGION

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister -

4.45

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Madam Speaker, when I was appointed the Prime Minister, that was one of my first assignments I handled. In the meeting which we had last week, the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives has not yet paid the tobacco farmers. They have entered into an agreement with the tobacco companies so that – Remember, the tobacco companies are supposed to refund this money to Government.

Already Nimatabac Tobacco Company Limited has entered into an agreement with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives. However, Continental Tobacco Uganda has not yet entered into an agreement with the ministry and I believe that this week – It is because they are Kenyan based. I think they will enter into an agreement with the ministry this week.

I believe that Parliament will handle this matter when Government is done with the process. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, what we asked the minister to lay on the Table – it is unfortunate that you were not in the House that day – is the MoU. You cannot pay the tobacco farmers before you have the MoU. We agreed that as a Government, we are not a bank of other institutions. So, for us to be able to give out the money to Continental and the other company, there must be an MoU that should be laid on the Table. Then you can go ahead and do the payment. What we want, as an institution, is a MoU. I would like the Prime Minister to know what we want.

**MS NABBANJA:** Like I have told you, Madam Speaker, there is only one MoU so far with Nimatabac Tobacco Company Limited. Continental Tobacco Uganda is yet – Like I have told you, that company is Kenyan based. We were told that they would come this week and I have not got any update as of now. However, I want to assure colleagues that the money is secure. We have not yet paid the tobacco farmers and we are going to pay them very soon.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, no payment will be made until we have a MoU on the Table. The Shs 11 billion will not be paid. Remember we provided for Shs 11 billion. There will be a joint verification of the beneficiaries as agreed in the last session.

**MR SILWANY:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to ask the Prime Minister this question because she is bothering to answer this question. The Minister of State for Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (Industry) was here and saw this matter on the Order Paper. However, he deliberately left the House.

I want to say this when the Prime Minister is here because you cannot come to the House, see your item on the Order Paper and walk out. Is it procedurally right for our ministers to continue behaving like this and to stress the Prime Minister by answering questions when she should be seated and guiding the country strategically at a higher level?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, I want to give you information. The status of payment of tobacco farmers in Bunyoro Subregion was given to the Clerk and I have a copy. Because we were not satisfied with what we got, we wanted a full response. I asked the minister to come on Tuesday to present a response and he agreed. Hon. Bahati asked for permission to go; he did not just walk out. He is a very respectful person.

There was something that was raised by hon. Feta on West Nile. We are talking about money that was provided for in the Tenth Parliament, and this was a pledge that the President made in Bunyoro. The issue of West Nile – It is good we are going into budgeting time. You should now bring it up as an item on its own.

COMPENSATION OF VICTIMS OF THE LORD’S RESISTANCE ARMY AND NATIONAL RESISTANCE ARMY INSURGENCIES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We have also received a report on compensation. The AG’s office is in the field in Lango, Acholi and Teso and they will give us an update next week on how far they have gone regarding this issue.

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, I raised a matter of national importance concerning the value addition factory that the President gave to the people of Busia, which was completed and commissioned. It has sat for almost a year now –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** How are you smuggling in that one? You know when you are a smuggler, you do not smuggle in something else. How is it coming in?

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, it is coming in as a point of procedure on whether the country is proceeding well when a donation of Shs 8 billion value addition factory is pending. You directed hon. Bahati to come and give guidelines to Parliament today but he has disappeared.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Bahati will give us a response on Tuesday regarding that.

**MR MACHO:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker.

**MR SILWANY:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The procedural point I am rising on before the Prime Minister leaves is, when we were talking about compensation of victims of the Lord’s Resistance Army, I stood up at that time and requested the Attorney-General to include Busoga Region where Lakwena’s holy spirit movement, took people’s cows and destroyed property. It is not mentioned anywhere.

Wouldn’t it be procedurally right to include Busoga on the issue of compensation because we had the holy – and also Teso and Bukedea so that the thing is handled comprehensively?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is a difference between Lakwena and the Lord’s Resistance Army.

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, Lakwena is the holy spirit movement.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, we have a number of areas that were affected. West Nile will come up, Rwenzori will come up, Bugisu will come up, Busoga will come up and Sebei will come up. All those areas will come up. What we need to do is move phase by phase.

Like I have said, we are going into a budgeting time. So, even if you now started talking about Sebei, is there a budget for it? What we need to do is to have a session of all areas that are affected, budget for them and have it sorted region per region.

**MS TAAKA:** Madam Speaker, on the Order Paper, the statement that we are expecting from the minister is on compensation of victims of the Lord’s Resistance Army and other areas. That is what the statement says –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It is compensation of victims of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and National Resistance Army (NRA) insurgencies in various parts of the country.

**MS TAAKA**: Insurgencies is in various parts of the country. Therefore, Madam Speaker, would we be proceeding well if we allow the minister to present for one region only? I would think that even if other regions are not budgeted for but are highlighted as regions that are known to have been affected by war, we should capture them and plan accordingly.

Also *– (A Member rose\_)* - I rose on a procedural matter as well, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Allow hon. Agnes to finish her submission first. However, before you finish your procedural matter, this issue has been in this House for long. It was here in the 10th Parliament and the Government has said they are going to compensate everybody. The money that was provided for, was for these people that went to court. These are the people that the Attorney-General’s office is verifying.

What we are saying is that all of us were affected but let us now put our claims on paper so that by the time we go for budgeting, we know that Busoga is claiming for this amount, Karamoja is claiming for this amount… Let us be systematic in whatever we are doing. It is not just a matter of getting up because you have seen the Acholi being paid and you say: “Okay, even Bukedea wants it.”

**MS TAAKA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your guidance but the procedural matter I was raising is that, as we receive the regions that went to court, wouldn’t it be procedurally right for us to receive a highlight of all the regions that the Government has, as those that were affected by war? As we go to plan, we shall be aware of the regions that the Government has, at least, recognised.

Even one time, when the President was in Bugiri, I raised that matter and the President promised the people of Bugiri that he would address the matter.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Agnes, I do not know whether you understand the English I am speaking. We are virtually speaking the same thing. We are saying that we are going to get an update on the whole country. Thank you.

Members, we have a motion seeking leave to introduce a Private Member’s Bill.

MOTION SEEKING LEAVE TO INTRODUCE A PRIVATE MEMBER’S BILL ENTITLED “THE ADMINISTRATION OF PARLIAMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021”

4.59

**MR ANTHONY AKOL (FDC, Kilak North County, Amuru):** Madam Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity. Hon. Apolot and I had to sit down and agree because our motion was almost the same. So, I am going to be the mover and she will be the seconder.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay. You can move.

**MR ANTHONY AKOL:** I thank you for giving me this opportunity. This has been pending for over two months. Unfortunately, I was called yesterday when I was out of Parliament, because the Opposition side had moved out. So, I was not around but I managed to come back.

This is a motion to introduce a Private Member’ Bill, moved under Article 94(4)(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 and Rule 121 and Rule 122 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda.

*“WHEREAS Article 94 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 and Rule 12l and Rule 122 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament recognise the right of a Member to move a Private Member’s Bill;*

*AND WHEREAS Parliament, under Article 79 of the Constitution, is given power to make law on any matter of peace, order, development and good governance;*

*AND WHEREAS in the l0th Parliament of Uganda, where I served, the Institute of Parliamentary Studies Act was passed into law and subsequently assented to by His Excellency, the President of Uganda, with the sole aim of providing for the establishment of the Institute of Parliamentary Studies and to provide for its objects, functions, composition, management, finances and other related matters;*

*AWARE that the Institute of Parliamentary Studies, prior to the passing of the said Act, was a department within the Parliamentary Service being serviced by staff appointed by the Parliamentary Commission but by provision of the said law was made a separate body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal, with capacity to sue or be sued in its corporate name and, do or suffer any other thing a body corporate may lawfully do or suffer yet remaining under another body corporate, namely, the Parliamentary Commission, which under the said law is the overall policy organ of the institute and is responsible for the strategic direction of the institute;*

*FURTHER AWARE that there are a number of national organisations which are employing the philosophy and system of in-house service training and that the practice of disintegrating the management levels imposes an additional financial burden on the Government of Uganda;*

*FURTHER AWARE that the Parliamentary Commission, which is responsible for the strategic direction of the institute, is established and guided by the Administration of Parliament Act;*

*NOTING that the high growth rate of the Government agencies in Uganda has continued to create jurisdictional ambiguities, drain the national treasury at the expense of effective service delivery, overstretch the capacity of the Government to sustain agencies, cause salary disparities between agencies employees and traditional civil servants, leading to wastage of resources, which would otherwise be committed to critical public services;*

*FURTHER NOTING that the Government of the Republic of Uganda has previously, through Programme 0l-l55l5l-264l0l of the Parliamentary Commission budget allocation, been funding the budget of the institute;*

*FURTHER NOTING that the continued existence of a separate body corporate as an independent entity but still under the Parliamentary Commission runs contrary to the Government of Uganda’s decision to rationalise the Government agencies and public expenditure;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, I move this motion that:*

1. *This House collectively resolves and accepts the introduction of a private Member’s Bill for an Act entitled, ‘The Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Act, 2021.’*
2. *Do order the publication of the said Bill in preparation for its first* *reading.”*

I beg to move.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, hon. Akol. Is the motion seconded? It is seconded by hon. Ocan, hon. Isingoma, hon. Apolot, hon. Dan Kimosho, hon. Muwuma and hon. Abigaba. Thank you. Would you like to speak to your motion?

**MR ANTHONY AKOL:** Madam Speaker, in the Tenth Parliament, I served as the Shadow Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development. I remember one of the issues I emphasised to the Government was how an Act of Parliament created the MDAs – and they are too many - which is now affecting the operations of Government.

First of all, I must thank hon. Bahati, who was very active at that time. I think he shared that idea in the Cabinet and later, we realised that they were cutting down the number of agencies in the country.

Madam Speaker, the amendment I am bringing is in line with the Government programme to reduce the cost of running institutions, which are too many and yet there are a lot of disparities in payments. At one point, I remember analysing some executive directors who were being paid over Shs 40 million yet the people in the real ministries get meagre resources.

The motion I am speaking to is for an amendment, which will help the country to reduce the number of institutions in the Government. Apart from that when I critically look at the Administration of the Parliament Act, especially the Parliamentary Commission, where my friend hon. Silwany and others sit, the position of the Deputy Speaker is not very clear and I have included that as part of the amendments that we are going to look into.

Madam Speaker, I have looked at the training as part of the mandate this institute is handling but when you look at the core roles of Members of Parliament or the Parliament of Uganda, you will realise that training is not a core component we should be engaging to do as the institution.

We have Government institutions like Uganda Management Institute (UMI), which is conducting a lot of technical training for the country. Even the Law Development Centre (LDC) and many other institutions are conducting training. Therefore, it will divert our major function as Parliament of Uganda. Actually, it also increases the cost of administration.

This institute has an executive director, who is at the same rank as the deputy clerks. When I did a proper check in Parliament on how the deputy clerks work, I noticed that one deputy clerk has about seven to eight or even nine other departments that he or she supervises. Yet in this institute, the executive director is only mandated to oversee training. To me, we are under-utilising our staff.

Let me also make it very clear that this amendment will not affect the current people who are employed by the institute, because it has been taken care of in the amendment that I have provided.

I have looked at the contradiction in the work of the deputy clerks. When you look at what the other clerks are doing – this institution specifically focuses only on training and I think this does not make sense.

Madam Speaker, I am sorry that I am bringing this, when my side is not here. I have been talking a lot to them about this particular amendment. Fortunately, hon. Silwany is saying Members seated here will back me up. Thank you very much. This is all I can say; the amendment is in good faith and, therefore, there is nothing to hide about it.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, hon. Akol.

5.10

**MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to second the motion for the amendment of the Administration of Parliament Act. There are some areas to be amended in the provisions in this proposal for the first reading of this Bill.

When you look at the Parliamentary Commission and the Institute of Parliamentary Studies, there is a relationship. The aspect of training of Members of Parliament, staff of Parliament and local Government leaders is very paramount. However, as an institution, we may not be able to cover everything without the help of others.

The roles of Members of Parliament and local Government leaders are related, especially when you look at legislation, oversight and others. Meaning that the Institute of Parliamentary Studies has been undertaking what the other institutions are providing and I think there is no big gap.

As a means to cut costs, we believe that some savings can be done, if this Bill is taken into consideration. When we make some savings as Parliament, we may find a way and make provisions for appropriating it further for the benefit of Ugandans, other than duplicating services in this House.

I support this motion because in the composition of the Parliamentary Commission, there is only provision for the Speaker of Parliament and not the Deputy Speaker. The Deputy Speaker only chairs when the Speaker is not present.

Madam Speaker, I have seen the way business is conducted in this House and at the beginning, you were there. Today, we may have the Rt Hon. Speaker but another time, we have the Deputy Speaker. This implies that the Deputy Speaker should be fully informed about matters of the Parliamentary Commission and the House.

I stand to second the motion that the Deputy Speaker becomes a full member of the Parliamentary Commission. *(Applause)* Therefore, honourable members, we need to amend some provisions as stated earlier. It will never be a guarantee that the Deputy Speaker will always be a lady. Another time, it may be a gentleman and the Speaker may be a lady. In this case, we are not very specific in terms of sex, as we look into this Bill.

I want to state something on the efficiency and effectiveness of Parliament. You are aware that at the time when H.E the President was nominating ministers for various positions, members of the public were against the increase of the number of ministers. When members of the public get to know the roles of the Parliamentary Commission and roles of the Institute of Parliamentary Studies, they will pose questions to us as Members of Parliament.

Madam Speaker, I second the motion and after critical analysis, I also learnt that the staff in the Institute of Parliamentary Studies will not be affected by this Bill and so, we shall not have issues of litigation. Therefore, because of time, I would like to plead with honourable members in this House to support the reading of this Bill for the first time because the staff will be accommodated in the Parliamentary Commission. The terms and conditions of the employees remain. I would like to call upon you to be very flexible leaders in this country so that we also see commitment and full utilisation of the Members of the Parliamentary Commission.

Fortunately, we have four Members, representing Members of Parliament on the Commission. Let other Members undertake full responsibility because there is a lot of delegation by the Parliamentary Commission because there is a board in place, among others. Those of us, who have had to read these documents, will actually see an aspect of duplication.

Madam Speaker, I would like to cut my presentation short, and plead with the honourable members of the august House to support this Bill. It is for the good of this country because we shall save resources and avoid duplication. I thank you, Madam Speaker. For God and My country.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

5.16

**MR DAN KIMOSHO (NRM, Kazo County, Kazo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to second the motion for specific reasons.

The amendments therein, would help us to answer and harmonise the ambiguities in the law in that specific Act. When you look at the composition of the Commission, the Act is very specific on its composition. It, however, remains silent on the position of the Deputy Speaker, who is second in hierarchy yet when we are in plenary, he or she is fully the Speaker.

I think a good law should not leave room for ambiguity, guess work or questions. It should address issues in a specific manner. That is why I support the amendment and specifically the law in effect mentions that the Deputy Speaker is a member of the Commission.

The other reason I support the motion is: the Parliamentary Commission and the training institute - the two can be merged and they can be compatible in their working relations. The core mandate of Parliament is not to train. Our core mandate is in a different area. It is very important that we concentrate on our core mandate and leave the other organs of Government and institutions that were created for the purposes of training, to do that.

It is important that the Commission in itself and its departments, create a department of training and incorporate the existing institution as a department of the Commission without venturing out for the executive officer and accounting officer, among many other issues that come with a separate Act, yet all the money is drawn from the Parliamentary Commission .

The institute in its nature is consumptive; it does not make money. Even the people that we train outside the country are paid for by the Government of Uganda. All the costs of the institute are paid for through the Parliamentary Commission.

Therefore, the institute in its nature is consumptive and it does not add any economic value to our coffers. That is why I think we would rather leave the already existing institutions that are fully financed by this Government, to run the training. Internal trainings, skills enhancements, and talent identification, can be a small role done by any other department among those we have in this Parliament.

Madam Speaker, the previous speakers were more elaborate and because of time, I beg to stop here. Once again, I put up my position that I second and support the Bill. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

5.20

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. When you look at the Parliamentary Commission, and as a Commissioner, you realise that for us to sustain and have control, and to manage Parliament well, it is good for every institution to be under Parliament. When you have a standalone institution, it kills monitoring, it kills the way you control the budget and the way we run Parliament.

I think the motion is good and I want to support it because it will strengthen the Office of the Deputy Speaker, which we need. When you look at our Act, the Administration of Parliament Act – for example, when we are going for a Commission meeting, it is silent on the role of the Deputy Speaker. You see a Deputy Speaker just mentioned yet in most times, the Speaker is not around or maybe the Speaker has travelled. This is a House with one Speaker and a Deputy Speaker. It is not a House, where we have a panel of speakers.

As a Commission, there was a time when we had a challenge; when they had just started the 11th Parliament, the Rt hon. Speaker was indisposed, he was sick. We are all aware and during that time, we had difficulty in conducting Parliamentary Commission meetings because the meetings could not take place - it is not clearly mentioned. It was until the Rt Hon. Speaker called from the sickbed to delegate the Deputy Speaker to go and Chair a Parliamentary Commission meeting that we were able to move on.

I think this is something that we should have sorted out yesterday and so, I strongly support this motion. Let us correct the way we run business in Parliament so that we do business in the right way. We need to empower the Deputy Speaker and mention that in the Act so that Parliament can run well.

Madam Speaker, I thank you, and support and urge Members to support this motion. It is for the good of this Parliament and the Parliamentary Commission. It will promote efficiency, effectiveness and create success in the deliverables of this Parliament. I beg to move.

5.23

**MR WILLIAM MUSEVENI (Independent, Buwekula South County, Mubende):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also stand to support the motion.

However, I have a concern of including the Deputy Speaker on the Commission. I think the Deputy Speaker is a Member of the Commission by interpretation. If you consider our Rules of Procedure, a “Speaker” means a “Speaker of Parliament” and includes the Deputy Speaker. Therefore, I take it that the Deputy Speaker is a Speaker and a Member of the Commission.

However, I do not know the practice here. If the Deputy Speaker is not a Member of the Commission, I think it is an error, which is supposed to be corrected because automatically she is supposed to be a Member of the Commission –*(Interjection)*–I allow the information.

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, the information I would like to give to the Member holding the Floor is that it is not that the Deputy Speaker is not a Member of the Commission. However, the Act does not mention how the Deputy Speaker can chair a Parliamentary Commission meeting; it is silent. The Deputy Speaker just comes in silently but it is not mentioned in the Act.

We want it to be mentioned so that it is not ambiguous and so that it is within the law. That is the information I wanted to give you. She is a Member but we want it to be mentioned so that when the Speaker is not there, the Deputy Speaker can call and chair Parliamentary Commission meetings.

**MR MUSEVENI:** Thank you. I would like to inform my colleague that the Act was put in place from our rules. It is a provision of our Rules of Procedure –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is not correct. The Administration of Parliament Act is superior to the Rules of Procedure.

**MR MUSEVENI:** Then if it is superior, there is a lacuna which is supposed to be corrected.

**MS RUTH NANKABIRWA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The motion is to seek leave so that a Member can bring a Bill. I have listened to the contributions from Members and we are discussing the Bill itself. *(Laughter)*

There is a precedent where we agreed that the request to seek leave should be a given right so that a Member can bring a Bill and we see its merits or demerits.

Are we proceeding well by continuing to listen to the real debate – debating issues which are supposed to be in the Bill?

**THE SPEAKER:** We are actually proceeding very well because they are only seconding the Bill. However, the honourable members have brought this Bill under Rule 121 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament. As Members of Parliament, you have a right to produce a Private Member’s Bill and they are seeking authority to bring a Private Member’s Bill. This authority is being sought by hon. Apolot jointly with hon. Akol who merged their Bills.

I, therefore, put the question that hon. Christine Apolot and hon. Akol be granted leave by this House to introduce a Private Member’s Bill entitled, “The Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2021”.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I, therefore, adjourn this House to next Tuesday. Thank you for coming.

*(The House rose at 5.28 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 5 October 2021.)*