FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY

PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIFTH SESSION - SECOND MEETING

THURSDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2025

PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FIFTH SESSION - 4TH SITTING - SECOND MEETING

Thursday, 30 October 2025

Parliament met at 2.20 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. Last evening, I was watching the news where baboons are wreaking havoc among communities in Kagadi District. A four-month-old baby was snatched by baboons from inside the house and taken to the forest, where people from the community found the child dead. I have received information from the same area, and I spoke to the reporters, who reported that children are no longer attending school in that area of Kagadi, and parents are also not working. They have to stay at home to protect their children from these wild animals.

The people claim they have been reporting to the authorities, but no action is being taken. It appears that this issue was at least reported by the news, and according to the video, these stories have been ongoing. It is a big problem around Kagadi and maybe in other areas where we have human-wildlife conflict. At first, it was people's crops; now it is human beings. It was a sad story to watch. It was on Runyakitara TV, so people who do not understand Runyakitara cannot get it well but it was a sad story.

I, therefore, request the Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities to handle this matter, ensure they visit this community and engage with the community on the interventions that they are going to take to protect the community. This is because we have always been saying we want people to protect animals, but then you get people saying, you are protecting animals more than the people. We want the people to get the same kind of protection and treatment.

This family should also be compensated and all efforts should be taken - The minister, on Wednesday, should present a statement on this matter showing which action has been taken.

Secondly, I promised to cross-check with the Office of the Clerk the issue regarding the Nation Media Group. I have been told that there is an active investigation going on and Parliament is only complying with the investigation. Once the investigation is complete, Parliament will reach out to the affected media houses.

Also, I would like to make a clarification that Parliament is not operating in darkness because I saw some people trying to insinuate that. We are live on TV; both our committees and plenary. We are live on social media; so, not being live on one television channel does not mean that we are working or operating in darkness. We are going to wait as an institution until these matters are sorted and we shall be communicating again. I thank you, honourable colleagues.

Acting Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Rwemulikya and then Hon. Wanda.

2.26

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, I rise to react to your communication, and I am going to pick on the item on which you have communicated about; an active investigation into the ban of Nation Media Group from covering Parliament.

Whereas I welcome that investigation, I think the nature of the investigation and by whom and what offence, need to come out clearly so that if it is from within Parliament – For example, it has to come out clearly that it is Parliament doing that. My understanding is that the Nation Media Group was stopped by this Parliament and the point of contestation I have is that the administrators of this Parliament act for and on behalf of all of us, the Members of Parliament.

If there is anything that needs to be brought to our attention, it has to come now because the coverage that the Nation Media Group gives is not only for Parliament but also infringes on the individual rights of Members of Parliament. If it would please you that we are not kept in the dark and have a blanket statement that we are conducting an investigation – Investigating what? This is in order for the country to know.

Secondly, I rise on an issue which is giving this country negative publicity. About a month ago, it is alleged that two Kenyan citizens came into this country; one by the name of Bob Njagi and the other one is Nicholas Oyoo. They were reported missing from this country. There are contradictory accounts of how they went missing. On one account, it was alleged that they were apprehended by our security forces. The other account is that they simply just went missing, but they went missing within the territory of Uganda, and these are citizens of Kenya.

There is a big uproar in Kenya, given the fact that we have our citizens here; Sam Mugumya, for example, who has gone missing for the last two to three months and no one is coming out to explain.

Therefore, my question is, is it a responsible way of running the state or running the Government that your own citizens, but also citizens from other countries, come into the country and there is no explanation at all? I would have thought that the Government would verify, first of all, to confirm whether those Kenyans actually crossed, came into the country, and confirm that they either crossed back or they got into whichever situation, from within.

It is bothersome that so many Ugandans are missing and it is becoming a norm for the state and the Government to say, we do not know, they got lost. I think, particularly, this one has to be explained because it is likely to inflame the relationships between the two countries. I think that the Government should take this opportunity to inform the country not only about those two Kenyans, but also the whereabouts of Sam.

It worries that one of us can simply disappear. How about those who are probably not known, and there was no one probably recording what was happening to them? It is an issue that bothers me a lot. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Jonathan. I am sorry, I cannot explain beyond what I explained here. I leave my administrators to do their work, and I trust that they will be updating us on the issue of Nation Media.

Nonetheless, honourable colleagues, you are free to interact with the Nation Media; we have not stopped any of you. They interact with you via phone, you meet outside, but also, the content released by the national broadcaster is free for any television that would want to use it. If anyone is interested in the content from here, they can tap from UBC for free. It is a taxpayer’s institution, and they can get the information from there.

Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers of Katikamu SDA Secondary School from Luweero District. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Hassan Kirumira and Hon.

Brenda Nabukenya. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. (*Applause)* They are the ones who trained my brother, Hon. Odur. We shall settle our issues outside there.

Also, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers of Namboole High School from Kira Municipality, Wakiso District. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Ibrahim Ssemujju Nganda and Hon. Betty Naluyima. They have come to observe proceedings of this House. Once again, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

I received a call from the Minister of Internal Affairs that he was coming to the House, but would be late. I do not know if the Minister of ICT and National Guidance would like to highlight anything.

2.32

THE MINISTER OF ICT AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also congratulate you upon being nominated unopposed, as a Member of the next Parliament. Regarding the alleged two Kenyans who went missing, when this story came out, I received many calls from international media, including BBC. As the minister of information, I crosschecked with security agencies and none of them was aware of these two Kenyans.

According to the story, they entered the country and were moving with one of the presidential candidates, and they went missing. Maybe we shall ask the Minister of Internal Affairs to come and update Parliament. However, when I checked with security agencies across the Government, none of them were aware of these Kenyans being in Uganda and where they were. Therefore, the Minister of Internal Affairs will give us an update when he comes.

Regarding the media, as you have said, if an investigation is going on, let us wait for the report. But also, to inform the media that we have what we call minimum broadcasting standards. All media practitioners are required by law to observe those standards. If there is a breach of any of the standards, then action is taken.

We have freedom of the press, but we do not operate in a vacuum.

If there is a breach of any of the standards, then the State takes action. However, let us wait for the investigation and the findings will be shared with the public. (*Hon. Ssewungu rose_)* If the Speaker allows.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the honourable minister who recently lost the Vice President position for NRM. I found him here in the 11th Parliament.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssewungu, that is not how you welcome an honourable colleague who has given you way. You can do better.

MR SSEWUNGU: I seek your indulgence, Mr Speaker. I saw him smiling and I felt it was not an attack. I am seeking clarification because we are getting a slow but sure dose on media houses and it is very dangerous. Your own statement says that there are codes of conduct on how they should operate.

When you hear what the Speaker has stated about the investigation, Hon. Odur, and that side, there is a challenge. Why don't you come out as the Minister of Information and National Guidance and tell us particular people who are not supposed to be reported on in this country? For example, if you write about Hon. Ssewungu or Hon. Chris Baryomunsi, it is a breach of minimum standards of media houses. That would solve problems.

Mr Speaker, we know that the President stopped the Nation Media Group from covering them. However, most of the Government officials go to Aga Khan Hospitals in Kenya and it is still the Nation Media Group running those hospitals.

Therefore, as you continue harassing them, you must be very careful as you get to their other services. If you know that once Hon.

Ssewungu is reported on by the Nation Media Group, that is a breach of his duty of conduct and is below the minimum standards, it will solve problems.

I miss NTV here and I want them to cover me not because I am ugly, but because I am speaking sense. If you continue getting that slow but sure dose, Mr Speaker, writing about Hon. Ssewungu – in the news, when I bite a dog, it makes news, but if a dog bites me, it does not make news. That is what happens with media houses. You are blocking them on this side, but other media houses are giving the same stories.

My mother, at 73 years old, is complaining about NTV. The priests are asking us about the same – Hon. Baryomunsi and you are also Catholic. The Muslims are also asking about the same. The answers come from us, Members of Parliament, on what we have done.
Mr Speaker, it is your chair there to solve this challenge.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is a two-way issue, Hon. Ssewungu. I read a statement from the Nation Media Group yesterday and it was not helpful. Well, they said that they were unstoppable and they were doing whatever they want to do. Therefore, if you are able to operate and access what you want, why are you insisting that you want to be here? "You are unstoppable." I think that we need restraint from both sides. It cannot be one way. You have a situation, but you want to come out very instructive and attacking individuals; it is not helpful.

As a person who believes in peace and talking to each other, that is not how you talk to each other when you have a situation. What the Nation Media Group needs to do is to engage. We have many media houses that have engaged and they are doing their work freely. This is what I think but it is up to whoever is operating the way they are operating.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Since I have your number and you have mine, I beg to share that kind of statement. Otherwise, we shall also talk to them because even I, you are going to stop me from talking and that is the practice in Parliament.

Otherwise, Minister of Information and National Guidance, take my words seriously. A slow but sure dose will also affect you and everybody. Pick those people and tell them that once you write about this one, you shall close you down.

DR BARYOMUNSI: I do not know what you were clarifying on, but there is no crisis. Like the Speaker guided, that there is an investigation going on; let us wait for the report. It is true like what the Speaker said that NTV or any other media house is free to tap content from UBC.

Therefore, there is nothing that stops NTV or any other media house from getting content from the national broadcaster. For emphasis, the media is regulated in Uganda. We should not debate as if the media has free range to do anything it wants. It should be noted that there are even radios we have suspended and put off, especially in this electoral season – when they become irresponsible.

Hon. Ssewungu, your threat notwithstanding that we shall get affected, I think you should allow the state and the Government to regulate the media so that we have responsible media in Uganda.

MR ODUR: Thank you, honourable minister, for taking this question for clarification. We acknowledge that the Government regulates and where there is a violation, it is prudent for the Government also to be honest and transparent in whatever they are doing. If there is any breach of the minimum broadcasting standards, we ought to know. If I am accused of murder and I am being investigated for murder, they will tell you that we are investigating.
Can you clarify which particular minimum broadcasting standard was violated by the National Media Group?

If, among the sanctions available to you, which were passed in law, is a blackout from

Parliament, why would you allow them to continue doing other coverage? Why do you single out only Parliament, which is the epicentre of governance of this country and say, “We are banning them”? Would you clarify, particularly, which minimum broadcasting standard and your choice of sanction.

DR BARYOMUNSI: When the matter is under investigation, as you know as a trained lawyer, we minimise the debate in public until the report has come out. I just ask you to be patient, and then the report will come out.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Rwemulikya?

2.41

MR IBANDA RWEMULIKYA (Independent, Ntoroko County, Ntoroko): Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you so much for your great concern over the issue of baboons. This is not an isolated case. All those communities that border wildlife face the same challenges. Especially in Ntoroko, we have the Semuliki Game Reserve that was elevated to Semuliki National Park.

If you went to Kanara Town Council, you would find a number of cases where children were snatched by these baboons and injured. Parents go ahead and foot the medical bills. Afterwards, you find that there is no compensation. Kanara Town Council and Semuliki Game Reserve are just separated by the road. Baboons cross at any time of the day into homesteads. At the end of the day, they cause a lot of injuries.

I would like to move, under your guidance, that there should be an investigation throughout the country, especially in the communities that border the wildlife, and appropriate action should be taken. Those people, especially the injured children, should be compensated. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, on that issue of wildlife, if the minister comes here with a statement on Wednesday, I think we will discuss more. I will allow debate on the statement. Hon. Richard Wanda.

2.43

MR RICHARD WANDA (NRM, Bungokho Central County, Mbale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take this opportunity to congratulate you on being nominated unopposed. It is our prayer that we join you soon.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you for your concern and the fact that you have asked the minister to come up with a statement regarding the issue of the wildlife-human conflict. As stated, this is not isolated. This is the case for baboons but there are cases of elephants in the northern part of the country and Hippopotamuses. I think there is some laxity somewhere.

You requested for a statement but I think we need a proactive action plan. There is the wildlife-human conflict but also the staff of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) harassing communities in the Elgon Region about the boundaries. Sometimes lives are lost; they shoot and destroy property, including buildings and crops.

Therefore, it is my prayer that while the minister makes a statement here, he also needs to come up with an action plan on how to address all these challenges that are coming from the wildlife management. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, let us take it at that. Hon. Masaba wants the list of the people compensated included. We will do that. Let the minister give a comprehensive statement then we debate it on Wednesday. It will be more helpful because this is scanty information and the minister is not here. Let us do it that way.

Matters of national importance, Hon. Sserukenya. Honourable member, here we speak on a microphone - *(Laughter)* - I can see the problem of campaigns. You are still a Member of Parliament. *(Laughter)*

2.45

MR DAVID SSERUKENYA (NUP, Makindye-Ssabagabo Municipality, Wakiso): Mr Speaker, I am still a Member of Parliament and I know I am coming back because all the runners up never came back. It is a sign that I performed well –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, grab the microphone and speak.

MR SSERUKENYA: And by the grace of God, I am coming back.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Great.

MR SSERUKENYA: Mr Speaker, we have a challenge in Busabala; after constructing that road, we got a lot of land grabbers. I remember you gave me a chance on the Floor of Parliament, whereby you ruled that the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development should go there.

Indeed, the minister came and chaired a meeting, but those who claim to be the owners of the land never came to that meeting. It is so unfortunate that yesterday, late in the evening, bouncers came heavily guarded and surveyed the land. I asked the Local Council I who said they knew nothing about it yet they are the main stewards of the properties. Mr Speaker, this land has around 300 families. They could crash and we lose lives.

My humble prayer is for the minister for lands to come and give us a comprehensive report on the findings that she got so that we can be updated and brief our people. Coming to survey the land could cause chaos and we lose lives. I will be grateful when this matter is taken seriously. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, this is not a matter where the minister will need to come back here, but rather, to engage the parties that are involved. Let us focus more on action. I request that the Clerk writes to the minister for lands to again visit the area and engage the parties.

How can someone refuse to come and appear before the minister in charge when there is a conflict? It means there is a problem somewhere. Either it is impunity or they are trying to hide something. We are going to take it up at that level and I will ensure that the minister comes in next week to handle the issues of your people. Hon. Joan Namutaawe.

2.48

MS JOAN NAMUTAAWE (Independent, Woman Representative, Masaka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On Tuesday, this week, the Electoral Commission shipped into Uganda 60,000 biometric voter verification kits to be used in the upcoming elections.

However, we have heard from the Government that the use of these machines will be compulsory yet there is no enabling law. Can we know from the Government exactly which law will enforce this? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this is a matter which was raised on Tuesday. The Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, who is in charge of the Electoral Commission, was given two weeks to bring a comprehensive statement. He will address your concern when that statement comes, then, we shall discuss it further on the Floor. Hon. Acrobert Kiiza.

2.49

MR ACROBERT KIIZA (Independent, Bughendera County, Bundibugyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I join honourable colleagues to congratulate you on going through unopposed. Once I come back, I want to assure you, you have my vote. That is it. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hope Hon. Jonathan Odur has heard – *(Laughter)*

MR ACROBERT KIIZA: Mr Speaker, I rise on an issue regarding the poor state of roads in Bundibugyo as a result of too much rain.

Mr Speaker, since July to date, Bundibugyo has been experiencing heavy rains, and we have lost so many bridges and culverts. As I speak, six administrative units have been cut off, including the subcounty where I come from. Mr Speaker, I leave the vehicle in Bundibugyo Town and board a boda boda.

My prayer to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and the Minister of Works and Transport is that at least they should send a technical team on the ground to assess the impact.

My second prayer is that we are provided with some gabions and culverts for a short-term intervention as we wait for the long-term.

Finally, Bundibugyo, with one road, needs an alternative road through my constituency, and this road should be tarmacked. That is the permanent solution for that area. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Once we tarmac yours, shall we have permanently solved the problem? *(Laughter)* I like that.

2.51

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Gen. Edward Katumba Wamala): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, I informed you that because of the importance of the Fort Portal-Bundibugyo Road, we have decided to put CCCC on that road, and they are doing everything, not only maintenance. Otherwise, that road is the only main trunk road that they have up to Lamia.

Mr Speaker, CCCC is also going to do rehabilitation of the bad sections and fix whatever breaks down. The contractor is already on the ground, and they will keep maintaining that road throughout.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, the Member says, if you do not tarmac his, you will not have a permanent solution. *(Laughter)* Also, the rural ones, which he has said seek administrative unit - I do not know whether there is any intervention you can do.

GEN. KATUMBA WAMALA: I know about the road through his constituency. It was one of those security roads, which we were supposed to work on but again, because of funds, we have not yet been able to address it as an alternative road to Bundibugyo. I know the road and we used to call it a security road and it goes through his constituency.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Acrobert, I would like to guide that you write to the minister and state clearly that the administrative units are affected and all that.

MR ACROBERT KIIZA: Much obliged, Mr Speaker, but can the issue of gabions and culverts, for the short-term, be addressed?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: All that.

MR ACROBERT KIIZA: Thank you.

2.53

MS EMMA CHERUKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kween): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to join my colleagues to congratulate you for having gone through unopposed. The race is still in our hands and we pray for the best, for all of us.

Mr Speaker, I rise on an issue which happened yesterday night in Kween District, at 1.00 a.m. We happened to have a very heavy downpour and it is well known that Sebei, particularly Kween, is a very mountainous area. What happened is that due to the heavy rains, there was a serious landslide and as a result, six people lost their lives and three of them are in Kapchorwa Hospital for treatment.

The six bodies are also in Kapchorwa Mortuary. It is unfortunate that Kapchorwa Hospital, which is supposed to be our regional hospital, does not have a fridge to preserve the bodies so the families can prepare for a decent burial.

Mr Speaker, I am here on their behalf and grieving with them. It is good my sister, Minister Aber Lilian, is right here with us. Honourable minister, can your office bail out our people by providing them with some money for burial expenses.

Mr Speaker, so many families were affected as a result of this landslide that need to be relocated. Most of their crops were destroyed and washed down. As we speak, almost 320 people do not have food and are languishing and grieving.

Mr Speaker, when you come to the lower belt, that is, Soi - I am speaking as the district woman Member of Parliament- Mr Speaker, the same heavy downpour carried away so many cows, pigs, goats, hens of our people in the lower belt. I want to put it on the record that there is a report that is being made available to us by the district disaster management committee.

My prayers are: one –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, I thought you had already presented your prayers.

MS CHERUKUT: Those were two. The team from the Prime Minister should step down to see how best our people from Kween, that is, Tuikat, Chepkutus Parish, Kaptang Village can be helped. There are, of course, expenses for the mortuaries that these people cannot afford. The six people were from one family.

Mr Speaker, that is my plea to my dear sister, Minister Aber. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, I would like to register our heartfelt condolences. Colleagues, as practice, I request that you observe a minute of silence since our colleague has brought this disaster to our attention.

(The House rose and observed a moment of silence.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Chemonges, I have you on my list but if the issue is related, then the minister can give an answer to us.

2.57

MR WILLIAM CHEMONGES (NRM, Kween County, Kween): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. My colleague, Hon. Emma has said most of it but I just want to add that the same issue also went to the extent in Bukwo. Bukwo lost three people and the main road was cut off. Up to now, we are still struggling to open the way.

Mr Speaker, this matter of landslides in Sebei has been happening every time whenever it is a rainy season. Even as we speak, we expect that this evening, there may be another landslide because now it is raining.

I would like to add a prayer that Government should look into this matter in totality, especially urgently resettling people who are in disaster-prone areas.

Mr Speaker, we have always presented this matter and even a team from the Prime Minister's office always comes, takes pictures, takes their lists and does everything but they do not come back. I am happy that today, we have our very brilliant minister. I can see her with a lot of notes. She must be able to give us the - (*Interruption*) – I will take it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister – No, not from a Member and he is not responsible for your – You see, we are not debating. The man has disaster issues yet you want him to clarify.

2.59

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, RELIEF AND REFUGEES (Ms Lillian Aber): Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is true that we have lost six people in Kween, three people from Bukwo, and about 2,250 people have been affected. This morning, I had a meeting with Hon. William Chemonges and Malinga Isaac, who came and we had a meeting together with the commissioner for disaster, and we have taken steps.

Mr Speaker, the first step we took is to instruct the team from the Red Cross. As you are aware, the Government funds the Red Cross to provide non-food items and support with emergency response in this country. As I speak, part of the team from the Red Cross is already on the ground. I also dispatched a team under the National Emergency Coordination and Operations Centre (NECOC) to go and support the rescue mechanism on the ground.

However, we have also allocated 10 tonnes of maize, 10 tonnes of beans, and 100 pieces of tarpaulins, and we are still mobilising others to support mainly the emergency response, provide temporary shelter, and ensure that our people who are there are supported.

Mr Speaker, allow me to say this: I request the leaders to join me in sending this message out that the communities in these areas that we have mapped out as the risky areas, should evacuate because the rain is heavy. If we speak the same message, it will help in saving lives.

However, the resettlement programme is ongoing. We are completing the procurement process on the land where we are supposed to resettle some of those people who are mapped out in the risky areas and they will soon be resettled.

Pertaining to the families of those who lost their loved ones, the President will contribute, as usual, the Shs 5 million to support the burial expenditure and those who are injured. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Lillian Aber, and I would like to thank you for being proactive and moving in quickly - the only part is on the evacuation, where they should leave the place. When people hear that you are still procuring land and all that, I think they need to be advised further on where they can temporarily settle, whether it is among relatives or you have certain temporary shelters. If you could guide us on that, it would be easy.

MS ABER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have been discussing with the disaster committee and some of the leaders on the ground and they suggested that we can have one of the churches as a holding ground. Those people will then be transported to the camp, which is in Bulambuli, because establishing two camps is a bit costly and will not help us with the emergency response now.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like to ask the leaders from Sebei to support the minister in this effort because we do not want to be coming here to talk about people who are displaced.

MS ABER: Mr Speaker, we have a meeting at 10.00 a.m., they are aware. We have sent information. They are supposed to join us with the Red Cross and other partners to plan better.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Atkins.

3.03

MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I rise to bring to the attention of the nation and specifically the Government in regard to the high cancer rates and high mortality rates in Kasese.

In the last six months, God forbid, for every expectant woman that walks into a hospital, two things have to happen in Kasese. One, either a child does not get the opportunity to live or the mother does not survive the last six months. But I also know that I came to this Parliament and raised it on the Floor, in regard to the high cancer rates and then high mortality rates.

Mr Speaker, I found in my pigeonhole, a communication from the Government Chief Whip directing the ministers - last week, I was in the district and had the opportunity to interact with our District Health Officer and other doctors, asking them whether they were able to see the ministers. The ministers have never made it to Kasese.

When you go to the Uganda Cancer Institute, it has five floors. Every floor has got somebody or a cancer patient from Kasese. I was trying to statistically make some observations. Almost 80 per cent of the cancer patients in Mulago Hospital come from Kasese.

Mr Speaker, as a leader at Makerere University, you are familiar with Prof. Hannington Oryem. He made research that relates to copper deposits. The copper miners and processors left copper deposits on the surface.

I remember Prof. Hannington Oryem saying, "Atkins, I think you could be having a disaster knocking on your district" and I said, "Professor, what could be the problem?" He said, "My research has found out that the water sweeps the copper deposits into the water bodies and it is the same water body that is used as drinking water."

Mr Speaker, this is a disaster that could cause the extinction of an entire community. As a matter of emergency –*(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, point of procedure.

MS PACUTO: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. What Hon. Atkins is raising is a crucial health matter in Uganda, not just Kasese. I am rising on a matter of procedure, requesting whether it is not procedurally right that Hon. Atkins - perhaps him or the minister - brings us a paper here in the House to be debated and articulated, so that we have a clear message to the people of Uganda.

This is because the English that he is trying to use on this matter is confusing a number of us and making us miss a very serious issue that is affecting many people, even in the countryside. I am straining myself to understand him, yet he is stating a very serious issue.

Mr Speaker, next time when Hon. Atkins is supposed to present, he needs to speak the common English of Uganda. *(Laughter)* We are tired of this. He should give us a paper and we follow word by word because the English is too much. We are just from campaigns. *(Laughter)*

Is it not procedurally right that he comes with a paper because this –*(Laughter)* - allow me to congratulate you, too, for having gone through unopposed. I am working very hard to come back, so that I be the one to nominate you for the next position. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Pacuto. You brought two things and I would like to know what the problem is. Is the problem the English or how complicated the matter is or both? *(Laughter)*

Hon. Atkins, you are raising a critical matter that needs a structured answer. The matters we usually handle here, as matters of national importance, are matters, which are very urgent. This is an urgent matter but where an off the cuff answer can be conclusive and helpful; I do not think even the Minister of Health could give a conclusive answer regarding this matter.

I would like to guide that you write a comprehensive question to the Prime Minister or even the minister because it is provided for under our rules of procedure, so that they can respond here in writing, after consulting the technical people and necessary Government agencies. I do not know if that will be satisfactory, Hon. Atkins.

MR KATUSABE: Mr Speaker, I appreciate your leadership. Like from the very start –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Pacuto, I hope you are picking this. *(Laughter)*

MR KATUSABE: I did indicate, Mr Speaker, that our Government Chief Whip was kind enough to put it into writing, and I found the letter right in my pigeonhole. However, I am struggling to understand why the Minister, even after getting a directive or request from the Government Chief Whip, has never made it to the community in Kasese. It is overwhelming us as a community.

Every expectant mother is either losing life or a child. This is something that cannot wait. Therefore, I respectively ask you, Mr Speaker and the doctors here, Hon. Dr Baryomunsi, that this could be a fast tracked.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, can I request you to put it down, and next week I will require the Minister to come and give a comprehensive statement on the same. Hon. Dr Baryomunsi for now, you can give him a mitigating answer from which we can move on. I do not know if you picked the English.

MR KATUSABE: Much obliged, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Mr Speaker, I thank Hon. Katusabe for the issue. In the medical language, something which causes cancer is called carcinogenic, and his accent seems carcinogenic like Hon. Pacuto was saying.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, honourable, you want to say his accent causes cancer? *(Laughter.)*

DR BARYOMUNSI: That was on a lighter note. Anyhow, I thank him for the concern he has raised. The problem of cancer is real in Uganda and other developing countries, where cancer is on the rise for various reasons, which we may not go into. However, the recent studies I have read done by Makerere University do not indicate that Kasese has the highest prevalence or incidence of cancer, although there is a challenge of cancer like any other place.

I think the central region, the parts of the north post higher prevalence than Kasese, and also, there is no scientific consensus that links exposure to copper to cancer. However, the Minister of Health can come and give a detailed paper. I want to add that yes, it is true, when you go to the Uganda Cancer Institute, it is congested with cases of cancer, but the Government, like we have explained earlier on -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, point of procedure.

MR KATUSABE: Mr Speaker, Hon. Dr Baryomunsi is just like me, a scholar, a philosopher, and a thinker. For anything to be believable, you will agree with me that there must be research undertaken and the research finding published in a high-impact peer-reviewed international journals. In my presentation, I did indicate that Prof. Oryem Hannington undertook research, and there is a paper to that effect.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It seems we have something the member believes is not orderly in the House. *(Hon. Migadde rose_)* Honourable, you know that you do not access the microphone before I have allowed, but please raise your point of order.

MR MIGADDE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. A few minutes ago, Hon. Atkins submitted on this Floor that 80 per cent of cancer patients in Mulago are from Kasese. Then a while ago, he said, Hon. Dr Baryomunsi, who is a scholar like him, and a philosopher, knows that for anything to be believed, there must be research. Is Hon. Atkins in order to submit on the same Floor the 80 per cent, which is not researched? Is he in order?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I listened to Hon. Atkins properly. He said that from his assessment - because the *Hansard* is a critical document, which can be used by researchers globally.

When he says that from his assessment - I cannot question someone's assessment; you get it? That is his personal assessment. If he had referred to a certain research paper, it would be different. But he referred to himself as a philosopher, and then he got another philosopher in Hon. Dr Baryomunsi, and they are disagreeing totally. I would think these are personal assessments. Yes, so conclude your procedure point, Hon. Atkins, and then we move.

MR KATUSABE: Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. You are the best in the world. All right. My procedure issue is simple. Is my honourable brother, Hon. Dr Baryomunsi procedurally right to challenge something that has been researched and published, even in high-impact international peer-reviewed journals? Is he in order? Mr Minister - through you, Mr Speaker, I appreciate it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It becomes difficult for me to know whether he has not procedurally moved in a right way when you have not referred to the exact journal or research paper. It is not a matter of who is right or wrong. I think you are all making a critical contribution. Let us conclude this matter, Hon. Dr Baryomunsi - moreover, we are waiting for a statement next week.

DR BARYOMUNSI: I will confer with Hon. Katusabe to avail me the copy of the publication. Anyhow, I know he has raised a similar issue in Kasese, in my presence at a function, on cancer. I called Prof. Oryem whom he is quoting, and he confirmed what I am saying, that while I do not deny that there is a challenge of cancer in Kasese, it does not post the highest prevalence in the country. I can look at the publication, and then we see how to handle it.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, I just wanted to say -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But Hon. Dr Baryomunsi, he did not talk about the country. He said that those at Cancer Institute. You see, he is very cautious. So, maybe other cases do not come to cancer institute.

DR BARYOMUNSI: I would like to believe that Hon. Katusabe is just making a naked eye assessment. I do not think there is a technical publication that actually supports what you are saying. If there is any publication, we could share and look at it. Lastly, Mr Speaker, the Government is alive -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister, you have your fellow medical doctors that maybe want to contribute to the debate. Dr Musa Noah and Dr Bhoka Didi.

DR MUSA NOAH: Thank you very much, honourable minister, for giving way. The only research that has been done so far in Uganda on assessing regional cancer spectrum by the Uganda Cancer Institute was done between 2017 and 2020, by Dr Jackson Oryem and colleagues. In that paper, it put Kampala, Kabale, Iganga, and Gulu as districts with higher cancer rates in the country. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I thought that you scientists do not disagree.

DR BARYOMUNSI: He is confirming what I had said earlier on. Lastly, Mr Speaker, just as information, it is true that when you go to the Uganda Cancer Institute, you notice that it is quite baffling because at the moment, most cases from upcountry come to the Cancer Institute. The Government is constructing regional cancer institutes, in Gulu - I think Gulu is complete - Mbale, Mbarara, and Jinja. I think we have discussed this before.

The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should be having some requests that they will be tabling –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On Tuesday, we passed those funds.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Yes, we passed them on Tuesday. So, we are opening those regional centres to manage cancer in the country. For Mulago Cancer Institute, we passed resources sometime back to upgrade the regional centre of excellence, where many oncologists are being trained as cancer experts. Many have been sent out to upgrade and specialise and they will be managing those cancer institutes in the regions. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers of Kabalega Secondary School, Masindi District. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Joab Businge and Hon. Florence Asiimwe Akiiki. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* You can stand up. They are very smart.

Yes, Hon. Karim Masaba - we concluded that matter. We shall carry it on next week.

3.20

MR KARIM MASABA (Independent, Industrial Division, Mbale City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance concerning the power outage in Mbale City. I have received calls from various leaders in Bugisu, Bududa, Sironko and other areas confirming that they have been in a blackout for the last two days. The entire

Bugisu Subregion has not had power for the last two days and this is impacting business. Most of our people are incurring losses, especially those dealing in the supply chain.

My prayer is that the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development fast-tracks the restoration of power in Bugisu Subregion. Since this is not an isolated case, they need to find a permanent solution because the substation in Bugema is in a low land or low-lying area. Every time we have some rains that are above average, we have power off in the entire Bugisu Subregion. They need to come up and give us a permanent solution because this is a place that is prone to flash floods.

Lastly, on the power challenges in the country, we have seen Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL) every time doing maintenance, causing power outages in different areas. Perhaps, the Minister for Energy can come and give us a brief on that because we saw several allegations in the media that it is deliberate to have a private player come in to perform this role. I suggest the minister comes to give us a comprehensive report on that. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The first one on power outages is for noting and I hope the Government takes action urgently on that.

On the second one, let the Committee on Natural Resources follow up that matter because we would need to interact further and invite the technical people who do not have a way of coming on the Floor.

Next item? Sorry, I understand the acting Leader of the Opposition (LOP), Hon. Jonathan Odur, briefed the Minister of Internal Affairs. I requested him to do so. Honourable minister, on the issue raised by Hon. Odur earlier regarding the missing Kenyans?

3.21

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Mr Speaker, yes indeed, *Ow'ekitiibwa*, Hon. Odur –*(Laughter)*- raised issues to do with the two Kenyan nationals, Nicholas Oyoo and Bob Njagi, who allegedly disappeared, and also Mr Sam Mugumya. I would like to respond as follows:

Indeed, over the two Kenyans, I have seen a communication from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prompted by the Kenyan High Commission regarding the alleged disappearance of their nationals - Bob Njagi and Nicholas Oyoo.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs communicated to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and we communicated to the Police to verify and get back to us. We are yet to get an update, but it has also come to my mind that we need to verify further because for one to be accountable for a citizen, or in this matter, a foreigner, we have to establish that they came to Uganda.

Therefore, we need to widen our search through immigration and we shall do so and make a more informed position on the matter.

Regarding Sam Mugumya - Mugumya is a Ugandan but he has the unfortunate precedent of having disappeared before and gone to Congo, where he was caught on the wrong side of the law, and spent a long time in incarceration. Indeed, we shall find out by going through the protocols of missing persons whether his disappearance was reported, and if indeed he went back to the Democratic Republic of Congo, we shall still inform the country. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of procedure?

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. You gave a directive to the Committee on Education and Sports under the stewardship of my chairperson, seated there. You gave us a time limit to report back to the House because of the teachers' concerns. Since the committee started the sitting, two ministries have refused to appear before the committee, but they are not giving sufficient reasons why they are not coming. That is the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development - Public

Service tried to appear - and Education and Sports.

Today, we sat, but there was no response. The finance ministry is the key to solving the issue of teachers, but up to now - I called your personal assistant to find out if they could, as directed by my chairperson, come and inform you of the same, but you were busy with some visitors.

I do not know if it is procedurally okay, but the finance ministry is here; direct them to respect the Committee on Education and Sports. We have always had battles with them to appear before us, yet we cannot solve the issues of the teachers without the Ministry of Finance appearing before the committee.

Our report to this House will not be successful without their appearance before the committee. He is here; he has come for loans, as so many of them have, but when it comes to the teachers, they are very negative. They forget that they went through teachers' hands. They learnt English, learnt how to speak in Parliament, and how to write, because of us, the teachers.

I pray, Mr Speaker, if it is procedurally okay, you direct - finally, or else the committee does not appear again, because you know that we have to go for campaigns.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On this matter, what we mainly want from finance on our side was for public service, which would have finished negotiating with the teachers, to come up with the figure in terms of how much money would be needed. Then, finance comes in to say that this is the figure we can now take to the Cabinet and negotiate over.

I would like to know from the Ministry of Public Service: have you completed your negotiations with the teachers so that you can complete this cycle and come up with a figure?

As for the finance ministry, indeed, they should come to the committee, but the thing they should be coming to discuss would be a figure. I would like to know if Public Service has sorted out the issue of the amounts. Finance deals with amounts and provides money. I want to first know if Public Service has sorted out the money.

3.28

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE (Ms Grace Mugasa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Public service already has the figures and they were submitted. However, when we met the First Lady, we agreed that negotiations would continue because the Uganda National Teachers Union (UNATU) had conditions that they wanted us to fulfil. The Permanent Secretary (PS) is writing invitation letters, because we are not only meeting UNATU, but all the arts cadres, including local government workers. So, I think next week, as it starts, we will have that meeting and we will bring a report, Sir.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. At this time, finance is not relevant – no, it is not because finance does not participate in the negotiations. The ministry in charge of negotiations is the Ministry of Public Service.

Therefore, I will extend the committee's time, for the Ministry of Public Service to engage with the teachers and they will update you on what they have agreed upon and then finance ministry will come in to bridge the gap. I have given you more time until public service finishes the negotiations with the teachers. Next item.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT TO AUTHORISE GOVERNMENT TO BORROW UP TO UA 91,700,000 EQUIVALENT TO $121,961,000 FROM AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SOUTH SUDAN-UGANDA POWER INTERCONNECTION PROJECT

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Public Service, let this be expedited. Move quickly and conclude so that the committee can also finish. Honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, please move the motion.

3.31

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to move a Motion for a Resolution of Parliament to borrow up to UA 91,700,000, equivalent of $121,961,000 from the African Development Fund for the construction of the South Sudan-Uganda Power Interconnection Project.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? Okay, it is seconded by Hon. Pachuto, Hon. Timuzigu, Hon. Dr Baryomunsi, Hon. Okaasai, Hon. Lt Col Alanyo, Hon. Alyek, Hon. Walyomu and many other Members. Minister, would you like to give us a quick brief?

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, the motion is moved in accordance with Article 159 of the Constitution, Section 34 of the Public Finance Management Act, and Rule 162 of our Rules of Procedure.

The project description is as follows:

The project objective is to enhance electricity supply, reliability, and affordability by integrating South Sudan into the East African power pool grid. This will address electricity deficits in South Sudan, promote regional energy trade, and provide a market for clean and surplus power generated in Uganda.

Specifically, the project aims to provide South Sudan with access to affordable, reliable electricity, enable Uganda to export surplus power and thereby reduce financial losses from unutilised capacity, and strengthen regional energy security and integration by enhancing power trade between Uganda and South Sudan.

The Uganda-South Sudan Power Interconnection Project aims to construct the necessary infrastructure to enable power trading between the two nations, providing affordable and reliable electricity to South Sudan and optimising Uganda's surplus capacity.

The project has the following components:

Component one is the construction of transmission lines, whereby a 400KV double-circuit transmission line spanning approximately 299 kilometres between Orio in Uganda and Juba, South Sudan, is designed for a power transfer capacity of up to 1,000 MW. The section in Uganda covers a distance of 150 kilometres.

Component two is the construction of substations. The construction of new substations at Gumbo in South Sudan and Bibia in Uganda, and the expansion of existing substations at Orio and Karuma in Uganda, is required to accommodate the new transmission infrastructure.

Component three is the construction of the distribution network and last-mile connections. Here, there will be a development of a 33 KV distribution network in both countries, extending electricity access to 1,000 new connections, including households, small businesses, and social infrastructure amenities.

Component four is about project administration and management services, institution capacity building, and joint coordination. This will entail the services of project supervision consultants with two independent teams, one for South Sudan and another for the Uganda project components, for the construction supervision of the project.

Component five is about resettlement action plan implementation. This will entail the acquisition of the way leaves for the transmission line infrastructure and the respective compensation of the Project Affected Persons and livelihood restoration for vulnerable households impacted by the land acquisition for the project.

Part of the loan worth UA 3.3 million will cover the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) implementation.

The financing of the project

The total estimated cost of the Uganda-South Sudan power interconnection project is UA 185.061 million, with funding contributions from the African Development Fund and European Union, and both governments of Uganda and South Sudan.

The financing for the Uganda section will be primarily through a concessional loan of the African Development Fund (ADF) of UA 91.7 million. This will be supplemented by counterpart contributions from the Uganda government amounting to UA 3.29 million. The total cost of the project components for the Uganda Government is UA 94.99 million.

The financing terms are as follows:

The loan amount is UA 91.7 million. The maturity duration is 50 years, including a grace period of 10 years. The service charge is 1 per cent per annum of the disbursed loan balance, and commitment fees are 0.75 per cent per annum on the disbursed loan balance.

The conditions precedent to the disbursement of resettlement funds are:

i) To submit the work compensation schedule in accordance with the resettlement action plan;
ii) To provide evidence of the establishment of a special account for the resettlement and compensation activities; and
iii) To submit the valuation report for the affected properties prepared by an acceptable valuer.

Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Committee chairperson, kindly, present the report. The minister has given the brief - Hon. Katabaazi on procedure.

MR KATABAAZI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the same vein, I would like to join my colleagues in congratulating you on your successful nomination, which was unopposed. The minister brings here loan requests every other day with very good intentions. As Members of the Committee on National Economy, we look at what they are going to do. They look quite developmental.

Once, they brought a loan request about rural electrification, I think around 2002. However, when we went to Hon. Okasaai, he said the loan was passed and everything was done, but the money was never disbursed.

These loans are borrowed money, which means interest will be accruing, and no work is done. We have just processed about 12 loans -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your procedural matter, honourable member?

MR KATABAAZI: Are we proceeding well if we are just here to pass loans and most of the work is not done? I will especially need clarification from the minister.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, we are proceeding well because you signed this report as Member No. 37. Since you signed it, I must process it on the Floor.

When you sign a report as a colleague, you want it processed –

MR KATABAAZI: Mr Speaker, I am not disputing that, but what I am saying is that –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, please. You may not access the microphone without the Speaker’s permission. Kindly take your seat, honourable member.

If, from what you have raised, you felt this was a loan that should not have come here, you should not have signed. I have a minority report, which is signed by your honourable colleagues but you signed the majority report. Thank you. Honourable committee chairperson, please proceed.

3.41

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL ECONOMY (Mr John Bosco Ikojo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before I read the report of the Committee on National Economy on the proposal to borrow up to Units of Accounts 91,700,000, equivalent to $121,961,000, from the African Development Fund for the construction of the South Sudan-Uganda Power Connection Project (SUPIP), I beg to lay the report. The minutes of the committee are hereby attached, and also the minority report signed by two members of my committee, Hon. Tebandeke and Hon. Hassan Kirumira.

This loan request was referred to the Committee on National Economy. We interact with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Limited, Uganda Electricity Credit Capitalisation Company, and Uganda Electricity Distribution Company. We had many documents that were presented together with the loan -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, can we do page 20? The minister has given a full brief.

MR IKOJO: Mr Speaker, I was trying to bring up an issue of compliance.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We know you did that; otherwise, I would not have allowed the report on the Order Paper.

MR IKOJO: Most obliged. Mr Speaker, it would also be good for the committee to point out issues in the ministry, most especially, such as poor performance of some of the loans.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable member. I expect a report from you and your committee on loan performance generally, not on one loan. I have been waiting for it, by the way. It’s better to do that, then I give you space, but not for each loan getting to the same issues because they are recurrent.

MR IKOJO: Mr Speaker, I take your guidance. Page 20 discusses the committee’s observations and recommendations. The minister already gave the preamble about this particular loan facility, and the committee made observations.

1. Regional Transmission Interconnectors

The committee noted that trans-border power interconnection projects are inherently complex because they often involve multiple governments, executing or implementing agencies and financiers, and must be backed by several agreements to become operational.

The committee recommends the following:

a. The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development should ensure efficient and effective coordination at regional level with the Ministry of Energy and Dams, Southern Sudan, to avoid delays in the utilisation of the electricity transmission assets in both countries in order to guarantee the timely realisation of the project benefits;

b. The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development should ensure that the final power purchase agreement between the Government of Uganda and the Government of Southern Sudan, including the joint operations and maintenance agreements, are finalised and signed by both governments prior to the completion and live testing of the power connectors. This will avoid the delays due to commercial dates of the operation of the Southern Sudan-Uganda power interconnection line being postponed due to the untimely preparation of the prerequisite documents, namely, power purchase agreements and related agreements.

2. Budget implications of the project

The committee observed that while a budget provision of one billion Uganda shillings for domestic financing has been provided for the project’s ongoing activities in the Financial Year 2025/2026, the project’s first-year external financing requirement is not provided for in the Financial Year 2025/2026 budget.

Further, the project is not part of the Multi-year commitments statement for the Financial Year 2025/2026 as presented to Parliament. The external debt requisition to finance year one of these project activities increases the government's financing requirements that should be planned in the Government's physical operations for the current Financial Year 2025 and over the medium term.

The committee recommends that the Government expedite the process of including this project in the Multi-year commitments for the Financial Year 2025/2026 and the medium term. As a result, the Government should adjust its physical framework to include any costs associated with the project's financing modalities for the Financial Year 2025/2026 and the medium term.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, cognisant of the regional integration, regional energy infrastructure development is prioritised in the fourth National Development Plan (NDPIV), Financial Years 2025/2026 to 2029/2030 since investing in the electricity supply industry is a multifaceted intervention that does not only support socio-economic growth, but also addresses technical challenges in other sectors such as agriculture, health, transport, education and telecommunication, among others.

The implementation of the project will enable Uganda to trade 624GWh of its surplus energy with Southern Sudan in the first year of operation, with a corresponding huge reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Uganda will receive direct economic benefits as a result of this project, which will be redistributed within the energy sectors, especially in contributing to increasing the proportion of the population with access to electricity within the country.

The project will further complement previous and ongoing energy operations, specifically by expanding the national transmission network, thereby providing the backbone to increasing electricity access, particularly in the Acholi Subregion, which has one of the lowest grid access rates in the country, alongside Karamoja and West Nile.

The committee recommends that the request by Government to borrow up to UA 91,700,000 from the African Bank for the construction of South Sudan-Uganda Power Interconnection Project be approved, subject to the above recommendations. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable chairperson. I want to welcome the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to the House. The debate opens now. The chairperson said we have a minority report and Hon. Tebandeke is ready. First, we will receive the minority report from Hon. Tebandeke.

3.50

MR CHARLES TEBANDEKE (NUP, Bbale County, Kayunga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I move under Rule 215 of our Rules of Procedure to present a minority report on the resolution of Parliament to borrow up to UA 91,700,000 equivalent to $121,961,000 from African Development Fund for the construction of South Sudan-Uganda Power Interconnection Project.

Mr Speaker, we are cognisant of the fact that this specific project is to enhance electricity supply and reliability and affordability by integrating South Sudan into the East African Power Pool (EAPP) to address electricity deficit in South Sudan, even when our Government has failed to connect many parts of the country to the national grid.

Mr Speaker, reports from Uganda National Bureau of Statistics, 2024, show that the national electricity connection rate in Uganda is still rotating around 25.3 per cent to the national grid with significant differences between urban, that is, 49 per cent, and rural, that is,9.1 per cent areas, and with only about 15 per cent enjoying reliable electricity, including rural residents who are disproportionately affected.

Mr Speaker, while the committee scrutinised this particular request, we disagreed on two crucial issues that deserve the whole House's attention, and I hereby highlight them.

Area of dissent

We dissented with the majority of the committee on fundamental matters -

1. Missing Memorandum of Understanding, power purchasing agreement and contract between Uganda and the rest of the neighbours, including South Sudan in question.
2. Inadequate information on the project and power capacity.

Mr Speaker, I hereby explain as follows:

1. Missing Memorandum of Understanding, power purchasing agreement and contract between Uganda and the rest of its neighbours, including South Sudan, in question.

Mr Speaker, we acknowledge that the regional power trade is advancing rapidly after exports to our neighbours of Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and lately to South Sudan. However, Ugandans have not had a chance to know the memorandum that governs this exportation. The contract terms and obligations governing the export are still a public secret from the Parliament for its interrogation and further inquiries.

Mr Speaker, only 25.3 per cent of Ugandans are connected to the national grid, and only 15 per cent enjoy reliable electricity. Rumour has it that where we export or sell our power, importers enjoy a unit price cheaper than us, the exporters. This is a disservice to Ugandans, and many Ugandans have resorted to cheaper means, like solar power, given its negative consequences. Other factors remain constant. In places like Kalangala, a unit is above Shs 1,500.

Mr Speaker, this Government owes an explanation as to why electricity is still costly to Ugandans compared to our neighbours, to whom we export electricity.

2. Inadequate information on the project and the power capacity

Mr Speaker, analysing the proposed intervention, like a 400 kV double circuit transmission line, approximately 299 kilometres with a power transfer capacity of up to 1,000MV, one question at hand is, what is the installation capacity and available megawatts that our country has before dreaming of export? Mr Speaker, the gap between installed generation capacity and available power is not clear because factors like low hydropower output during droughts, high transmission and distribution losses, and low access rate dilute the impact of increased capacity, as lamented by the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development. Reports of installed capacity reaching 2,048 megawatts are insignificant, with persistent challenges of reliance on hydroelectric power, which is affected by water levels and low grid expansion.

Additionally, the statement from the Managing Director of Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited portrays that power demand has increased to 10 per cent per annum in the country, which is enough to fast-track power distribution and extension to Ugandans rather than borrowing power for export.

Recommendation

We recommend that this House, in the spirit of minimising and reducing loan appetite for Ugandans that is seeing almost above 50 per cent of the national budget tied to debt management, and not even service, and in the spirit that our debt to GDP has increased nearly to 52 per cent, we request this Parliament to stand over this loan for the following reasons:

i) The Attorney-General to lay before this House the memorandum and contract terms that regulate the export of power to our neighbours. This embeds the selling price of a unit of power to our neighbours.

ii) Parliament resolves to reconsider this proposal to instead look for cheap credit to extend power to Ugandans as opposed to heavy borrowing for export, yet many Ugandans are not yet connected to the national grid.

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, we request that, for the sake of reducing the risks and the fear of increasing the country's debt stock, we consider and overwhelmingly support this minority report to stand over this loan so that we fast-track electricity for distribution and connect Ugandans rather than thinking of exportation with relative disadvantages and secrecy within the Memorandum of Understanding that is not availed here. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Why didn't you add those words to the report, the ones you have ended with? Maybe your colleagues would not have signed. That was on a light note *(Mr Tebandeke rose_)* No, that was just on a light note. You have done a thorough job.

3.59

MR SIRAJI EZAMA (NRM, Aringa County, Yumbe): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. First of all, I want to congratulate you on being unopposed. When I come to this Parliament again, you should be assured of my vote.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: When I came to your constituency, I saw that you were doing well. I wish you the best.

MR EZAMA: Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, I would like to concur with the report that Uganda should borrow the loan to supply power to South Sudan. That is going to be good business for Uganda because, as Ugandans, we operate businesses in South Sudan and neighbouring countries like Kenya and Rwanda.

When we supply power to these countries, we shall also automatically be beneficiaries of the power's use, which will, in turn, bring us income from Uganda.

Mr Speaker, I also want to be categorically clear on this point. We supply power to other countries, but the rate they are paying for power is extremely lower than what Ugandans who supply power to these countries are paying. Therefore, something should be done in order to normalise these rates, so that we, the suppliers of this power, also benefit at a much lower rate than what they are getting from us.

Secondly, there are many areas in Uganda where power has not been supplied. While borrowing such loans in order to supply power to these areas and nearby countries, we should first consider supplying power to our people, and then the surplus will be given to those countries, so that our people benefit from the power that is available. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Rugumayo?

4.02

MR EDSON RUGUMAYO (NRM, Youth Representative, Western): Mr Speaker, I vehemently support this loan request on two grounds:

One, we are doing something similar to what we are going to do to extend power to South Sudan or like we did the past few years to extend our roads to the Democratic Republic of Congo. We are doing this to help us cast a shadow and become a powerful nation in this region.

We should not go without expressing our gratitude to the visionary leadership of our Government, the Head of State and all leaders of the NRM. By doing this, we project ourselves as a powerful country in the region and remain so as a necessity.

Two, while my colleague across the aisle was arguing on the basis of our having insufficient power, I wish to request that our colleagues always first read the reports. For example, the committee report did a good job in explaining that by 2024 alone, Uganda's power capacity was over 2,000 megawatts, and as a country, we were only consuming 988 megawatts. It means we have a surplus of over 1,000 megawatts, which, by the way, we pay for even when we do not consume it. To produce some of this power, we have borrowed money, but we continue paying for it even when we do not consume it.

Mr Speaker, it is in the best interest of Ugandans that we get this loan, then supply this power to South Sudan, and they pay for it as we relieve ourselves of the debt burden for the loans that we borrowed earlier to produce this power. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kabasharira?

4.03

MS NAOME KABASHARIRA (Independent, Rushenyi County, Ntungamo): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I will continue from where I stopped by appreciating the chairman for the report and to the Government for thinking of extending power to our neighbouring countries of Kenya and Rwanda.

I would like to use this chance to be explained to, and I think it will even explain more to the public that is listening to this. Many Ugandans will ask a question like we are asking: Why export when we cannot get in the country? I might understand, but may Hon. Okaasai use this chance to explain to us why we have a lot of power to supply?

What is happening to the distribution in this country? We need that distribution to cover a big area. What is it that is stopping us? If it is to borrow, why don't we also borrow for distribution, so that our areas that are in darkness can get power? *(Applause)* We can borrow; we are here. We are going to pass this one, but use this chance to explain to this country why we still have –

Some of us are going to have problems getting votes. Yes, we shall get, but with many questions. People are asking, "Why don't you give us this power? We don't have power here and there." We explain, then go to the ministry, and they promise. What is it? Now, they will see this loan because people read social media. You are going to give power to South Sudan, but here we are -

There is also this load shedding. We have enough. Why don't we control load shedding? *(Applause)* It is too much. People are losing business because of power. People are losing gadgets in the House because power comes and goes. What is it? Can we get an explanation? Mr Speaker, I would like to get an explanation sincerely, and I think the public will also benefit from this. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Obigah Rose?

4.06

MS ROSE OBIGAH (NRM, Woman Representative, Terego): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. In the same vein, I would like to congratulate the committee on such a well-thought-out idea to give power to my neighbours in South Sudan. Historically, I am from the Sudanic group of people, but the only embarrassing thing is that you forget about yourself; you prefer a neighbour.

Obongi does not have a single electric pole. In Terego, which hosts very many refugees and where the honourable minister, Hon. Okaasai gets money specifically for refugee hosting, they have become adamant. The other day, my people did not know what to do. They were asking for power directly from the President. What is stopping us from first serving ourselves, and then giving the surplus to the neighbours?

Two, the most crucial thing here, I sit on the Committee on Natural Resources. As power travels a long distance, there is a lot of leakage. Why don't you break down this power within the West Nile that is really crying?

Last time, when the honourable minister for energy was in West Nile, she was booed and made to sit down, and embarrassed before the President. I think this is the only language the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development understands. We have failed to explain ourselves to the local people of West Nile.

Arua has a lot of potential for business. Non-Governmental Organisations have established welding machines in areas for promoting youth, but they cannot do so. The ministry has adamantly refused to step down power. They now come here to say, "Let us now transport power to South Sudan", as if there are no human beings in West Nile. You have turned us into animals. We do not need power because we are now part of the national park.

We need a clear explanation before we can allow this power to proceed to South Sudan, or else if we get it, let us first sort out West Nile, then proceed. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Jonathan Odur?

4.08

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I associate myself with the comments, concerns and sentiments of the Members of this House. Before I proceed to make a comment, I would like to compliment the committee.

Having looked at Table 1 and Table 2, Table 1 is about compliance. Except for the counterpart funding, which I think has a score of three points, this loan scores almost 100 per cent on our own requirements. I am raising this, Mr Speaker, because I am a very strict enforcer of our own Rules of Procedure. I feel that documents and reports that come from our committees must honour our own Rules of Procedure. When I look at this report, it is almost 100 per cent.

The second is on Table 2, which is about loan performance. I invite Members to look at some of the projects that we have borrowed but remain undisbursed. I think some of the concerns that we are raising here, for example, the electricity scale-up access project, are just 20 per cent. 80 per cent remains undisbursed.

There is a transmission line from Masaka to Mbarara, almost 100 per cent; the loan is just lying there; I think two loans. Additionally, there is power supply to industrial areas.

They should explain to us why they would come to us to borrow and raise the appetite of Ugandans that we are going to connect them to the grid, and in the end, some of this money remains, yet we have to pay a lot of costs. I also want to ask, if you are going to take this power from Karuma through Acholi and West Nile, and the two communities remain in darkness, especially West Nile, which has remained for a very long time. Yet when you look at the National Development Plan of 1980 to 1985, one of Uganda Peoples' Congress (UPC), there was already a plan in place to connect the entire West Nile. That plan was already there when the NRM government grabbed power.

Forty years, up to today, West Nile is still crying for just a connection to the grid, and their power is unreliable. I implore the Government, do not allow your own citizens who are going to shoulder the burden of this loan to be crying for power, and then you want to, if I may use the words of my brother Hon. Rugumayo, that you want to be a big man of the region. There is no pride in being a big man presiding over other countries when your own country does not have power supply. I depart from that narrative, and I think we should not be doing things because we want to position Uganda as the big man of the region when we cannot supply our own.

Lastly, the issue raised in the minority report of the power purchase agreement. Mr Speaker, I implore you to prevail over the ministry to provide this information to the House.

We have entered so many bad agreements, and then in the end, Parliament is blamed. We ought to avail ourselves of this document, with the mechanisms within this House. If the document cannot be accessed by everyone, at least within the committee, and maybe a group of members can review, including your office, Mr Speaker, so that we avoid suspicion. We avoid the blame game, and even save this country from potential hazards that may arise out of a bad contract. We have bad people all over the world who are moving, trapping countries, setting them up, and after two to three years, we have to terminate and then compensate.

I implore that this issue of the power purchase agreement should not be swept under the carpet. We have to get an explanation from the Government. Otherwise, in this loan, I commend the compliance level of the document supplied by the Government to the committee. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, we need responses to this issue because you have a loan of 2015, which was supposed to end by 2020, and you have not yet completed it. You have - No, Honourable, please. Take your seat. You have a loan of 2020, which was supposed to end in 2024; the performance is 0.33 per cent, not even one per cent. You have a loan which was supposed to end in 2023, and your performance is even worse, 0.32 per cent. You have one which was supposed to end in 2024, the performance is at zero per cent, yet you want us to give you more money. What would be the basis?

Number two, where is the power purchase agreement between you and South Sudan? Why did the committee not receive it? I was trying to summarise what colleagues raised here, if you can satisfy them.

MR OKAASAI: Mr Speaker, I will start by addressing the justification for the loan and then answer those questions. One, we are a signatory to the East African Power Pool, where we agreed to share electrons, which will not flow in one direction.

In the East African Power Pool, we trade in power. Uganda does not always have excess power. For example, occasionally, we import electricity from Kenya to kick-start our systems.

This one is supposed to enhance the flow of electrons across the East African region. We are doing this so that in case we run out of electricity, we should be able to import it. Within the East African region, you find Ethiopia actually having more electricity than us.

In case of shortages, like it happened recently in Southern Africa, where the dam produced about 10 per cent of their electricity, we should be able to bring in electricity. That is the major reason why we must trade in East Africa to avoid shortages across the East African states.

Number two, the report clearly says that we have excess electricity available. Yes, we are producing 2048 megawatts now, but we are using only 900 megawatts. This means we have some electricity that we can sell. Selling electricity not only brings in foreign currency to our country, but it also contributes to reducing the power tariffs you are talking about.

If you are producing electricity and you are not selling, the cost of production of electricity is shared among the few consumers. Although if we can extend the power, it contributes to the reduction of the tariffs. For example, recently we had a 14 per cent reduction of the tariffs in Uganda by only removing Umeme. We would want to continuously reduce the power tariffs by selling out whatever we produce. So it has a factor of reducing the tariffs instead of raising the tariffs.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, the Members have not had a problem with that. If I listened to their submission, their problem would have been, why not sell that power to Ugandans who have no connection? Why not connect Ugandans? Sell that power to Ugandans who are dying for it instead of connecting to another country and selling to others. That is the question. I think if you could answer that line, it would make it easier for you.

MR OKAASAI: Let me answer that one. Why are we not connecting, distributing the power? The budget provisions cannot allow me to distribute the power because I need $ 4 billion if I am to deliver electricity. Two, it is very expensive to distribute electricity. I am going to challenge the Members of Parliament – wherever we pass electricity, the Parliamentarians demand for electricity, although when we take electricity, the cost of clearing the paths is extremely high. It is!

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us not roast the minister.

MR OKAASAI: That is actually a chorus.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, it is clear that we have given you money through loans, but they are not performing. I think what we should do is focus on the performance of the loans we have given you, so that you reach out to very many people and distribute this power. If these loans performed well, I am sure you would have many people to give power to. How can we help you on that, honourable minister? Let the Leader of the Opposition (LOP) add something - and we are here to support you, honourable minister. We want to move with you, but listen to the concerns of your colleagues.

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, out of the 10.8 million households, only 2.3 million are connected to electricity, and that is the concern. The question we are posing to you is, will you have excess supply if you connect all the 10.8? The answer, obviously, will be no. It is unfair for you, the minister, to come and blame us for not providing funding, yet I have cited for you three electricity access scales performing poorly, two transmission lines from Masaka to Mbarara or somewhere there, two, and power to industrial parks. There is an industrial park in Lira, and people want power. There is no connection, and the loan is performing at zero per cent. The question is whether, if you execute all these loans to the dot, you will have excess power? Obviously, no.

MR OKAASAI: It is actually wrong for Hon. Odur to allege that it is only less than 20 per cent of the households that are connected to electricity. According to our statistics, 60 per cent of Ugandans are connected. I have got to talk about this. What do you mean by electricity? Electricity is electrons flowing; 22 per cent are connected to the grid, but 38 per cent are connected to alternative electricity sources. Yes, we have many grids that are solar-based. We have rooftops. Those are all electricity connections.

Let us not focus on grid connection. It is how many people use electricity, so it is 60 per cent. Let me continue answering the questions, but I am talking about the percentage of the population. It cannot be 22.

Secondly, the electricity access scale-up project. While I appreciate your approval of the project, we provided for counterpart funding, which was not provided. We would wish to get this project moving, but the counterpart funding must be provided because it is in the agreement –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Really? It is not? Honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, is it true? This is because it was not a lot of money. This is a World Bank Project, which is very critical. The Minister for Finance is here.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, every year we budget, and it is about the entity to prioritise, to choose what to use the money we give them. If the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development thinks counterpart funding is a priority among their other priorities, then they should be able to find money within their budget and provide for it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, power purchase agreement?

MR OKAASAI: The power purchase agreement for this one is not yet ready because you cannot enter into one without infrastructure. We can start discussing one after this loan is approved.

Two, there is no country that we are exporting power to at less than $0.12¢ (twelve US cents). Kenya, for example, our provision of power to

Kenya is $0.12¢ per kilowatt hour, and there is no area in Uganda where we are supplying power at more than $0.10¢.

For the case of Kalangala Island because it is not on the grid, that is why we have those high tariffs.

Anyone here is actually consuming power at about $0.07¢, and we have reached $0.05¢ for large industries. That is much lower than anywhere in the region, so we are the cheapest tariff and the lowest tariff in the region because most of our power is hydro-based. The cost of producing that power is quite low, unlike other countries, where they rely on thermal generation of power. Diesel generation is quite high, and that is what is happening in many of our countries.

The power purchase agreement - I can talk about the Kenyan one, but I cannot talk in anticipation of what we are going to do with South Sudan. The performance of the various projects, the electricity access scale-up, is delayed implementation because of the World Bank clearances. However, the good news is that we have reached a procurement level where we expect the project to start performing. However, the path requirement where I need counterpart funding will continue to count negatively against us.

The Mbarara line - this project is delayed because of the terms of the financier. It has been moving to and fro. It is financed by the French and we had a problem with the procurement. The best evaluated was a Chinese company, but the financiers insist that we are going to get a country which is favourable, a French company, and this has taken a long time to overcome.

The last one is on the supply of electricity to the industries. That project is actually on course, including providing substations in the various industrial parks like Mbale and Soroti Industrial Park. The project is also on course to provide power to those industrial parks. Many industrial parks have been connected but they do not have adequate power supply because we are going to build substations in those various industrial parks and the transmission lines.

We have a project which we have specifically developed for providing, delivering adequate and reliable power to the industrial parks, meaning extending transmission lines and then having substations in those industrial parks. The industrial parks are developing faster than the power supply that we have. We are going to deliver the power through the transmission lines. I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I want to be in line with you and the committee because someone must be wrong somewhere. The committee report, on page 9, the one for industrial parks, shows zero progress. This is the project that should have been completed by 2024 because it was a 2020 loan. Therefore, who is wrong when you say you have made that progress?

Honourable minister, do you think it is an error so that we correct it? I am seeing in disbursing - zero progress, fiscal - zero progress.

MR OKAASAI: Mr Speaker, the project is at the procurement level. As long as you have not concluded procurement on the infrastructure project, you realise zero spending of money, but the moment we get the procurement over, that project will be delivered.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I did not get the exact reason as to why a project that was supposed to end in 2024 -

MR OKAASAI: It is still procurement.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: From 2020 to 2024? This project, if I remember very well, had a contractor on it; I remember a little bit about it. Maybe, let the chairperson of the committee furnish us with some detail. It should have ended by 2024. We are in 2025 and you are still procuring.

MR MIGADDE: Mr Speaker, the minister should inform this House that they had earlier acquired a loan and later the premium and that is SINOSURE - so, the lender did not disburse any amount until the other amount of the premium was financed. Recently, we came back to this Parliament to approve additional financing to cater for that extra which is SINOSURE. That is why that project could not kick-start.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. That is a better explanation. I remember us approving that extra financing. Honourable minister, you know we have many honourable colleagues struggling in their constituencies because of power. I am sorry, that is why you see - I request the honourable minister for finance to meet with the minister for energy to discuss the issue of counterpart funding for that World Bank project.

I remember both the finance and energy ministries were here and they assured us - this is an extremely critical project. It is very big; over Shs 1 trillion, where we shall be paying interest on undisbursed money if we do not move.

Honourable colleagues, I put the question that a motion for a resolution of Parliament to authorise the Government to borrow up to UA 91,700,000, equivalent to $121,961,000 from the African Development Fund for the construction of the South Sudan Power Interconnection Project (SUPIP) be approved by this House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, please ensure that you implement this and other projects because you have heard - It is not that the MPs are against this project per se, but they have concerns on how projects that affect them are not implemented.

The Members of Parliament have given you a warning. They are supporting you but they are saying, do not bring any other until you sort these issues. Hon. Odur has suggested that you do not bring any other loan from your sector until you address their issues. We shall stop on the ones of today for now. Next item.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF THE PARLIAMENT TO AUTHORISE GOVERNMENT TO BORROW UP TO EUR 230,454,687.23 FROM CITI BANK TO FINANCE THE DESIGN AND BUILD OF THE JINJA-MBULAMUTI-KAMULI-BUKUNGU ROAD (127KM) AND JINJA CITY ROAD (10KM) PROJECT IN UGANDA

4.34

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move a motion for a resolution of Parliament to borrow up to €230,454,687.23 from the Citi Bank to finance the design and build of the Jinja-Mbulamuti-Kamuli-Bukungu Road and Jinja City Road project in Uganda. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? *(Members rose_)* It is seconded by Hon. Brenda Nabukenya, Hon. Anifa - I will only consider those standing up - Hon. Walyomu, Hon. Tebandeke, Lt Col. Alanyo, Hon. Rwemulikya, Hon. Okaasai, Hon. Rose Obigah, Hon. Baryomunsi, Member for Nakasongola, Pastor Wanzala, Hon. Muhumuza, Hon. Siraji, Hon. Enock and Hon. Karubanga.

Honourable minister, speak to your motion.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, the project scope and components are the following:

The upgrading of Jinja-Mbulamuti-Kamuli-Bukungu road is part of the Integrated Transport Infrastructure Services Programme in the National Development Plan. The project is key in delivering the programme's objective of increasing the stock and quality of transport infrastructure. To achieve this, the project will be implemented through:

a) Upgrading the existing Class C gravel road to Class II paved standard with a design life of 20 years, including all the necessary drainage structures, and load furniture for the safe operation of the road. The upgraded road will have a seven-metre carriageway with 1.5 metre shoulders on either side, resulting in a total road width of 10 metres.

b) The construction will include drainage structures like side drains, culverts, and bridges across major crossings. The roadworks include:

i. site installation,
ii. preparatory works,
iii. general earthworks,
iv. construction of the roadway and pavement layers,
v. drainage network,
vi. execution of signalling and safety equipment works,
vii. public lighting where necessary,
viii. structures, and
ix. implementation of the environmental and social management plan.

Mr Speaker, as part of the environmental and social management plan, tree planting will be included to help consolidate some of the areas around the roadway catchment, and where it could help manage potential flooding. Where any minor vegetation is cleared, this should be offset in other critical biodiverse or swampland areas to benefit biodiversity and hydrological regimes.

The flow of water in the wetland will be maintained via connections and culverts integrated into the approved design. These various road design features are developed to standards that address identified climate risks including flooding, increased precipitation and other extreme climate variables, and will adopt strict road safety measures to ensure users' safety, including meeting the safety of women and youth.

I now come to the project financing. Mr Speaker, I had mentioned the project cost. I do not have to repeat it. I now come to the terms.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, that is enough.

MR MUSASIZI: I have to present the terms.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have them in the report, and the Members have read. It is the report that confirms not your submission here, honourable minister.

MR MUSASIZI: In the interest of time - the benefits are very important, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have them in the report.

MR MUSASIZI: Okay, thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson of the committee, start from page 18.

4.40

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL ECONOMY (Mr Robert Migadde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. As per your directive, I will go to page 18. However, for purposes of emphasis, this is a report of the committee -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson of the committee, first lay the minutes and the report on the Table. That is the normal procedure before you present the report.

MR MIGADDE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thought you had also directed that I go straight to – I beg to lay on the Table the minutes of the Committee on the National Economy on processing this request.

Mr Speaker, I also lay on the Table the report of the Committee on National Economy on the proposal by the Government to borrow up to €230 million from Citibank to finance the design and build of the Jinja-Mbulamuti-Kamuli-Bukungu Road (127 kilometres) and Jinja City roads (10 kilometres) project in Uganda. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, on page 18, we have the observations and recommendations:

i. Unfavourable project financing terms

The committee noted that the project financing terms, characterised by a 13-year maturity period, including a three-year grace period, are not favourable given the experience from the implementation of projects in the Ministry of Works and Transport sector. This will erode the economic gains from the project as the payment will start before completing project implementation. The financing terms are also on the higher side, considering insurance, arrangement fees, and commitment fees.

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should renegotiate the project financing terms downwards, as these commercial terms are expensive, considering the current debt situation.

ii. Duplicated costs for engineering designs and surveys

The committee noted that the Government of Uganda, through the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA), contracted consultants to undertake a feasibility study and detailed engineering designs of the road in two sections. Studies on the Jinja-Mbulamuti-Kamuli Road (62 kilometres) were completed in June 2016 whereas the section of Kamuli-Bukungu (64 kilometres) was completed in August 2012. The feasibility study includes Shs 13.2 billion for engineering designs and surveys.

The committee recommends that, as a good practice, these costs should be excluded from the project budget to minimise the undue burden on Uganda's debt position because these designs are already there.

iii. Engineering design reviews for road projects

The committee noted the increased inconsistencies with carrying out engineering design reviews for the majority of the road infrastructure projects, which contributes to the continued escalation of road project costs.

The committee recommends the following:

a. The Ministry of Works and Transport should give authority to the chief engineer to approve designs, conduct design reviews, and associated costs in line with design manuals, ensure consistency across the various projects, and minimise the design risks associated.

b. The Office of the Engineer-in-Chief, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development and National Planning Authority (NPA), should regularly undertake independent unit costing reviews for externally funded road projects to ensure that all loan projects costs are in line with market benchmarks and do not escalate unnecessarily.

Mr Speaker, this project and the loan also includes the acquisition for right of way. It is embedded in the overall project cost so we may not have issues like delays in implementation.

In conclusion, upgrading Jinja-Mbulamuti-Kamuli-Bukungu Road (127 kilometres) to paved standard is economically justified and financially viable. This road will enhance the linkage of the Busoga Sub region to the Teso and Lango sub regions, as well as Nakasongola District, which share Lake Kyoga.

The rapid growth in the physical development and population of Jinja City has increased demand for better road infrastructure. The roads within Jinja City require immediate upgrading, stock rehabilitation to increase driver comfort, riding quality and road user costs.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the request by the Government to borrow up to €230,454,688 from Citibank to finance the upgrade of the Jinja-Mbulamuti-Kamuli-Bukungu Road and the Jinja City roads (10 kilometres) project be approved, subject to the above recommendations.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank the committee. As you saw, Hon. Tebandeke also seconded this loan as opposed to the others. With this, I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the motion for a resolution of Parliament to authorise the Government to borrow up to €230,454,687.23 from Citibank to finance the design and build of the Jinja-Mbulamuti-Kamuli-Bukungu Road (127 Kilometres) and the Jinja City roads (10 kilometres) project in Uganda be approved by this House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I would like to thank you. This is a project that has been here every day, with everyone talking about it.

Let us handle the last item.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT TO AUTHORISE THE GOVERNMENT TO BORROW UP TO EUR 342,592,806.25 FROM STANDARD CHARTERED BANK FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 400KV KARUMA-TORORO DOUBLE CIRCUIT TRANSMISSION LINE AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS AND 132/33KV NTINDA SUBSTATION PROJECT

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, yesterday, I had a meeting with the Ambassador of Norway, who came to me. I want to ask the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, why you captured it this way, because they told me that the money is coming from the Norwegian bank, but Standard Chartered Bank is an arranging bank. Sometimes, when people see these commercial banks, we immediately get scared.

I asked the ambassador - and the Norwegians have been supporting us so much on these projects and their money is usually very cheap. Next time it should be captured to include such an element. The commercial banks should not scare us. Honourable minister, kindly move your motion. I just wanted to inform you about that.

4.51

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take note of your concern and the concern of the ambassador.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, it was not the ambassador's concern, because she does not know how we frame it on our Order Paper. It was my concern and in fact, it was on Tuesday.

MR MUSASIZI: We shall sit and review our format of presentation because we have always presented it in this structure. Nonetheless, I beg to move a motion for a resolution of Parliament to borrow up to €342,592,806.25 from the Standard Chartered Bank to finance the construction of the 400KV Karuma-Tororo double circuit transmission line and associated substations, and 132/33KV Ntinda substation project. I beg to move, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? It is seconded by the Member for Obongi, Hon. Okaasai, Hon. Mugasa, *Afande* Matsiko, Lt Col Dr Hon. Alanyo and very many colleagues.

Honourable minister, submit a brief about the project -

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. The project seeks to increase transmission capacity and reliability to ensure efficient utilisation of power generated from the Karuma hydropower plant while supporting Uganda's goal of industrialisation, regional power trade and energy security. To achieve this, the project will be implemented through three key components that are outlined below:

i. Construction and transmission lines, 400KV double circuit transmission line from Karuma to Tororo. This will cover 347 kilometres and 220KV double circuit in loop-out from Tororo to Tororo border substation, 400 metres and 132KV double circuit loop from Namanve, Kampala North to Ntinda substation.

ii. Construction of substations
Construction of new substations; 400/220KV Tororo border and 132/33KVk Ntinda substation, and expansion of the existing 400/132KV Karuma substation to accommodate new transmission infrastructure.

iii. Resettlement action plan implementation

This involves the acquisition of way-leaves for the transmission corridor, compensation of the project-affected persons, and livelihood restoration for vulnerable households affected by land acquisition.

Mr Speaker, I had already mentioned the financing, but it will be financed with support from the Swedish Export Credit Agency of Sweden.

The project will be financed through a loan from Standard Chartered Bank, structured into two facilities, namely: the EKN covered facility, which amounts to €291,000,440.699, extended by Standard Chartered Bank and fully guaranteed by the Swedish Export Credit Agency.

A commercial facility of €51.152 million was provided directly by Standard Chartered Bank on commercial terms. The EKN covered facility will finance the main construction works under concessional terms, while the commercial facility will meet counterpart funding requirements, including the resettlement action plans and other related costs.

Loan terms

i. Loan amount - €291.44 million;
ii. Loan duration - 13 years with a grace period of three years;
iii. The interest rate - six months liable of 2.124 per cent as of 28th October, plus a margin of 0.9 per cent, which adds up to 3.024 per cent;
iv. The margin - 0.9 per cent per annum;
v. The agency fees - €350,000 flat;
vi. Commitment fees - 0.2 per cent per annum on the undisbursed funds;
vii. Arrangement fees - 1.4 per cent flat on the loan amount; and
viii. Loan repayment is semi-annual.

The terms of the commercial facility

i. Loan amount - €51.152 million; this includes 5 per cent of land compensation;
ii. Loan period - seven years;
iii. The grace period - one year;
iv. Interest rate - 6 per cent liable, which is at 2.14 per cent as of yesterday, plus a margin of 4.6 per cent. All will amount to 6.724 per cent;
v. Commitment fees - 1.38 per cent on undisbursed loan;
vi. Arrangement fees - 1.3 per cent flat.

Mr Speaker, briefly on the benefits -

The project will improve power supply reliability in the eastern and greater Kampala metropolitan regions, enabling industries and households to access stable electricity.

It will facilitate regional power trade with Kenya, promote economic growth and job creation, and strengthen Uganda's role in the East African power pool.

The construction of the Ntinda substation will relieve pressure on Kawanda and Lugogo substations, while the Tororo Border substation will support Tororo Industrial Park and expand industrial capacity in the eastern region.

Overall, the project will enhance Uganda's energy security, reduce transmission losses, and support the country's industrialisation and export-led growth strategy. I submit, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Chairperson, the minister has given details. You can present the report and after laying it on the Table, start with page 11 on observations and recommendations.

4.57

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL ECONOMY (Mr John Bosco Ikojo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay the report of the Committee on National Economy for the proposal to borrow up to €342,592,806.25 from the Standard Chartered Bank for the construction of a 400KV Karuma-Tororo double circuit transmission line and associated substations and 132/33KV Ntinda substation project. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, as guided, the report of the committee made a single observation in line with the projects being implemented by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development. The Project-Affected Persons is one of the observations that we made. The committee was informed that the total cost for compensation of the Project-Affected Persons is €48.595 million, which forms part of the commercial facility to be borrowed from Standard Chartered Bank. The committee observed that part of the main challenges affecting project implementation in the energy transmission project is aggrieved Project Affected Persons (PAPs) who are not in agreement with the compensation sums.

A case in point is the Masaka-Mbarara 400kV transmission line and associated substations that has recorded zero progress by December 2024, seven years since its financing was considered. The project faced challenges relating to compensation of PAPs who are aggrieved with the revised compensation amounts.

The committee was concerned that this may impact the handover of the right of way to the contractor. The committee recommends that the resettlement and compensation of Project Affected Persons along the project location be given first priority upon effectiveness of this financing, since it caters for the PAP costs. Any delays in settling these costs may escalate to changes in valuation costs and delays in project implementation.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, subject to the observations and recommendations presented above, the committee recommends that the proposal by the Government to borrow up to €342,592,806.25 from the Standard Chartered Bank for the construction of the 400kV Karuma-Tororo Double Circuit Transmission Line and Associated Substations, and 132/33kV Ntinda Substation Project be approved. I beg to report. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the motion for a resolution of Parliament to authorise the Government to borrow up to €342,592,806.25 from Standard Chartered Bank for the construction of 400kV Karuma-Tororo Double Circuit Transmission Line and Associated Substations and 132/33kV Ntinda Substation Project to be approved by this House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, House adjourned *sine die*.

(The House rose at 5.01 p.m. and adjourned sine die.)