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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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THIRD SESSION - THIRD MEETING

TUESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2024



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 9TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Tuesday, 13 February 2024

Parliament met at 2.17 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. I have been reading reports, which said that we have a shortage of blood in this country. Unfortunately, we cannot manufacture blood yet any of us can need blood any time. Most of you have excess blood; some of you even come boiling towards me because of excess blood. *(Laughter)*

I request and implore you, honourable colleagues, to donate blood. You never know whom you will save, but you also never know who will save you in the future, or who will save your relative, or one of your loved ones.

The blood bank team have been in the media calling upon people to donate blood. We have a huge shortage of blood in the country. Therefore, I request the Clerk to organise for a blood donation week here in Parliament *-(Applause)-* so that Members of Parliament can be able to donate blood and save lives. Among the most excited is Hon. Martin Muzaale. I am sure he has excess blood, and "Rastaman" will be there to donate too.

I will be very grateful if we donate blood and I will personally join. I have taken about six months without donating blood. The last time I donated blood was from here. So, I will be able to donate it again.

Honourable colleagues, in the VIP gallery this afternoon, we are blessed to have His Excellency Fukuzawa Hidemoto, the Ambassador of Japan to Uganda. He is accompanied by his deputy, H.E Tomotaka Yoshimura. They are here to observe the proceedings of this House. *(Applause)*

However, on a painful note for me, personally, H.E Amb. Hidemoto will be leaving Uganda after completing his assignment. He has been a friend to many. During his time, he has been able to lobby for the people of Uganda and the Government of Uganda; increased funding from sectors ranging from basic education to university research, infrastructure, the energy sector, health centres and ambulances. They have touched each and every sector.

We now have experts on highway and flyover designs from Japan, based here. They have been studying our country and helping us to come up with the most complete designs for roads in the country. You know that Japan is associated with quality.

On another personal note, on Sunday morning, we played golf at Serena Kigo, and he gave me a gift, which no one had ever given me. For those who know golf, there is what we call a hole-in-one; where you hit a ball and it goes

straight in the hole. I have played with pros; I have played everywhere. On top of not doing it personally, it was my first time to witness it. That always happens on a par 3. So, as golfers in the whole country, we have been celebrating him this entire weekend, and luckily enough, he met all our bills because that is the rule in golf. If you do a hole-in-one, you have to look after all those people; we “punish” you for doing well. *(Laughter)*

He is a personal friend and he told me that this was the second hole-in-one he has done in 42 years of playing golf. He did one in Kenya, he has done one in Uganda and he said that that was the greatest farewell this country has given him. *(Applause)*

Today, he paid me a courtesy visit to say bye and we shared a lot with him and some other honourable friends. He has advised us on a few things here and there, which we will be using in our legislative duties.

Government Chief Whip, would you like to say something in reaction to my communication?

2.25

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, in reacting to your communication, I would like to pay special tribute to the outgoing Japanese Ambassador, H.E Fukuzawa Hidemoto. I am saying this because before I was appointed Government Chief Whip, I worked closely with the ambassador when I was the Minister of State for Education and Sports, in charge of sports.

I would like to state that the Ambassador, we see up here is part of the reason Uganda participated in the 2022 Olympics in Tokyo, Japan and ended up putting up the most viable competition in our post-Independence history.

I thank him because he coordinated our team very well. Remember the 2022 Olympics was held during the COVID-19 pandemic. He connected Team Uganda to the pre-trial camp in two cities in Japan.

Your Excellency, the outgoing Ambassador of Japan, I pay special tribute to you on behalf of the Government under the leadership in the House here of the Rt Hon. Prime Minister. I thank you. Your tour of duty has come to an end and wherever you are going, please go with the blessings of the people of Uganda.

Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Government Chief Whip. Hon. Otingiw, Hon. Achan, Hon. Opio, and Hon. Ndiwalana.

2.27

MR ISAAC OTINGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. May I also begin by thanking our outgoing Japanese Ambassador for the great work he has done for our country. Rightly noted, he has actually done a lot for our country in terms of lobbying for so many things right from infrastructure to the health sector.

I particularly want to thank the Japanese Government, through our ambassador, for the efforts they have made in the health sector. Recently, the ministry launched about 116 ambulances to go to our respective districts and out of the 116, 25 type B ambulances were a direct donation from the Japanese Government through our ambassador. We congratulate you for that.

In addition, the districts from the refugee hosting communities know very well that you have donated heavily - over \$79 million - this year to help the refugee hosting communities in Karamoja and other areas. We thank you.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, I thank you for your effort in trying to encourage Members to donate blood; that is something that we need to do. I sit on the Committee on Health and during the Budget Framework Paper(BFP), they mentioned to the committee about the shortage of blood.

We are all aware of the cries of our mothers in our respective districts, constituencies and subcounties. We know that 40 per cent of

maternal deaths are due to excessive bleeding. So, this is something that we should all embrace and champion; to donate blood. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

2.29

MS JUDITH ACHAN (NRM, Woman Representative, Nwoya): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to pay my special tribute to His Excellency, the Ambassador of Japan to Uganda. I am a beneficiary of his hard work during his tour in Uganda. One of our health centres in Nwoya District benefited from his hard work; that is Koch Goma Health Centre II maternity ward.

I was privileged to be part of the commissioning of the maternity ward that day. Thank you, so much. I believe that as you leave the country, you will continue to work with us from wherever you will be.

On blood donation, we have been struggling with the hospitals - in my district, Anaka Hospital does not have where to keep blood. As much as we try to mobilise the community, the youth and the people who are willing to donate blood, the challenge of the fridges to keep the blood still rocks our country.

I urge the Ministry of Health to ensure that every hospital has a fridge to store this blood safely. We have challenges where sickle cell children most of the time are referred to the hospitals and health centres for blood; we have lost many of them on the way as they strive to get blood from the hospitals. We welcome this. I will be part of the people to donate blood and save lives in this country.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

2.31

DR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also would like to add my voice to pay tribute to the outgoing Ambassador of Japan to Uganda and to state that my constituency is one of the beneficiaries. They provided solar to Aleru Secondary School and also fully equipped the

laboratory, which is still functional, to date. I would like to appreciate them for that.

On the issue of blood, Uganda needs 450,000 units of blood annually, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) standards. However, we are only collecting 350,000 units. That means there is a gap of 100,000 units. Several times, we have presented, on the Floor of Parliament, unfunded priorities for the blood bank.

They need more human resources and more vehicles to bridge the gap. I pray that as we move into handling ministerial policy statements, we allocate more resources to the Nakasero Blood Bank so that they can collect more blood.

Most importantly, I would like to thank you for your appeal for us, as legislators, to donate blood. A lot of blood is collected mainly from schools. Nakasero Blood Bank has indicated that whenever they are on holiday, there is a huge shortage of blood, something that we are noticing.

The age for giving blood is 17 years and above, so, they mainly collect from the advanced level students. So, it is important that we now mobilise legislators and the bigger working population to donate blood to fill this gap. Thank you.

2.32

MS CHRISTINE NDIWALANA (NUP, Bukomansimbi North County, Bukomansimbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also add my tribute to the outgoing Ambassador of Japan. We are so grateful for the work done to our country.

Concerning blood donation, I have a piece of advice to my fellow honourable members who are going to donate it. First, look at yourself to know that you are above 45 kilogrammes. Secondly, you must be above 18 years and you should not be above 60 years. Make sure that your diet is okay so that you do not collapse after donating blood. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank you. Hon. Ndiwalana, I hope you will not charge Parliament for that medical advice.

MS NDIWALANA: And make sure you are not on your menstrual period, for the ladies. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

2.34

MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. To manage blood, the Government needs to improve the administrative and laboratory infrastructure of blood banks. For example, in Kiryandongo General Hospital, the Ministry of Health provided us with refrigeration.

However, when the power goes off - because we usually have issues with electricity, for three to four or five to one week - when we do not have power, automatically the blood goes bad.

Government has to first address that issue and then the collection, preservation and storage of blood will be up to date.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Should they first do that before we donate blood?

MR NGOMPEK: We shall donate, but the Government has to also improve on the infrastructure. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay. Let us hear from Hon. Bagiire, followed by Hon. Biraaro.

2.35

MR AGGREY BAGIIRE (NRM, Bunya County West, Mayuge): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to pay tribute to the outgoing Ambassador of Japan to Uganda. The outgoing ambassador has played his part. I will give about two or three issues that the Ambassador personally played a very big role in, and that is in improving the lives and the economy of this country.

The Jinja Bridge that all of us are happy about, was his effort and we thank him for that. *(Applause)* Right now, the bridge being planned on Karuma has been his effort.

When I held an office, he told me that one of the challenges that this country is facing is the death of people on the roads. He proposed the idea of training drivers in defensive driving. I do not know whether, Your Excellency, maybe you will share with the Speaker, whether you continued with that effort because we had begun on it.

He wanted to bring in machines into this country to train drivers like they train pilots, to make sure that we reduce on the road carnage in this country.

He was thinking about that to save the lives of the people on the roads. Mr Speaker, it is good that you have brought him so that we pay tribute to him when he is still alive. On many occasions, we pay tribute to people when they are gone. Thank you.

2.37

MR EPHRAIM BIRAARO (NRM, Buhweju West County, Buhweju): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In your communication, you talked about paying tribute to His Excellency, the Ambassador of Japan to Uganda. Thank you very much, for connecting us to that extent. The interaction you had with him was very enriching and put a foundation for the incoming Ambassador to take on.

Mr Speaker, Buhweju is one of the areas that have not benefited from NGOs or foreign support. However, Japan, without much soliciting or pushing went and installed water tanks in about seven primary schools. *(Applause)* They are the only ones so far existing there because there is no input from others.

So, as the people of Buhweju and Ugandans, we wish to thank Japan and the ambassador. We hope that his successor will sustain what he did and even build much more. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us hear from the Hon. Sarah Opendi.

2.39

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I appreciate you for your communication, and specifically, through you, thank the Japanese Government, for all the support that has been extended to the Government of Uganda.

They have supported various projects in the health and education sectors, and certainly, a number of schools in different districts were constructed through their support, specifically through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). So, on behalf of my people of Tororo District and the Minister of Health who is not here, but touring the country, I would like to thank the people of Japan for that gesture.

Mr Speaker, you have talked about the issue of blood donation – I have a lot of blood and that is why I am even sweating *-(Laughter)* – and I would like to plead with the Members of Parliament because whenever we would bring here the team from the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services - we would speak a lot in the House, but when it came to actual donation, few Members would turn up. I hope this 11th Parliament will be different and I hope Members will show up when the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services team comes here.

However, Mr Speaker, we have a challenge. We can donate blood, but as long as we do not provide funds to the National Medical Stores to procure the necessary reagents, test kits and the blood bags, then, we are wasting our time. As we speak, I am aware that the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services is short of Shs 10 billion. In November, they put in a supplementary request, which has not been honoured up to now. As we speak, they have already used the Quarter 4 funds, so, they have no money left.

Mr Speaker, can the request from the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services for the Shs 10 billion be availed to the National Medical Stores so that the necessary reagents and blood

bags are actually procured. Short of that, you are going to donate blood, but it will actually be wasted. That is my plea to the ministry for finance. *(Members rose)* He wants to give information.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, you know the practice here on matters of national importance: we do not receive information.

Honourable colleagues, please, matters of national importance are under my communication because they are not provided for you here - please, you have to bear with me. We have designed our programme that on Thursdays, we give you more time to raise Members' issues spontaneously.

Yes, honourable minister of state for disaster preparedness.

2.42

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (RELIEF, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND REFUGEES) (Ms Esther Anyakun): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join other Members of Parliament and ministers who are here today to thank the ambassador. He has played a very big role under the Office of the Prime Minister, most especially in my docket. He has supported the department of disaster, where we have got a lot of donations through the embassy, especially for food security.

Mr speaker, I thank him extremely because of the development projects under the refugee window. We have seen tremendous changes *-(Applause)*- in all the areas where we are hosting refugees - bridges, roads, hospitals and everything. I would like to be part of the Members paying tribute today because my docket has benefited from the Government of Japan. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, we are going to miss the ambassador. We pray that the next Ambassador works – but he has been very exceptional. He is more of an African and I pray you will give him a plot of land where we shall be able to

come and visit him in your constituency – *(Laughter)*- as well as in Karamoja.

We would like to thank you, as the people of Uganda. I was in Japan with him, when we went to lobby for more support for the country. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, Ambassador Hidemoto first came to Uganda in 1984; it was in the midst of the war. At that time, he was a senior business executive for one of the big Japanese businesses coming to explore the market here. He shared with me that he never thought this country would recover; he never thought he would come back here.

When he was posted here, he said, he was impressed by the strides we had managed to make as a country and he prays we continue on that path. *(Applause)* The Government of Japan has been able to build over 242 schools and different health centres for us, and supported the roads sector. So, we would like to extend our appreciation. I am sure the one for the Government will formally be extended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the President, when the ambassador goes to pay his last farewell visit to them.

Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of sugarcane outgrowers from Butembe Constituency, Jinja District. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. David Livingstone Zijjan and Hon. Loy Katali. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* You can stand up for recognition. I hope some are from Hon. Walyomu's area.

Honourable colleagues, we had a consultative meeting today with Members of Parliament from the sugarcane-growing areas, the minister for trade, the Attorney-General, representatives of farmers and the shadow minister for trade, Hon. Manjeri Kyebakutika –*(Hon. Ssemujju rose)* - the Speaker is still speaking. The motion might be aimed at stopping the Speaker from speaking. *(Laughter)*

Anyhow, honourable colleagues, as I was saying, we had a very extensive discussion and, in the end, the Government requested for time to go and consult on some of the issues, which colleagues raised. Once those consultations are concluded, I will wait for a signal from the Government and, then, we shall consider the Bill at the right time.

In the public gallery this afternoon, we also have a delegation of representatives from Bunyoro Kitara Students Association, based in Hoima City. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Asinansi Nyakato, Hon. Patrick Isingoma Mwesigwa and Hon. Joseph Ruyonga. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them once again. *(Applause)* Thank you.

Still on my communication, before I forget, we have Ash Wednesday tomorrow. The Catholic Chaplaincy will have it celebrated here. The Bishop of Nebbi Catholic Diocese will lead us in Mass, starting at 5.00 p.m. tomorrow. For more information, you can link up with Hon. Lucy Akello, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Catholic Chaplaincy. Be there in big numbers to welcome the Bishop of Nebbi.

Hon. Ssemujju, do you have a procedural matter?

MR SSEMUJJU: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. We had an Ambassador from Germany who was very good to Uganda. He was offered citizenship. He eventually returned and settled here, and even made it to the list of Presidential Advisors. I would like to move Parliament to urge the Government to offer and bestow citizenship of Uganda to the Ambassador of Japan for everything that we have said that he did while here, and the good things he has done, and then leave it to him to choose to either come back and settle in Uganda or not.

Once he is a citizen, the many things he has done, we can even ask him to provide leadership –*(Laughter)*- especially in areas where we are lacking - because we are thanking him for bridges, schools, health, for roads. In fact, if

he came here, since we have a life President, maybe we can consider him for Prime Minister. The motion I would like to move is to make an offer, asking him to take up Ugandan citizenship like the former Ambassador of Germany to Uganda. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, that is a vintage Ssemujju. I hope if he comes, he does not stand for MP, Kira Municipality. But I picked the point that Hon. Ssemujju is putting across, that such people should remain useful to our country, given the connections they have.

In addition, in our interaction with the Ambassador today, he said he has been the Ambassador of Japan to Uganda, but now that he is going back, he will be Uganda's ambassador globally because of our good country.

Did you want to say something, Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

2.50

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, I support the motion, on behalf of the Government and it is because of the good Government that we have, which has provided a conducive environment that we can get such people serving in our country. Before, such people were not here. So, I would like to thank His Excellency, the Ambassador for the good work that he has done to supplement what the Government has been doing.

I also thank His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Uganda, Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, for allowing such people to be here. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. For the record to be captured well, I did not accept this motion. These are motions provided for under Rule 59 of the Rules of Procedure; motions without notice. Specifically, this would fall under Rule 59(1)(k) of the Rules of Procedure.

However, it is at the discretion of the Speaker to feel whether this is very urgent. I think this is not urgent. If the Ambassador is interested, he will apply. He has not yet bid farewell; he will share with the Executive on this matter. So, I would like, for record purposes, to state that there is no motion on the Floor. Yes, point of procedure?

MS OPENDI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I raised the issue of the supplementary request from the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services. This was in November last year, and I did notify this House that already, they have used up their entire allocation, even the fourth quarter. Since the Rt Hon. Prime Minister is here, we want assurance that the blood we are going to collect from Ugandan citizens will not be wasted due to lack of reagents. And accordingly, wouldn't it be procedurally right for the Prime Minister to assure this House that the blood collected will not be wasted?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when you look at the gap that we have - like for the blood bank - it is not that big in terms of mobilising resources compared to the work that they are doing. I think we can look for the Shs 10 billion because you never know who will be saved by this blood. That is the good thing about blood. I have a friend of mine whom I told to go and donate blood, but he said, "I can never go to donate blood." I asked why and he said, "Look, I always drink a lot of alcohol; my blood is manufactured from alcohol, it might be given to people who do not take or who are not allowed to take alcohol."

So, you can see, people have excuses and play around, but when such a person needs blood, that is when they will know what it means to need blood.

Anyhow, we have organised a blood donation week. We have told the Clerk to arrange for Members of Parliament and staff and some of our visitors - I am sure you will donate blood. But above that, the blood bank has a shortage of around Shs 10 billion.

2.54

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank everybody who is willing to donate blood. I have also been donating blood, and it is a good gesture to this country.

I am going to follow this up with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development because the letter requesting for a supplementary of Shs 10 billion was received on 17th November. I am going to make a follow-up on this issue to see that the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, commits money for this urgent programme. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, matters of national importance – yes, Hon. Mbwatekamwa Gaffa.

2.55

MR GAFFA MBWATEKAMWA (NRM, Igara County West, Bushenyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The matter I am raising is very urgent and extremely important for this country. Today, if you have read the *New Vision*, its front page headline reads, “*Nine tea factories shut down*” – *(Interjections)* - yes, out of 21.

Mr Speaker, it so happens that I lead people who are tea farmers and we are in pain that my Government has been strongly supporting cattle farmers, unlike tea farmers in this country.

Mr Speaker, we have been crying – *(Interjections)* - yes, it is a fact *-(Hon. Kinyamatama rose)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, point of order, Hon. Kinyamatama.

MS KINYAMATAMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have been here with issues to do with cattle farming, and everything. Is it in order to start discriminating? I support the tea factories, I am here to support you, my brother, because we are all Ugandans. So, let us stop discriminating and incriminating the Government. Is it in order?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You people, I am the one who has been asked, now you are quarrelling amongst yourselves. Honourable colleagues, I wish the exchanges were through me. I was in Kazo recently, and I have been meeting cattle farmers. They are crying. They have lost a lot of cattle to Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and ticks because we had no money.

Putting all that aside, we have had people who grow Vanilla here, those who grow Maize and coffee. Therefore, Hon. Mbwatekamwa, my thinking is that you could deliver your point without inflaming. Otherwise, your point might be lost in this chaos. Just focus on that because you also represent me. You know that my farmers sell the tea at your factory. Hon. Mbwatekamwa is my immediate neighbour in the constituency and our farmers sell to Kyamuhunga. So, you are also speaking for me. Let us not mix in other issues and our point gets lost.

MR MBWATEKAMWA: Point noted, Mr Speaker, although in most cases facts are bitter. Recently, we were looking for money to control the spread of Foot and Mouth Disease. How often have we looked for money to bail out farmers, especially tea farmers? These are facts and we need to talk about them.

Mr Speaker, the point I am trying to deliver painfully is that right now, a tea farmer earns Shs 200 out of which, they give those who pluck Shs 150 and the farmer takes only Shs 50. Out of the Shs 50, they put in agricultural inputs so they do not make any profit there. I have painfully uprooted my 10 acres and at a cost, moreover.

Farmers have started uprooting tea plantations. The main reason is that we also need to be bailed out. We saw some time back when the Government came up to bail out – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order!

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, Hon. Mbwatekamwa is a Member of the NRM Party. He even participated here when we are passing

money to teach Ugandans how to drink coffee. Is he in order not to know that the policy has changed and these factories are being allowed to close deliberately so Ugandans can drink coffee? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Mbwatekamwa, what I pick from Hon. Ssemujju is that because you seem all that much angry, he felt you needed a commercial break to cool the anger *-(Laughter)-* please resume.

MR MBWATEKAMWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Factories are shutting down, the reason being, one, the cost of production is very high. A unit of electricity per kilowatt is between Shs 3,470 unlike those who are producing within the industrial parks where they only buy a kilowatt at Shs 1,900 and some cents.

Mr Speaker, the Government has failed to provide a market for our tea. We have the Uganda Coffee Development Authority and there is no Uganda Tea Development Authority or any regulator. The only thing the Government did – *(Interjections)* – no, even if they were closed, they were there. What do you mean? We are orphans in our Government.

As I wind up *-(Hon. Macho rose)-* Hon. Macho, with due respect –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, you know the principle: on matters of national importance, there is no information.

MR MBWATEKAMWA: Mr Speaker, one time we went to Mombasa and found out that they buy our tea from Uganda, re-brand it – they even mix Ugandan tea, produce what they call “Kericho tea” and it comes back here. I raised the matter here and the Prime Minister claimed she was going to sit with the minister. They are very many, but they failed also to perform. *(Laughter)*

These are my prayers right now - tea farmers from Ankole and all over Uganda, are giving an ultimatum of 10 months from now. If we

cannot be listened to, we shall find any party that can even host us well and we stay there *-(Interjections)-* yes, I will subscribe to any party as long as it can solve the problems of farmers. *(Applause)*

My prayers are that the Government should bring a subsidy to all the tea farmers. All the factories that have been shut down and those on the verge of shutting down should be bailed out the way we bailed out Atiak Sugar Factory, which is defunct, and does not bring any profit to Uganda.

I pray that my prayers be heard and the Government should act and not only to think about certain animals and leaving farmers to suffer. I thank you. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, you have been given a defection notice.

3.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Thank you, Hon. Mbwatekamwa, for raising this important point. Actually, with the energy that he brings, I am sure that he will be the first one to donate blood.

Mr Speaker, we are experiencing a problem in the tea sector. In addition to what he has raised, we also have an issue of the quality of tea, which has got to be addressed. On the international market, one of the reasons our tea is not going is its quality, which is brought about by the lack of fertilisers.

What Government is doing is to discuss this issue in an inter-ministerial committee, chaired by the Prime Minister. We have written a Cabinet Paper, which will be probably presented on Monday. And some of the prayers that Hon. Mbwatekamwa has raised, including an immediate subsidy to have relief for the tea factories and farmers, have been included. We hope that once that is done, we will come back and address the nation *-(Hon. Kaberuka rose)-* just a second.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, you cannot walk towards a Member when he is on the Floor. That is unparliamentary. You stand up and request. Once you are not permitted, you remain in your position.

MR BAHATI: We are going to conclude this matter on Monday. We will come back and inform the House. Also, to correct Hon. Mbwatekamwa, there are actually 41 factories and not 21. On the issue of us taking our tea to Kenya and Kenya mixing it with their tea to export back –(*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, go on.

MR BAHATI: It is really a matter of international trade. I think we should focus on making sure that we have the right tea to sell on the international market, and, once you sell this tea, what the trader on the other side does with it should not be your concern. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kaberuka, then Hon. Kateshumbwa.

3.07

MR JAMES KABERUKA (NRM, Kinkizi County West, Kanungu): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving way and I would like to thank you for the passionate -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not given way - I am still here.

MR KABERUKA: Thank you. I thank you for your passionate consideration for the people of Uganda, especially for bringing out facts on this people's platform.

The minister says that on Monday they are going to present a Cabinet Paper. However, if you recall, Mr Speaker, in the previous sitting, when they were about to bring the supplementary, they told us they were going to prepare a Cabinet Paper and that they would bring a supplementary on this Floor. I do not know whether he could clarify what happened and whether it is now factual that tomorrow, he is going to bring it up?

Mr Speaker, the Minister of State for Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (Industry) knows that the tea industry brings a lot of money into this economy, and it is dying in his hands. It is not only for Bushenyi or Ankole, but Kigezi, Central, Tooro, and now Zombo.

Mr Speaker, I seek your indulgence that you allow us to bring a comprehensive motion on this matter, and we discuss it comprehensively such that it incorporates more than we can bring through matters of public importance so that the ministers can appreciate what is underlying and what they are negating here on the Floor. I salute you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, we can instead do it the other way around. Since the minister has said they have prepared a Cabinet Paper, once it is presented to the Cabinet and adopted, then they extract an information paper for Parliament and, once that information paper is brought here, we give it enough time and extensive discussion. Thank you. Yes, Hon. Kateshumbwa.

3.10

MR DICKSONS KATESHUMBWA (NRM, Sheema Municipality, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. First of all, I would like to say that the Government is failing to manage its successes.

Years back, the Government, through the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAAD), and Operation Wealth Creation (OWC), distributed seedlings to farmers. As a result of that, there has been increased production of tea in the country.

Unfortunately, from planting to processing is where we have a problem. Most of the factories you have talked about, Mr Speaker, are operating below capacity. We all know, that the tea farmers - those who are familiar with the tea process, know that when you get the leaves, you need to process them within 48 hours.

However, if you have to transport raw tealeaves from Bwehweju to Igara, by the time they reach, they have already lost a lot of moisture

content, and the quality you get is a problem. That is one of the causes of poor quality.

Number two, as a country, we do not have a tea policy. People are plucking leaves without guidance. That is why within the region, Uganda fetches the lowest amount on tea not because we do not have fertile soils, we have the best soils, but Rwanda and Kenya are earning more money from tea than Uganda because of quality.

Mr Speaker, what we need the Government to do is; one, we must have a tea policy. Secondly, the tea that is blended in the Mombasa Tea Auction - today, I was reading a story in the papers saying that one of the highest causes of costs is warehousing charges in Mombasa. Incidentally, the area where they are doing the processing is Ugandan property.

Lastly, we need to negotiate a market for our tea. We cannot export through third parties as a country. I know one of the neighbouring countries which did bilateral trade with Pakistan and they are selling tea and fetching a lot of prices. Therefore, the Ministry of Trade needs to look at the market, and the quality, and then we can also deal with the issues of fertilisers.

Fertilisers alone, without having a tea policy to educate the farmers and increase processing capacity, will not solve the problem. I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. It is very painful to learn that our tea is auctioned through third parties in other countries. Recently, we did it for fuel. We said that for our fuel importation, we cannot depend on other countries. Why can't we do the same? Honourable minister, I think – do you want to comment?

MR BAHATI: Yes. I just wanted to inform you and the House that on the issue of auctioning -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, say, "I want to inform you, Rt Hon. Speaker..." not just "to inform you and the House."

MR BAHATI: I beg your pardon. I would like to inform you, Rt Hon. Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is better.

MR BAHATI: I would like to inform you, Rt Hon. Speaker, as the presiding officer of this House, and the honourable colleagues, that on the issue of auctioning our tea, we are working out different options on whether we can establish our own because going to Mombasa has not worked in the interests of Ugandans.

I pray that you give us more time; we will come and give an information paper next week so that we find a way of resolving this issue.

Friends, we must all understand that we are operating in a liberalised economy. However, the Government must intervene in areas like this one where we have difficulties. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, on Wednesday, next week, please bring us a statement, we shall discuss it extensively. I heard a procedural matter from Youth Northern.

MR BONIFACE OKOT: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a procedure matter. About two weeks ago, actually on the 6th of February, you directed the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development to bring to this House a statement today regarding a matter that I had raised on the Uganda Development Fund (UDB), special credit for youth and women. The performance of the Special Credit Fund, the beneficiaries, of the fund and the equity.

However, Mr Speaker, I do not see the minister on the bench and I do not see the matter on the Order Paper. Are we proceeding well?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, we are proceeding very well because I looked at the matters I had and I determined the Order Paper to handle these issues. Your matter will be coming up as well.

Honourable colleagues, there is something that I am uncomfortable with. I do not like using

the language of directing. This is not a House of directives. I think we like using very strong language. I believe we are colleagues. The moment you are colleagues, even when you are requested or begged, like how we say, 'I beg to move' - have Members ever stopped you because you have begged? This is Parliamentary language. Parliamentary language does not involve begging and directing, - no. So, really, do not attribute words to me of "you directed".

I have always used the words "you are requested" then when I am boiling and I need some blood donation, I use the words "you are required" because I do not like directives at a personal level and so, I do not want to be directing people here. We should be - in a humble way - listen to the requests of Members. I just wanted that one to be very clear.

3.16

MR JULIUS ACON (NRM, Otuke East County, Otuke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance. We are aware that the rainy season has started. On the 10th of February, that is last Saturday, a heavy rainstorm and wind blew off the roof of one of the primary schools in Olilim Subcounty. Also, the maternity wing of one of the health centres in Olilim Subcounty was blown down.

Mr Speaker, this has left the patients and pupils for both institutions homeless. When you look at the classroom blocks, they are all blown away.

My prayers:

First, I request the ministry or the department of both institutions to at least give iron sheets to the community. They will do the work by themselves if the minister or the ministry cannot do anything or help.

Secondly, I would like to ask the teams of both institutions to go and visit Olilim Subcounty and Olilim Primary School. I beg to lay my report. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees.

MR ACON: I beg to lay my report. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The member wanted to lay it before the minister. *(Laughter)*

3.19

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (RELIEF, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND REFUGEES) (Ms Esther Anyakun): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank Hon. Acon, for raising what has happened to the people of Olilim Subcounty. I am going to send a team from the Department of Refugees to go and carry out an assessment. However, I ask the Member to be a little bit patient with us because - first of all, we are not included in the supplementary, so, we do not have money right now to buy the iron sheets. We are waiting for the next quarter. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I have two more matters related to that. One is from Hon. Ssasaga and another from Hon. Isodo. Maybe for the minister to take note of, they can raise them quickly.

3.20

MR ISAIAS SSASAGA (FDC, Budadiri County East, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We had a devastating hailstorm on the slopes of Mount Elgon, in Budadiri East, in the subcounties of Bumulisha and Bukiise. Bumulisha Primary School was affected, whereby the classroom block was washed away together with some semi-permanent structures where some teachers were residing.

In Bukiise, very many parishes were affected and the crops were destroyed. Mr Speaker, my prayers, especially for the primary school that has just resumed, is for the ministry to look at the most intermediate solution for the primary three block, which was affected.

If you can provide for example, temporal tarpaulins or tents, or iron sheets. I believe as the district plans for the reconstruction of the classroom block, the Ministry of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees could come in and mitigate that effect.

With the issue of crops, as usual, we shall need some food - if you have it in stock - and the most sustainable one since the rains have started, would be good to give the community some seeds to plant. Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, these are the reports from the district disaster team, which has already been transmitted by the chief administrative officer to the Permanent Secretary in the ministry.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can lay them on the Table. Hon. Stella, wait a bit because we have a formal process of laying documents on the Table.

MR SSASAGA: Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table a report on the damage caused by disasters in Bumulisha Subcounty, Sironko District, from the Chief Administrative Officer. The second is a report on damage caused by disasters in Bukiise Subcounty from the Chief Administrative Officer, Sironko. Thank you.

3.22

MS STELLA ISODO (FDC, Woman Representative, Ngora): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Last week on Tuesday, 6 February 2024, due to unexpected occasional rains, residents of Ngora District were faced with significant losses after a heavy hailstorm and strong winds destroyed some houses, including a fuel station called Akello Oils in Mukura Town Council, and cassava, sweet potato gardens. This hazardous situation has worsened the already precarious food security situation in the district.

Out of the 11 subcounties in Ngora District, five were affected. They include: Ngora Town Council, Odwarat, Mukura Town Council, and Mukura Subcounty. The magnitude of the disaster has been captured in the report, from the district production office.

My prayers are:

1. Mr Speaker, we need provision of early maturing planting materials like sweet potato vines and cassava cuttings; and

2. I also request the Office of the Prime Minister to provide dry rations to the households in the meantime.

I have a report from the district production office and I beg to lay it on the Table.

3.24

MS CHRISTINE KAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to present a matter of national importance concerning the environment and the situation at abattoirs, especially in town councils and municipalities.

A colleague is also citing cities, but the general conditions at abattoirs is alarming. As the Shadow Minister of Water and Environment, I find it very important to state that most abattoirs have no toilets. For those that have toilets, the cleanliness is not there. Most of them have no drainage to enable the dirty items from the abattoirs to find their way out.

Then they present a foul smell and it becomes very difficult to the human beings nearby because they do not have water facilities. Those who come to slaughter their animals come with water in jerrycans and as they work with the little water, really the products are not well cleaned. In addition, most abattoirs have no power, and yet we are aware that some animals are slaughtered before morning.

They use torches, but it is very unsafe for our people. The cleanliness in terms of slashing is almost not there. Most abattoirs are bushy.

Mr Speaker, my prayers are:

1. That the Minister of Water and Environment expedites the exact monitoring of abattoirs and their operation in a bid to put right the environment. When you look at the town councils, they charge heavily –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prayers, honourable?

MS KAYA: I am saying that instead of concentrating on income and fees from the

employees of over Shs 30,000 and it even goes above Shs 50,000 during big days, let the health inspectors look at the general conditions of these abattoirs. But we can also get a report as far as servicing and managing sanitation around these abattoirs is concerned.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. This is something, which the sectoral committee can work on through field reports. They can go on the ground and ascertain this because the meat that comes from the abattoirs is feeding the whole country. This is a very crucial point.

Colleagues, the Committee on Health would be more appropriate because this is a health related matter. And when it gives a report, we can have input from other committees. so, I assign it to the Committee on Health to visit and report back within a month. Hon. Katalihwa, just wait a minute. Honourable minister for Local Government, do you want to say something?

3.28

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Ms Victoria Rusoke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am guiding that the construction, maintenance and routine management of abattoirs in all local governments is the responsibility of the lower local governments because they contract them out and get heavy revenue, which they should use to maintain, update, upgrade and put other services into those abattoirs.

There is a lot of mismanagement in the collection of revenue. There is a new and proper system that the Government has instituted, the Integrated Revenue Administration Systems (IRAS), but the lower local governments are not managing, inspecting and bringing to book the officers who are collecting this revenue into their pockets.

Lastly, we have health inspectors who are employed and paid by the Government. We also have veterinary officers in all districts, municipalities and in the cities. So, these are the people who should check and make sure

that the abattoirs are clean and ready to give services for human consumption.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I had closed this matter and so, the Minister cannot open it up again, but when the report comes, these are the issues we shall dig into deeply. Honourable minister, even when you talk about revenue - you remember the local governments petitioned this House that while they collect their revenue, we do not remit it back.

We made a resolution urging the Government to ensure that indeed, they receive their revenue in time, but it has not been effected. We shall go through these issues once the report comes.

3.31

MR DONALD KATALIHWA (NRM, Mwenge County South, Kyenjojo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on an issue of urgent national importance. On Sunday, 11 February 2024, eight elephants escaped from Kibale National Park and attacked residents of my subcounty, Nyantungo, specifically, in Kibira and the Mabonwa parishes and killed two people.

One, Kaganda Mugume Amuhereza from Isemihabo village was buried yesterday and another called Mwesige is being buried today; that is why the woman MP is not here.

Over 900 households are living in intense fear of being displaced because the elephants are still on rampage. The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) has taken some steps to chase them away, but the elephants have refused to go, and I am now coming to that very important issue. This has never happened in the history of my constituency, village and subcounty. If you remember very well, in the last two months, there were fears of the Allied Defence Forces (ADF) in that forest.

I pray that we do not take this as an issue of elephants, because there might be factors pushing these elephants out from the forest to attack my people because this has never happened in the history of my constituency.

My prayers are:

1. Can we have UWA to establish temporary, standby offices around this place so as to save lives.
2. This is a disaster issue, and I am happy that the Minister of Disaster Preparedness and the Minister of Internal Affairs and others are here. Can we have some budget to compensate the people affected by the elephants because people's crops and approximately 17 houses have been demolished, including toilets.

Finally, I implore the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Security and the Minister of Defence to take keen interest in the reasons these elephants are running away from the forest to attack the people. It may be classified information, but I have given it. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

3.35

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, I would like the Minister for Disaster Preparedness to come and answer on issues of compensation. Then the honourable Minister of Internal Affairs and then lastly, Minister for Tourism -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we do not have that much time, these are issues you have to go back and handle.

MS NAKADAMA: I am going to call the minister for tourism to go and intervene so that they can rescue the people who are in fear. Otherwise, we of course condole with those families that have lost their dear ones and let me hope that it will not happen again, the moment I call in the minister of Tourism. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, take lead on that matter and please, help the Honourable colleague.

MR ONZIMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The issue of elephants disturbing locals has been on this Floor for many years and at one time we took a decision - because colleagues from all over had been raising this issue - to task Government to put some kind of fencing and money was provided. There were two interventions, which we had talked about. One was digging trenches and the other was installing an electric fence. Government pronounced itself here and all the projects were going on.

Wouldn't it be procedurally right for us to ask the minister to give us the status report? I am saying this because if money was provided, but the same problem continues, we need to get that clarification although the attention to solve the problem can still be done. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the Committee on Tourism has just come from a field visit to some of these areas. My constituency is one of the most affected, day in and day out. The compensation provided for in the law is not sufficient. So, let us wait for the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry to bring us their report. We shall discuss this matter when they have finished.

Honourable colleagues, I usually receive matters - because sometimes, I am busy and I do not have time to interact with you and guide on certain matters, all of them are recorded. However, I find that some of them are of a policy nature and require a structured answer. I always skip such matters and do not consider all of them. Here, I will need matters of this nature - emergencies of sorts - as matters of national importance. The others are provided for on Thursdays, especially under the Prime Minister's Time. So, if I do not call your matter, that is the issue.

Secondly, I have around three matters for the Ministry of Health, but I feel these are not matters that I would clog the Order Paper with. All matters that I refer to and say "report back" - clog the Order Paper and that is why you can find that we have around 290 statements that

are not sorted. I would like most of the issues sorted here. We should get an answer and if we are to follow them up, we follow them up with the committee. Therefore, I will not handle matters to do with the Ministry of Health today.

The Government Chief Whip should ensure that we have at least one minister from the Ministry of Health tomorrow. *(Members rose.)* Please, stop harassing me. *(Laughter)*

Next are issues to do with education – I do not know who is raising procedure. I can hear: “Procedure! Procedure!” Hon. Katalihwa, your matter is going to be handled. I am also going to – okay. Now, after the elephants have refused to go, he has also refused to – *(Laughter)*

MR KATALIHWA: Mr Speaker, I am not good at disturbing you and you know that. However, this is a very serious issue, where people have died and they are burying them as we talk right now. I am not comfortable, I am sorry to say, when I do not get an immediate answer yet I have the Prime Minister, the Security minister, the Internal Affairs minister as well as the information minister and the Government Chief Whip here.

Mr Speaker, wouldn't it be procedurally right to have a commitment on this very burning issue for my constituency? I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay. I thought I had assigned the matter because of how important it is. Honourable colleague, I had assigned it to the Prime Minister. Usually, what she does – and I follow up – is that she calls you and the stakeholders in Government to ensure that you meet and they immediately respond to the matter. I thought that would be sufficient. She has assured you that it will be tomorrow.

Hon. Macho – procedure?

MR MACHO: I would like to agree with my colleague. Mr Speaker, you guided very well –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Listen, Hon. Macho. Your colleague has already accepted my

guidance, so, you do not need to add anything else – no. We do not have time for appreciation, honourable colleagues. *(Laughter)*

Hon. Harold Muhindo? I wish we had more time, I would allow you.

3.40

MR HAROLD MUHINDO (FDC, Bukonzo County East, Kasese): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. About four years ago, the Government rolled out a programme of the new curriculum to the lower secondary schools, including during the COVID-19 year. The pioneers of this programme are sitting their Senior Four exams this year. They have been communicated to that they should organise to apply for combinations in A-Level following the old curriculum.

Mr Speaker, I find it very confusing for the Government to change the orientation of education and do an experiment using our children as specimen so that at some point, when things are not working out, they say, “We are moving from this programme and going back to the old programme.” This simply shows that we are looking at a generation that is being stifled and stunted. They are killing the academic future of these children. Government should come out and give us direction on the new curriculum progress. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister for education -

3.42

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (PRIMARY EDUCATION) (Dr Joyce Moriku): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank my brother for raising that critical issue concerning the curriculum. We are all aware that we have got the Lower Secondary Curriculum, which is new. The secondary school curriculum, previously, was not so much with the current situation. This is a student-based and competence-based curriculum that brings on board very many things that we want a student to be.

Mr Speaker, it is true that the pioneers of the new competence-based curriculum are in Senior Four and these are the candidates preparing to sit Senior Four examinations. We have all admitted that this is the type of curriculum that we need in the 21st century because we bring on board creativity, innovation and many other skills that the students require to be ready for the job market, even if they do not progress to the next level of education.

Indeed, it is true that as this candidate class is getting out at the end of this year, the process and preparation – with consultations – to ensure that we form the A-Level curriculum, has been taking place.

Mr Speaker, a curriculum is not just a one-day process. You do not just wake up and come up with a curriculum. It is a process that involves consultations with stakeholders at different levels being brought on board so that we come up with a real curriculum that we all desire, as a country.

Therefore, much as the curriculum for A-Level is not ready, I can assure this House that the process is ongoing and on the right course.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Hellen Adoa, would you like to add something?

3.45

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (FISHERIES) (Ms Hellen Adoa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to add my voice to the minister's. Yes, this curriculum might have made some people very uncomfortable, but I can assure you, as an educationist who has been there, that I feel this curriculum can make a child self-employed even if he does not proceed after Senior Four.

One thing I have noted, Mr Speaker, is that the people who brought us education have a better one, but in Uganda, what we have been doing is schooling our children without imparting any skills. However, this new curriculum makes a child participate in projects.

In Uganda – (*Interjections*) - Mr Speaker, I need your protection. I want them to get my point – a child in nursery leaves school at 5.00 p.m. and that child gets disturbed psychologically. Ugandans should learn to adjust, not just schooling children without building the skills. Even with that process, this is the fourth year and I believe from the time they started from S.1, S.2, S.3, and now S.4, the teachers and the children have been prepared.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us hear from the teacher first. Hon. Margret Rwabushaija, then Hon. Ssemujju -

3.47

MS MARGRET RWABUSHAIJA (Independent, Workers Representative): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I think the issue we are talking about or what the colleague was presenting is that, yes, there is a new curriculum and he is not saying it is a bad curriculum. What we are talking about is sensitisation. How many teachers know what the curriculum is –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I have the attention of the Minister of Education and Sports? Honourable minister, I need you to listen to Members because they are raising issues of your sector.

MS RWABUSHAIJA: Thank you very much. The issue we are talking about is that many teachers have not been sensitised about that curriculum. They sometimes go to particular areas and ask the head teachers to send teachers. They, however, say the teachers should not be paid transport because there is no money when they are supposed to stay in those places for about two or three days, over the weekend. So, many of them have refused to go because they will not be paid or even be accommodated. It is now taking us to the wrong side of what should have been a good curriculum.

Some teachers do not even know how to mark. I am on some of the platforms, but you see someone saying, “Now, we are going to mark; how do we go about it because some of us do not know anything about how to mark those learners?”

When we come to S.5; those who have joined A-Level, if it is four years ago, the Government should have started or the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), should have started on the new curriculum for A-Level by now. Up to now, they do not know anything.

I would like to say I have had a discussion - I chair the Quality Education Forum in this Parliament, Mr Speaker. We visited NCDC to find out what is happening. They told us they do not have money for the new curriculum for A-Level. They have been asking for money, but there is no response. So, that is where the problem starts. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssemujju -

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. The reason I wanted to raise the procedural issue is exactly what the workers' MP has just said. We have just considered the National Budget Framework Paper. The money to take care of the A-Level curriculum is not provided for in the budget. The minister then comes here and says, "These things are not done quickly; we are now doing them", but money is not in the budget. Maybe you are doing them in your sitting room.

Most importantly, the point that my neighbour here has made - none of us is contesting that the new curriculum is good. We are only saying, prepare for it. I will give you an example. I have a daughter; she leaves one secondary school to go to another. Then they say, "Your continuous assessment results are not here, so we cannot give you a report." To another friend, they say, "no, we cannot take your child because those progressive marks remained where you are; so stay there."

We are only questioning the preparation. Maybe, it is not painful. You may not have children. So, that is the point that my colleague was saying. You are providing no money in the budget yet you are saying you are developing a curriculum. A colleague has said they went to people whose duty it is to develop it; they

have not even started on it. Our children are registering to sit for S.4 examinations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, a colleague raised the issue of transition. Will this stop at O-Level? - because you have brought a curriculum and now for A-Level, you are telling these students to apply for combinations based on the curriculum, which you have phased out. Is this curriculum stopping at O-Level? If not, how have you prepared for this transition to A-Level? *(Members rose_)*

Honourable minister? Honourable colleagues, on matters of national importance, usually, we do not have such a long debate. We would rather request for a statement and then debate it in detail.

DR MORIKU: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank all my colleagues sincerely, for accepting that this new secondary curriculum is the curriculum that, as a country, we all yearn for. We are happy that the curriculum is being rolled out. Indeed, it is true all of them raised very critical issues, as you said Mr Speaker. One is about the preparation; two is the issue of the budget; three as to whether the curriculum stops at O-Level not progressing and proceeding to A-Level.

Mr Speaker, we may not finish the discussions on this Floor. However, allow me to say this. This preparation has started much earlier and it is an on-going process, in terms of the O-level curriculum. Continuous professional development, teacher's orientation and the pupil as well. It is a process. I can stand here to confirm that every term, there has been continuous professional development for the teachers and for all the stakeholders. However, as they observed, it may not be as smooth as we all expected to be at the time.

Mr Speaker, last year, the Committee on Education and Sports had a retreat in Kigo. In the committee retreat, we were all together with them. These are some of the issues we discussed in that retreat and it was brought on board. My colleagues who are here will agree

with me that in that retreat, the issue of the curriculum was top priority. It was discussed in detail and even the issue of A-Level curriculum was discussed.

However, Mr Speaker, with your permission, tomorrow, I will bring a two-page or three-page paper on this issue of the curriculum so that we can discuss from an informed point of view and we can all be on the same page if you could allow me, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is enough, honourable minister. Tomorrow, bring a statement, and then we shall have time to debate it. Hon. Opendi -

3.55

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Government phased out the non-core Primary Teachers' Colleges and the National Teacher's Colleges countrywide. Government is now trying to establish the Uganda National Institute for Teachers. In the process of doing that, in Financial Year 2022/2023, it phased out non-core Primary Teachers Colleges, and of course, asked that those who were teaching in these non-core Primary Teachers' Colleges be redeployed to other core teachers' colleges.

Mr Speaker, it is shocking that as expected, once these people were redeployed to these other institutions, their salary should have been maintained as science teachers because it is provided for in Establishment Notice No.2 of 2015 under Section 3.4, which says that "*A science teacher is a person who, other than the training, but is also one who teaches subjects in technical, vocational educational and training institutions.*"

Some of the affected teachers have reached out to me. They are now earning Shs 1,000,000 and below instead of the Shs 4,000,000 for the Science teachers.

I would like to find out from the Ministry of Education and Sports or the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development or the

Ministry of Public Service why these tutors – they were actually tutors – in these non-core PTCs are now earning below the required Shs 4,000,000 that Science teachers are supposed to earn as per the Statutory Notice No.2 of 2015. I beg to find out from the Ministry of Education and Sports or the Ministry of Public Service.

DR MORIKU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to put the statement correct. The Ministry of Education and Sports phased out non-core PTCs, not National Teachers' Colleges, which is called NTC.

I would like to set the record straight. We did not phase out NTCs; we only phased out non-core PTCs. Indeed, it is true, there are 22 non-core PTCs, which were phased out. The 23 core PTCs are still operating.

Hon. Sarah Opendi raised a very critical matter that concerns the re-deployment of the tutors who were previously in the non-core PTCs because the non-core PTCs have already been re-purposed for other different purposes. For example, six became teaching sites for universities, others are BTVET institutions, others are health training institutions and others are Health Tutors Training Institutions.

Having said that, when these PTC tutors were re-deployed in the core PTCs, indeed, it is true some of their salaries were affected. As I speak, they registered a complaint with the Ministry of Public Service last year in November.

I am happy to note and report that the Ministry of Public Service represented here by the minister, called for a meeting. From 24 November last year, there have been consultative meetings because the tutors want to be paid at the Science level scale. Indeed, some of them who were at Science level were affected.

This is because, previously, there was the system of Integrated Personal Payroll System, which was transited and integrated into the new system called Human Capital Management System. Because of the change in the system, some of the teachers who were previously on

the salary scale payroll were affected. This is because the new system recognises the payroll, which current tutors are getting, that is Shs 1 million-plus according to their scale.

Nevertheless, the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Public Service are right on top of this matter. We have been having meetings since last year and even early this year. My ministry is trying as much as possible to ensure that we resolve this matter amicably between the PTC tutors – there is a difference between the PTC tutors and the NTC tutors. The PTCs trains primary teachers. Ideally, we do not have any categories, Science or Arts, whereas NTCs are the colleges that train secondary teachers.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, my worry is on how Government usually takes time to conclude. When you say you have been consulting since last year, when will you ever reach a conclusion? *(Laughter)*

Honourable Minister of Public Service, training a primary school teacher does not make me a primary school teacher so that you put me in their scale. It is at primary where a teacher can teach all subjects, so you do not have sciences or humanities. I am a trainer. I am either a scientist or not.

The Government policy is very clear. It says scientists should be paid this much. If the funding gap is the problem, then you should say it and we look for a way of settling it. It should not be a matter of too much debate and consulting for a whole year.

4.03

THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE (Mr Wilson Muruli Mukasa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Indeed, I agree with what my colleague has said. The issue of Science tutors in the NTCs is clear. They are scientists and they are getting their Science pay.

There was a need, when it came to the PTCs where the distinction between Science and non-

Science is not clear because they are training teachers who are going to teach primary and they teach all subjects. That is where the point of consultation came in.

We are about to conclude. Obviously, as soon as the classification has been agreed on, then those people will be paid their Science pay *-(Interjections)-* As soon as. The consultations are definitely in advanced stages. As soon as that is cleared properly with advice from the relevant quotas, then they will be paid. The question of arrears is obviously taken into consideration. They have been teaching and have not stopped. Once that has been cleared, the arrears will come. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this is a matter you cannot conclude in Plenary. We are embarking – we are about to receive ministerial policy statements. These are issues, which sectoral committees should dig deep into and ensure that they are addressed in the Budget.

Committee on Education and Sports, please, take up this matter seriously. It should be one of the matters you report on when you are processing the Ministerial Policy Statement. That should give room to the honourable minister to also conclude the consultations.

When a matter has a financial implication, it becomes difficult for a minister to come here and commit. What we have to push for is ensuring that the consultations are expedited and the matter is concluded. We should not come back here to say, “last year –”.

Therefore, Honourable minister, I am sure we can sort this matter so that it is reflected in the next financial year. *(Members rose)*

Honourable colleagues, please, I have an Order Paper. Up to now, we have not yet gone to the substantive items on the Order Paper. By the way, our rules provide for Thursday, to handle these matters, as per rule 25. However, I have tried to be generous and I see that we are going beyond.

Minister for Education, you have issues, which I wanted you to respond to today. Please, get ready. Tomorrow, we have to address the issues, which Members have been waiting for. Tomorrow, in the first period, I am not going to allow matters of national importance, only two from the Ministry of Health. We shall handle issues of education and the statement for the rest of the period. You do not need to –

DR MORIKU: Most obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

I) ON ELECTRICITY CONNECTION
PROJECTS IN THE COUNTRY

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Energy - Minister for Energy, before you take the microphone to submit, Minister for Foreign Affairs, last week, I requested you to lay on the Table the Samoa agreement. If you have it ready - and the instrument.

4.08

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (REGIONAL AFFAIRS) (Mr John Mulimba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay the partnership agreement between the European Union and the Organisation of the African, Pacific and Caribbean States, also known as the Samoa Agreement, the revised version on the Table.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What about the instrument, honourable minister?

MR MULIMBA: We requested for the instrument from Brussels and we were told the transmission would take some bit of time because it was taken for certification first, at the agency, which is the European Union, before bringing it. I beg that you give me some time until next week, Tuesday.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Minister for energy? Procedure, Hon. Aisha Kabanda.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Looking at the Order Paper, the statement on electricity connection projects in the country is allocated 10 minutes. May we be guided, as a matter of procedure, whether it is something we are going to discuss, or he is going to lay on the Table and then proceed? I only see 10 minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, but this is a statement. It is not for laying. It is a statement, which is provided for under Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure. Therefore, the moment it is read, I will determine what to do because subrule 2 of that rule gives me power to do so. Procedure, Hon. Sarah.

MS OPENDI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs for laying the European Union and the Organisation of the African, Pacific and Caribbean States partnership agreement. However, Mr Speaker, you have not guided on the committee, which should scrutinise it and report back.

Therefore, would it not be procedurally right that you refer the report to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I need to consult the law to see whether this is one of the agreements that need ratification by Parliament. If it is not an agreement, which needs ratification by Parliament, then the committee does not need to scrutinise it. If it is needed, then I will refer it to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and I will do that after consulting the law. Thank you. Honourable minister.

4.11

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Dr Sidronius Okaasai): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am going to present the status of electrification in the country.

Introduction

In order to achieve Uganda's electrification targets in the medium term, the Government

approved the electricity connections policy in 2018.

One of the objectives of this policy is to increase the annual connections from 70,000 to 300,000 connections per year. One of the approaches to achieve this objective is by providing free one-pole or no-pole electricity connections.

However, due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in 2019/2020 –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, may I interrupt you? I asked for a statement on the status of electricity projects, not connection. The statement you have brought to me is about electricity connections. The statement I requested is on electricity projects in the country because we are tired of projects, which have been pending for three years, and you promised us a statement.

Therefore, this one on scale-up is totally different. This is like an update. The one we need is on electricity projects, honourable minister. If you could be kind enough.

DR OKAASAI: Mr Speaker, there are actually two questions, which were asked. There was a question on electricity connections; then there was a question on electricity projects, which is on the Order Paper. Which one is on the Order Paper? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, let us make it very simple. On this one, we do not have an issue. We have not had a big problem. The problem Members have is the projects, which have been in their constituencies for three years, and they are not done.

A project by TBEA Company, for which we passed a loan of over \$200 million, and we said that all subcounties in the whole country are going to be connected, we have not received anything.

Projects from Kuwait Fund and others; nothing is going on. We just need an update so that we

know what you are doing about it because these projects were started by your predecessors.

If you could help us get that - we can get this one, honourable minister, but in the interest of time, we can discuss all of them together. I wanted one statement - Let me see if the minister is feeling comfortable with my suggestion.

DR OKAASAI: Mr Speaker, I am comfortable with your proposal. Getting all the projects will actually require me to lay it on the Table, then it is referred to the Committee on Natural Resources. It will not be just a simple statement –*(Interjections)*–

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: My senior brother, Okaasai, has taken over my duty of determining how I treat statements, which come here.

DR OKAASAI: Mr Speaker, give me time to get a consolidated report and I will come back with it next week on Tuesday.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, next Tuesday will do. Honourable minister, this one can be part of the statement you are going to bring. You can make it part B, and part A should be on projects, which have been pending.

DR OKAASAI: Most obliged, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Tinkasiimire.

MR TINKASIIMIRE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This debate is attracting a lot of attention from honourable Members because it is very critical to our constituencies and Ugandans.

The honourable minister has obliged to your ruling that he presents another substantive statement. We have been here on the Floor of the House - when you guide on a particular subject matter, honourable ministers bring statements, which are very brief and sometimes, you have ordered them to go and add in more flesh.

We request the honourable minister to leave this place when he knows the type of statement that this honourable House expects from him. For instance, when you talk about TBEA Company Ltd, you must tell us how many subcounties are in this country; How many subcounties have been connected; How many subcounties are not connected; How many subcounties have you visited, but abandoned the work and for how long have you abandoned this work?

What is going on? What is your problem? *(Applause)* We must be seen to be a House that represents people, not just a House that cheers honourable ministers.

Mr Speaker, I thought you needed to guide, particularly, on the standard of the statement that we expect from the honourable Minister of Energy and Mineral Development. Thank you.

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, I was in the House when a statement was brought by the minister. At that time, the statement that was brought was not any different from what he has presented today. We had raised issues to do with – I will start with this one particularly. Out of the one million connections, that time, we had issues to do with equity, especially northern Uganda comprising 39 districts, the longest list was only given 140,000 households; compared to others that had more, one almost had about 500,000.

The question was, where is the equity in projects that are financed? *(Applause)* We requested the minister to come here and show us - and I remember these were your directives, that you even wanted to know the details of these connections village by village, so that we are able to see how far some parts of this country have lagged behind.

As you direct the minister to go back, Mr Speaker, I request that the minister takes your guidance seriously so that when the list is brought here, we are able to see in detail to avoid this back and forth engagements that we have had. Good enough, he is a very good minister, and like he has promised, I believe he is going to bring these details and we shall see

the plan of the entire country on how we are going to get connected. Thank you.

DR BHOKA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mid last year, when the Minister of State for Energy and Mineral Development was presenting a report on the status of electrification in West Nile, the Members of Parliament from Madi Subregion noted with concern the generalisation of West Nile to mean Nebbi and Arua.

You directed that Members of Parliament from Madi Subregion in collaboration with the minister come to the ground to have an assessment of the status of energy in Madi Subregion, and present a report to this House. To date, no action has been taken.

We need your guidance, Mr Speaker, on whether we are proceeding well or not. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, on that specific point.

DR OKAASAI: Mr Speaker, my honourable colleague has actually been discussing with me severally on this subject and we have committed to go and have a comprehensive survey of Madi Subregion, to get the actual demand of electricity such that we can allocate some projects to it. We agreed to go to Madi and he knows it. So, let us honour what we commit ourselves to do in office. I request.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us make it very easy. From Hon. Odur's submission, you pick what I am alluding to. The statement of the minister will only address one pole to no pole connection. If your district has no poles and no power extended, then it means you cannot benefit from this. That is why we need to get the status of all projects because it is those projects, which will enable this one to succeed. That is when you will get the national picture.

Honourable minister, you need to give us an update on all projects; electricity from TBEA Company Ltd to Kuwait. We are talking about projects that are donor funded, loan funded

and Government funded. We need details of all these projects.

However, honourable minister, you do not need to put them in one book. You can put them in books, but then you extract a summary for Members. You may say we have this per district and then show all the details in the book. In case we want to search for details, we can do it.

Once it comes here, we know how we shall process it in terms of; project name, status, when this project started, where it has reached, the contractor, what have you covered, what is remaining and all those details. Then, we will address issues to do with this sector.

MR SSEMUJJU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As Hon. Muruli Mukasa exits, I have an issue with the attitude of the Government towards Parliament. Today, we only have Hon. Obua, who is always here, and Hon. Muruli Mukasa is the only elder present.

I have taken note, Mr Speaker, if you may allow it, some ministers are never here, especially those who are above 65 years; from Hon. Otafiire, Hon. Kadaga, Hon. Jim Muhwezi and Hon. Moses Ali. Today, we have a bench full of state ministers and some of them have displayed their standards. The one of Education and Sports was asked questions and she was answering something else. The one of Energy and Mineral Development was guided to bring a statement, he brought something else.

They are turning this Parliament slowly into a talk show where they just make an appearance and go away just like that. If you look at the budget of Parliament, every single day, we are spending about Shs 2 billion on our being here. So, we simply cannot walk away without any value.

The question I would like to ask, Mr Speaker, is whether you have given them permission because you are the one who approved them. People who cannot come to Parliament to answer questions: Gen. Otafiire, Gen. Jim Muhwezi, Hon. Kadaga and Gen. Moses Ali,

people who are old - if you are old, please, this country has to continue. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I think it should be rule 114 -

MR ODUR: So, is the Member in order to imply that some of us are incompetent? I am more than 65 years old. So, is it in order for him to impute?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this House is a mix of all of us. I usually do not want to start making statements that make a Member uncomfortable, as if he is less of a Member or what. But the problem is, Rule 114 of the Rules of Procedure, which provides for the attendance of ministers, does not specify. Each one should be here in their capacity because they are Members of Parliament.

I know the issue of the attendance of ministers. I was a Government Chief Whip, I know what I went through, but honourable ministers, please, talk to your colleagues to come to the House because they are comfortably getting salaries from this House, but uncomfortable coming to sit and address the issues.

The elders are here, they are doing very well; you can see Hon. Muruli Mukasa is doing very well, Hon. Magode Ikuya is even getting younger by being in this House.

I remember the first time he came. You are doing very well. Hon. Muruli Mukasa, do you want to say something? Talk to your fellow senior ministers to attend the House.

4.27

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Dr Sidronius Okaasai): Mr Speaker, indeed, that appeal has actually been extended to Cabinet, that Cabinet ministers must attend Parliament. We were also informed that in the meeting where you sit to decide on business, you agreed that there should be a rota for ministers. On Tuesday, ministers; On Wednesday, certain ministers. Thursday, certain ministers.

4.28

THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE (Mr Muruli Mukasa): That rota is given out to the ministers and the ministers as much as possible - all I know is that they try as much as possible to follow that rota. Because of that arrangement, it is not possible to have all the ministers every day in Parliament. Even the senior ones, it is not possible, but those who are supposed to, they come.

That is why you can see senior citizens like me. And when I look around here, I think I am the oldest person in this Chamber now. Yes, Hon. Magode Ikuya, if he is older than me, then maybe it is only by a few months. So, we are here and we try to follow the rota. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, please, talk to your colleagues. The reason is, I postponed issues of health today. I do not have a Minister of Health. I have skipped issues to do with roads. I do not have a Minister of Finance, Minister of Water, or Minister for Foreign Affairs; Hon. John Mulimba has been coming over time. I do not see his colleagues. So, honourable colleagues, let us be here.

II) ON THE PROCESS AND GUIDELINES ON THE RENEWAL OF NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION CARDS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister - Maybe also to put the record straight. It is not that Hon. Okaasai brought an incompetent statement. He addressed only one component of the statement and yet both of them were needed. That record needed to be put straight because he has been doing a great job. I need that to be put on record. He answered part A and forgot part B. We need part B.

4.32

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Mr Speaker, this is a statement on the process of preparation for mass renewal of National Identity cards. Last Wednesday, Hon. Ethel Naluyima, Member of Parliament, Wakiso District, raised the matter of the

process for renewal of National Identity cards, including whether there are any prescribed fees and how often renewals will take place.

This serves to answer her queries, but also to provide an update on the process of preparation for mass renewal of National Identity cards as follows:

i) Rollout is slated to begin on 1 June 2024.

Matters pertaining to the readiness for the new National Security Information System, (NSIS), and capacity building for relevant staff in line with Modular Open-Source Identification Platform (MOSIP) customisation is on-going for four weeks now in India.

Financials

This House approved a supplementary funding of Shs 300 billion, and accordingly, this money was provided to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for the mass enrolment and mass renewal project which is broken down as follows;

Development - Shs 208 billion, recurrent - Shs 92 billion. Government has apportioned Shs 192 billion of the supplementary budget of Shs 300 billion for quarter III Financial Year 2023/2024 and NIRA expects the release of the supplementary budget.

Procurement of the system and other supporting accessories has been set in motion, and this includes things like UPS and generators.

ICT procurements - following the approval of the funding, the new National Security Information System-related procurements have also commenced with requests for approval of N7 forms by NITA-U and approvals have been obtained in that respect. A list of ICT procurements under the Mass Enrolment and Renewal Exercise is attached here as Annex 1.

There are also other procurements related to the Mass Enrolment and Renewal Exercise, which are on-going and also are attached in detail as Annex 2 to this statement.

Recruitment

The Human Resource Committee has been established to handle the recruitment processes for the exercise. This is being done in consultation with the Ministry of Public Service. Recruitment money is yet to be released. In the next month, advertisements are going to happen and districts need to be keen to ensure participation. NIRA is to give the necessary guidelines by 15 February 2024.

There are also the legal issues around the exercise - the legal regime. The principal Act is the Registration of Persons Act, Act No.3 of 2015; this will not be touched. However, the regulations thereunder will be amended, namely;

1. The Registration of Persons Regulations, Statutory Instrument No.67 of 2015; Regulation 23(2) Form 9 on application for renewal of National Identification Card. This form is being amended to remove repetitive information to simplify the process, and to improve the turnaround time at renewal.
2. The Registration of Persons (Fees) Regulations, Statutory Instrument No.9 of 2016; Regulation 2 on fees payable for renewal of a national identification card, including penalties for default in renewal by a citizen. This is key for Hon. Naluyima. The amendment here is intended to remove the fees payable by a citizen for renewal of a National Identification card *-(Applause)-* and instead introduce fees only for express service, where one requires an express service to get a National Identity Card.

I would like to further clarify that the law provides for renewal of National Identity cards every after 10 years. This was premised on the idea that the security features of these identity cards degenerate with time, as well as the physical features of persons, which also change over time, hence requiring renewal within 10 years – which was seen within the law as reasonable.

However, this has a huge cost implication. That is why honourable members were worried about repeating this exercise. The comfort, therefore, lies in the speed with which technology is advancing, which is fortunate. That is why, with anticipation, it was planned to include in the new Identity cards a mobile platform, which can allow for electronic update of one's profile.

The planned amendments were presented by NIRA management to the NIRA Board at its 78th meeting held on 3 August 2023 for consideration. The proposed amendments were approved and submitted to the First Parliamentary Counsel after board approval. We await progress on the matter.

Data migration

Data migration tests to establish quality of biometric data have shown a 92 per cent success. In light of the fact that each person's biometrics will be re-enrolled to take into account the actual NSIS, poor quality biometrics will be addressed at this point.

On 7 August 2023, NIRA and MOSIP began analysis of the existing data by checking the formats and different quality of the biometrics. This will guide on the data migration path and development of the data migration scripts and strategy by USPC.

The following stages of the tests have been completed:

1. Installation and configuration of the test database;
2. Exportation and importation of data in the test database;
3. Installation and configuration of the docker desktop;
4. Installation and configuration of wire guard application;
5. Installation of Java and Boat tool used for data quality check; and
6. Analysis of fingerprint and face image quality check was completed and awaiting a final report from MOSIP.

The team is currently working on column mapping and preparation of the Entity Relationship Diagram (ERD).

Hard-to-reach areas

This was a specific question. Regarding this matter of hard-to-reach areas, there are three notable constraints that have been factored and planned for:

1. Power connectivity challenges;
2. Internet connectivity challenges; and
3. Transport constraints.

Government intends to deliver kits to each district of the country for the exercise of mass enrolment. Money for the movement of kits has been planned for. This sorts out the transportation issue. Mr Speaker, approximately 2,750 kits with solar panels will be available, in addition to each district having a 5KV generator for the exercise.

Lastly, each kit will have two connectivity devices and connectivity mapping is on-going for each parish countrywide.

I hope this update adequately answers the honourable members' questions, in addition to providing an update on the whole exercise to the House in this regard. I beg to submit, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us have Hon. Naluyima, Hon. Bayigga, Hon. Joyce, Hon. Pacuto and Hon. Enos Asiimwe.

4.41

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. We are grateful for the statement, but it partly answers what Ugandans expect, as far as the national identity card renewal process is concerned.

Good enough, I am a student of IT with a Masters in Information Systems. When you look at the processes that have been explained to us here, under item seven, you realise that, technically, they are not yet complete. If you

are still under installation and analysis, you have not yet shown that the process that will be used is complete. We need clarity on that.

What is most worrying is that the minister is informing us, but not showing that money has been fully provided by the finance ministry. We know what we have always been told, as far as having money in the budget and the release processes are concerned. We still await full confirmation on how it is because this is very key. National Identity cards mean a lot.

Two, we still request that they borrow a leaf from neighbouring countries that do not renew after every 10 years. Look at Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa and Botswana. You are aware that every moment we are told about budget constraints *vis-a-vis* the economy.

Finally, I am a Shadow Minister for Local Government and for some good time, including from my student times, I have been close to local governments. When, under the recruitment process, you refer to the fact that districts should take keen interest, then, you are referring to the districts. Given all the challenges that the districts face, I pray that we should later be provided with what exactly is going to transpire.

We should know that you planned that "for this district, you will be in touch with this person". Those details are needed. Do not just tell the districts to take a keen interest. It will help us, as Members of Parliament, as we monitor the process, to know more about what is going on. Most of all, we pray that after this, you look at other countries that do not renew Identity cards, as long as someone has made 18 years and they use those biometrics. Thank you, Sir.

4.44

DR LULUME BAYIGA (DP, Buikwe County South, Buikwe): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for making these clarifications.

In my constituency, there are moneylenders – I do not know which tier they are and under what licence they are operating. The only security

they take is a National Identity card. They have boxes and boxes of National Identity cards because it is the only security that our people have in order for them to borrow money.

I now see the process of the identity card renewal coming. They are either going to make a loss because their securities will no longer make sense or, if there is a requirement that somebody must hand in the old identity card, many people will miss out on National identity cards in Buikwe South and Buikwe District in general, because that is where these moneylenders are.

Dear Sir, how would you like to handle such citizens who have mortgaged their national IDs? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us have Hon. Nakut and then Hon. Feta

4.45

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Mr Speaker, I also thank the minister for the good news of cost-neutral IDs for our citizens. I was very happy, I even clapped when I heard that news because some of our people cannot afford to replace IDs. There is only one thing that needs to be handled. The minister explained a window for express fees even though there are free IDs.

Perhaps if he had also explained or given a standard waiting time, it would help. Otherwise, the waiting will be abused as our people will be forced to wait longer so that they can pay express fees, if the standard is not set. I pray that gets added.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, what I fear are the deadlines and the timeline because this process is the one from which we are going to extract the register for the elections and we need to have this register ready by January 2025. When I was checking, you need to renew 15.2 million IDs.

You need to enrol around 17 million new ones, and for you to be able to do this, the

anticipation had been that by June of this year, you would have done it. But now when you look at the gaps - You are doing a great job, but you need to arrest our fears that you will meet the deadline so that we do not go into a national crisis, especially because you are changing to a new system.

The same kits, which are going to be used for the census, are going to be used for this purpose. The procurement of the kits, integrating the system, looking at the renewal, looking at the new enrolment, extracting the national register - We have a huge interest in this project and the moment it fails, it can fail the whole country in terms of democracy and other issues.

Hon. Geoffrey Feta, Hon. Joyce Acan, Hon. David Mugole.

4.48

MR GEOFFREY FETA (NRM, Ayivu Division East, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for pointing out my most immediate concern to the honourable minister. The task ahead, compared to the previous one, is much more because you have to work with the timeline of electoral activities. It is not only 15.5 million; the voter population is going to increase by about 2.5 million people and about 18 million voters have to be registered.

If we are going to wait until June, and we have only about six months - The last 15.5 million data that was collected took two years. The volume of work is so much and I appeal that you do something extraordinary. I have three issues to appeal to you.

One is the timely appointment of officers and their facilitation. That is one thing that has dragged this process back. Now that the money is there, the top management should not hold onto this money. The people who do the donkey work; the front soldiers on the ground are many times forgotten and the quality of work is compromised.

Two, political support and I appeal to Members. In the last registration, we had issues where our friends in the Opposition would go to

their constituencies and begin to demobilise the population from registering for national IDs. On the last day, they are the very ones to go and register. We have had these issues so I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to the House; to all leaders, to go and mobilise citizens to register. We should not politicise this process. This is a national exercise that determines whether you are a citizen of this country or not. It is not a political party issue. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Mugole?

4.50

MR DAVID MUGOLE (NRM, Kabweri County, Kibuku): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the statement, which he brings with sobriety.

Two or three things - Number one, on the issue of training the people who are already in India for training and recruitment, this is a timely matter because last time, the non-recruitment of these people early enough and failure to have proper training caused a number of issues; many people were registered on dates that they did not provide. You find the information on paper has a different date and the actual national ID has a different date. Many people missed out, even on the Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE), because of such.

I have an example of my parents putting the date of my mother's birth, which was 10 years earlier and my father could not get this SAGE, even when he was 90 years yet when you look at the information paper, he had provided the right age. So this time around, these people should have enough time for training before they do the registration.

Lastly, for those people whose dates were misquoted, are they going to be allowed to renew with their rightful dates?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Joyce Acan?

4.52

MS JOYCE ACAN (NRM, PWD Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern is about whether the ministry has an arrangement for people with disabilities who do not have fingers. In the last registration, these people were denied to register. We have a case of a man from Luweero, a Chairperson of the District Disability Council who was denied registration and as a result, he did not get his national ID.

We do not know whether the ministry has an arrangement or a template that is going to be designed in the form to cater for these kinds of people. We have a gentleman who is a councillor of Bunyangabu District. He was born without both hands and he was also denied to register. We want the ministry to come out and tell us how they are going to handle these special people. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Dononzio Kahonda, Hon. Esther Mbayo.

4.53

MR DONONZIO KAHONDA (NRM, Ruhinda South County, Mitooma): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have issues with the National Identification Registration Authority (NIRA) and in particular, where NIRA entered a joint venture agreement with Uganda Security Printing Company (USPC) in Entebbe. When we visited Entebbe, the construction of the factory so far is between 30 to 50 per cent complete and there is still a long way to go.

Secondly, they are supposed to supply NIRA with equipment and service the system. When we reached Entebbe, the USPC had nothing completely. They openly told us, as a committee, that they earn a living through brokerage. For example, they are dealing with immigration. They get work from immigration then they go outside, source the supplier, and what they get as a margin is what they survive on. Are we going to do the same with NIRA? Are we serving the interests of this country?

Mr Speaker, the honourable minister should explain this because we are also aware that

USPC, through Veridos, is using the equipment they are supplying and they source the empty IDs or rather passports. They just source them from outside and to the suppliers, who actually were the suppliers of the Government. The Government just ran away from them and they went through the Uganda Security Printing Company, yet they were printing the national ID a very low cost. Now, it has been hiked. I beg to submit.

4.56

MS ESTHER MBAYO (NRM, Woman Representative, Luuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement, but my issue is this continuous renewal after some time. What does it cost this country, if one clocks 18 years, to get the identity card until the time he departs?

Secondly, we have very many activities ahead of us. I wonder whether the time frame that has been given in the report by the minister will be enough for all of us to enrol. Given the fact that we have moneylenders who have collected - I think this is all over the country. Even in Luuka, there are moneylenders who are giving loans and the security are the IDs. Can't we have any other collateral that can be presented if one needs a loan other than the ID? I submit.

4.57

MS JANE PACUTO (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the report. However, I would like to get clarity on the following. One, NIRA has been reporting a number of Ugandans with IDs ready, but have not yet picked them. I think that at the time of renewal, one would need the previous ID. What will happen to those whose IDs are ready, but for some reason they have not been able to pick them? Are you going to register them afresh or renew them on the data that you already have?

Two, we have many Ugandans in the diaspora. Some could be boarding the plane right now. Given the time frame and resource constraints, some of these people may not be able to fly back to Uganda to renew their IDs. What

measures are in place for them to be able to renew their IDs and also to enrol, for those that could have travelled without the national IDs? I thank you.

4.59

MR JAMES MAMAWI (NRM, Adjumani East County, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement because the biggest fear with Ugandans was to pay money when you need to get the ID. However, the minister was very clear that there was going to be no money to be paid. We are very grateful.

I would like to request the minister that once the exercise kick-starts, we need to have enough staff on ground to avoid incidents where when registration at the parish level is closed, it is transferred to the subcounty level. At that point, it may also be closed and taken to the district. Some district headquarters are over 40 kilometres away whereby the nationals cannot move to get these national IDs. Once the exercise starts, let it stay at the parish level so that everybody gets registered. Thank you.

4.59

MR PETER OKEYOH (NRM, Bukooli Island County, Namayingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker and the minister for the statement. The minister points out that hard-to-reach areas are going to be covered and that they are going to give out standby generators and also employ the use of hydropower. That is why we say that there are some areas that need affirmative action, for example, when the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development was tasked to bring a statement indicating subcounties.

It is known that islands, for example, Bukooli Islands, Buvuma Islands and Jaguzi Islands in Mayuge are disadvantaged to the extent that sometimes charging these batteries is a challenge. They are given the generator, but there is a question of fuel. We find that maybe if they have charged, they can only operate for two hours and again they are off. I do not know how the minister is going to address this issue when it comes to hard-to-reach areas. I thank you.

5.01

MR TOM ALERO (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I feel that the officials who are going to register on the ground should guard against the following: one, those who are going to masquerade as citizens. Secondly, the foreigners who will want to register and also impersonators, more so when we have refugees along the borderline. The Sudanese refugees along the borderline might want also to register. The officials must be very careful in trying to find out all those who qualify to be registered as citizens of Uganda. Thank you.

5.02

MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mine is a brief one. You highlighted a very good point; the timeline towards the election. I feel that as Parliament, we did our part in passing that supplementary budget. However, I do not feel that the minister gave a proper explanation as to why this delay has come about.

Secondly, right now we have some people who are still applying for national IDs and yet within a period of six months or so, they will expire. What is going to happen? Should they keep applying for these national IDs?

Lastly, has NIRA learnt the lessons, which caused delays before? There has been a very big backlog of people of mixed race failing to get national IDs. Some of the issues are that they were requesting for birth certificates for the mothers who were born in the 1930s where those registries were still not in place. Have they actually come up with a proper system to avoid such delays, such that there is lack of discrimination among the people getting national IDs? Thank you.

5.03

MR MICHAEL TIMUZIGU (NRM, Kajara County, Ntungamo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have been wondering why people get IDs whose expiry date is beyond 2025 when they go to replace their lost IDs or correct their data. This means that some people have IDs, which will expire in 2032 or 2033.

I need clarification from the minister. When we come to renew our IDs, will those people keep the ones they have or will they get new ones? If they are to get new ones, why do they get IDs whose expiry date is beyond 2025? Thank you.

5.04

MS HELEN KAHUNDE (NRM, Woman Representative, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the report. Kiryandongo has a special category of people called the Maragoli community who missed out in the last enrolment. According to them, they qualify to be recognised in the Third Schedule of the Constitution as an indigenous community.

The Government has promised them over time that they will establish the Constitutional Review Commission to include them so that they can also qualify to be citizens and acquire national IDs. However, all this has not been implemented. They are very worried that they are going to miss this enrolment. They are there without national IDs.

Two of our constituency Members of Parliaments; the Hon. Karubanga Jacob Ateenyi together with Hon. Jack Odur in the last Parliament, tried to table a Private Member's Bill on constitutional amendment, but they did not succeed. They are requesting this House to find a way of assisting them because they do not want to miss out on this enrolment. Mr Speaker, thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kabula -

5.05

MR ENOS ASIIMWE (NRM, Kabula County, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern is more or less like hers. We have Rwandese –(*Interjection*)- Wait, do not say, “Aah”. Rwandese of Ugandan origin -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not parliamentary.

MR ASIIMWE: I apologise, Mr Speaker. My concern is Ugandans of Rwandese origin

- (*Interjection*)- thank you for the correction. They always find challenges in being registered for national IDs at times - Specifically on their passports, they usually run to us to get a recommendation letter regarding their origin and all that.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask the honourable minister to find a way to pass a regulation on how we can deal with such citizens. They seem to have descendants across the border, but when you look into their matters, they are Ugandans. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Engineer -

5.06

MR LUKE KYOBE (NRM, Luuka North County, Luuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the statement. I agree with the minister that after every 10 years, the physical features of somebody changes, but personal data is usually for a lifetime. If somebody's data is the same, why does it have to take that long to process the renewal?

Secondly, he talked about the issue of express, in case you are renewing the national ID by express. I would implore the minister to check how the Ministry of Works and Transport has done it when we are renewing our driving licences.

When you go there and your data is right, you get a driving licence instantly, yet the driving licences have been changing over time, including adding security features. Instead of putting Ugandans on hold for ages, in case they apply, but travel or they are away, they should be able to come back and pick the same national ID. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Tonny Ayoo, Member for Entebbe Municipality - I have NRMs who are on this side. No, now I am going to the Independents and the Opposition. So, if you are NRM and you are on this side, kindly -

5.07

MR TONNY AYOO (NRM, Kwanja County, Kwanja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the report.

For quite some time, we have been struggling and fighting with the Ministry of Internal Affairs in this Parliament over delays in processing, and people accessing their national IDs.

As we move into the second phase of mass recruitment and mass enrolment, we would like the minister to consider ensuring that there is efficiency and effectiveness by the National Identification & Registration Authority (NIRA) in issuing national IDs to the citizens.

One of the challenges has been NIRA operating very dilapidated equipment, systems and possibly applications. Out of the budget of Shs 300 billion that has been provided, the ministry is providing Shs 208 billion for development.

I think the priority must go into having the right equipment and applications. Therefore, when the question of providing for a window of paying for express processing of the national ID comes, we should not accept it. We should rather ensure that the ministry gets efficiency.

A colleague has just mentioned the issuance of a driver's licence. Why can't the ministry borrow the idea from the Ministry of Works and Transport in the process of providing national driver's licences? They use the same machines, computers, equipment, and security features. NIRA should be able to provide a national ID based on that.

Finally, Mr Speaker, we provided Shs 300 billion and the minister is reporting that the Government has apportioned Shs 190 billion for this quarter. Unfortunately, it has not yet been released. When is the quarter money going to be released? I thought funds had already been released for quarter three.

In this report, the minister needs to make a correction on quarter three Financial Year 2032/2024. I think it should be 2023/2024. That correction should be made.

Mr Speaker, all these delays - recruiting people to do mass enrolment, if the money is not released because of recruitment - You have reported here that money for recruitment has not yet been released and you have one month to start the process. Are you sure that without money now, within the next one month - That means you may get it only within one week. Are you going to meet the target?

Parliament is saying to the Minister for Finance that this is not business as usual. Provide the Minister of Internal Affairs and NIRA with the money to start work so that we do not stampede and get into chaos with the Government because of failing the election process because members of the Opposition on the other side - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, on the issue of recruitment, honourable minister, you can start the process of recruitment because it is long. By the time you issue contracts to the staff, you will have sorted out issues of finances. But if you wait for that money to first get into your account then you start recruitment, it will be a problem.

You better start on the process. I remember how you recruited teachers and then you waited for deployment and issuing of appointment letters. You need to start recruitment right away so that when money comes, you are just issuing appointment letters and you are moving because time is not on our side. Hon. Kakembo -

5.12

MR MICHAEL KAKEMBO (NUP, Entebbe Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the minister for this process of recruitment and massive registration.

As Parliament, we are here to correct the mistakes that we made last time. Among the mistakes is what I would call factory damage. Many national IDs had issues; spelling errors, and many others.

This time, I call upon the minister to consider this in the recruitment and deployment of your staff. Staff should be deployed and sent to areas where they have at least some cultural relationship, language understanding and orthography, which is very important. Many people have their names misspelt. You deploy somebody from Buganda to go and work in Lango, for example, yet he does not know how they write the names. Somebody has a national ID, but his name is badly spelt - It is bad. Some people do not want to identify themselves with such national IDs.

As you are going to recruit, honourable minister, I beg that you deploy people to areas where they have a cultural connection to help us come up with correct names to avoid factory damage to our national IDs. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, allow me - I am still on this side but allow me to pick one person from a very unique community; the Ik, the endangered -

5.14

MR HILLARY LOKWANG (NRM, Ik County, Kaabong): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the submission.

One thing I wanted the minister to clarify is on defaulting by the citizens. For how long will you charge them? There are hard-to-reach areas, people who are disabled and so many other people who will not be able to reach the issuing centres. For example, in my place, you have to move for 40 kilometres to get a national ID. How will you be able to handle that issue?

Secondly, the quality of national IDs that we have; that material sometimes breaks. This time we need good material that is resistant even to water. When someone puts it in their pocket, it should not break -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: They bring metallic?

MR LOKWANG: Quality material is what we want. The last one is the issue of the brokers.

You find people advertising on social media that, “If you pay me this amount of money, I will process for you a national ID in one day.” Where do those brokers come from? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, we are going to say you bring stainless steel material. Shadow Minister for Internal Affairs, the Honourable Member from Kalangala and then Hon. Lucy.

5.15

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE (NUP, Mukono Municipality, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, I would like to thank Hon. Naluyima for raising this matter. I do not know why these ministers deny this Parliament information.

Each one of us here has an issue to raise but had it not been for Hon. Naluyima to raise this through a matter of national importance, I do not know when the minister had planned to give Parliament this information.

Having said that, I would like to know, first, if it is not prudent of us to rethink this exercise. Even before we talk about renewal, a number of Ugandans do not have their Identity Cards (IDs), but we are talking now about a mass exercise to do the renewal.

Secondly, when you hear the presentation of the minister, it gives you a feeling that the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) is just beginning. They are procuring everything, they are going for training and they are doing everything for the first time. It is even difficult to believe that this institution has been around for some years now.

Some of the things for which they need money are very basic, Mr Speaker, sorry to say so. Regarding the issue of local government’s involvement, it is high time we revisited the issue of decentralisation.

Article 176 of the Constitution provides that for whatever we do, we should develop the responsibilities and the functions to local

governments in an organised manner. Some of these matters would be quickly handled and in the best way, by local governments. However, you see that NIRA is over centralised.

That is why the minister was saying that the local governments better take interest yet they would have been the implementers, because they are the governments that are near the people and know their areas better than any other institution.

Banks have already issued us with warnings that with the expiry of our IDs, they will hold our accounts. If that time comes and the IDs are not ready, what is the minister planning to do for institutions that will consider our IDs expired, including courts of law?

Lastly, Mr Speaker, every day we increase the role of the ID. For students now, the new education policy introduced the recording of results for national examinations. From the day a student joins senior secondary school, those results are recorded on their National Identification Number (NIN).

Where a student does not have a NIN number, he or she is required to provide the NIN number of the parent. It appears that the ID these days is required in so many areas than we had originally thought about. It is high time we drew a proper distinction between the voter’s ID and the national ID. It does not mean that every citizen of Uganda is a voter, and yet every citizen of Uganda is qualified for a national ID, including children.

Therefore, we cannot peg the issuance of a national ID to elections because voters are voters. There was a colleague who said that we told people to boycott registration. There is a difference between boycotting the registration of voters and the registration of citizens for the purpose of the national ID. Mr Speaker, we should draw a clear line between the two.

Lastly, when *–(Member timed out.)* – One minute, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Betty Nambooze, we do not do it that way. You request without switching on the microphone. There are rules, which we follow.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Much obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am thinking about other honourable colleagues and I have other statements. Just conclude quickly, honourable.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Last week, we had an exercise in Mukono; a show of “Go back to school” and NIRA was registering people for IDs. Today, we are talking about renewal. What is the purpose of the continuous registration when there is a provision that every 10 years, we shall be renewing?

One of those exercises is redundant. Personally, the exercise of mass renewal of IDs is redundant and it is high time this Parliament thinks about withdrawing it or rethinking this exercise. It is very expensive and it introduces a responsibility that is costly to the country and yet it is redundant. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, you will need to clarify whether the biggest push is because you are introducing a totally new ID with integrated features and a new system, which can provide more services so that we bring everyone on board.

5.22

MS HELEN NAKIMULI (NUP, Woman Representative, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Thank you, Minister, for that statement.

Mr Speaker, we have had illegal immigrants into the country - There is an island in Tanzania that is next to Kalangala. They come into the country, and they get IDs. Actually, they come during that time of issuance of IDs. I do not know who informs them, but they come to the country during issuance of IDs. They get our IDs, and they purport to be Ugandans and

yet they steal property of people in Kalangala; fishing nets and even kill our people.

Recently, there were two fishermen who were burnt; they wanted their nets, but they refused to give them and they burnt them. One of the survivors is the one who told the story. You should take this issue up, especially when issuing national IDs.

Mr Speaker, he also talked about issuance of generators to especially hard-to-reach areas. We, the islanders, are told that the Government property does not cross the waters to go to further islands because I hear there is insurance and all that. I would like you to confirm to us - are these generators going to cross to the deeper islands. I have 84 islands and Buvuma has about 54, but the Government only looks at the main island where the district headquarter is and they put their property there.

Mr Speaker, for reference, we got an ambulance for Kyamuswa constituency. We asked for a ferry for this to be taken and the person we asked said, no, we have to inquire from the minister to see if Government property can go there. Yet the ministry said it is supposed to go to Kyamuswa constituency. I am wondering because people in Kyamuswa also pay taxes and they need to get the services.

Therefore, are these generators also going to go to the islands or they need insurance to stay at the main island? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is very close to the one from Hon. Hillary Lokwang. The Ik, in those mountains, moving 40 kilometres to get a national ID - What we are going to - I had allowed Hon. Lucy Akello, Hon. Mayanja, Hon. Kirumira, Hon. Nabukeera and Hon. Namugga.

No, I will first pick the Opposition and then I come to Independents. *(Applause)*

5.24

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also want to add my voice in

thanking the minister for the statement. I have about three issues to raise. One of them is that I do not know whether this mass registration is going to make use of centralised data. In other countries, this data is collected once so that when I go to get a passport or driving permit, it is the same data that is being used.

Unfortunately, when I want a passport in Uganda, they will ask me for fresh information and yet I already have a lot of information with National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA). I do not know whether this is going to take care of this so that we have a centralised data system that can be used across the board.

Secondly, this will help us with our revenue collection. In developed countries, the National Identification Numbers (NINs) that we have summarises you as an individual or citizen. If you fail to pay tax, it will detect that Hon. Akello Lucy has failed to pay tax and when I go to renew my passport or permit, it will show that I have not paid my tax and I will not be given that document.

Third is about the issue that Hon. Acan raised, but I am going to bring it from another angle. In the last registration, we had very interesting scenarios where the machine would read a human being as a gorilla or a chimpanzee because –(*Interjection*) Yes, the machines would fail to detect the features of the thumb.

I have an identity card (ID) which says that I cannot sign simply because the machine failed to acknowledge and read my signature. So, it just said “unable to sign.” Are we taking care of these things?

Hon. Lokwang talked about quality; we must work on the picture quality and everything in the IDs. Otherwise, thank you and I wish you well.

5.27

MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. In Nakaseke, we have hundreds of people who failed to get

national IDs, not because they do not want but because the biometric machines failed to read their fingerprints, specifically people who are in construction and women who work in saloons because cement and cosmetics destroy their fingerprints. Many in Nakaseke cannot access banking services, Government services or hospital services and they are really suffering. So, minister, you need to be specific on how you are going to cater for these people.

Secondly, my national ID is expiring in the year 2030. Do I also need to renew it? Because most people’s IDs are expiring in 2029, do they also have to go for this mass registration?

Lastly, after collecting people’s data and the mass registration is done, how many days, weeks or months will it take these people to acquire their renewed national IDs? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. That addresses the issue, which Hon. Ssemujju had shared with me earlier on. When are the IDs you are issuing now expiring? Are we going to have an instrument saying all IDs have expired therefore, you must - or will you give us a transition period to say within this period, you should have renewed your ID because the ID with the new features is going to be the one used with effect from this day?

5.30

MR HASSAN KIRUMIRA (NUP, Katikamu County South, Luwero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern relates to your guidance because according to the international best practices, IDs are supposed to be for life. If you go around the East African region, Rwanda and Kenya have aligned their system to that.

Botswana and the southern part of Africa are also using the same ID system that does expire. My biggest concern is in the East African region where we are agitating for continuous integration within the region and these people are allowing Ugandans to access their territories on the basis of their ID.

My biggest worry is that at a certain time, they may start arguing that, you are coming

to Rwanda with an ID that is expiring in two months and that particular Ugandan may be potentially stateless in another country.

My prayer, especially to the minister, is to align our ID system to international best practices so that Ugandans have IDs that do not expire because there are so many justifications as to why non-expiring IDs are preferred to those that expire. Thank you.

5.31

MS HANIFA NABUKEERA (NUP, Woman Representative, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern is about the immigrants that come in from, for example, Katosi and Mpata landing sites. We have immigrants who come in from Tanzania, Rwanda - You know that islands are a collection and a mixture of cultures. Those that come in collaborate with the Local Council (LC) chairpersons, probably even bribe them, then acquire their national IDs.

How are we going to check and scrutinise that the people who come in qualify or do not qualify to acquire our national IDs? Thank you.

5.32

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me start with a correction from Hon. Kabula's submission. We do not have Rwandese nationals here; we have Banyarwanda recognised in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

I agree with you that these people are in our Constitution but they find a lot of problems getting passports here. If we do not want to recognise Banyarwanda anymore, we should scrap them off our Constitution.

My mother is a Munyarwanda and all of my maternal relatives are Banyarwanda and many of them have not even travelled to Rwanda in their lifetime but getting a passport - They have about four lines of generations here but getting a passport is close to hell.

Having said that, I would like to thank Hon. Naluyima for the question and the minister for a fairly elaborate report. I submit, on behalf of my second constituency. I represent Butambala but also the people that veil or put on head scarfs.

In 2022, I presented a question to the minister and the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister ably answered and rightly saw that Muslims have a right to put on veils and get official documents in accordance to the prescription she gave. I tested the system and I would like to thank the minister because my daughter was able to get a passport with a veil on. For that, I credit your office.

However, later on, another daughter went to get a national ID with a headscarf on but her application was declined. When I put them to task and told them I had a national ID with my headscarf on, they said, that was then.

Can I know, honourable minister, whether we Muslims will be given the right to practice our religion and have our national IDs with our headscarves on.

Also, may I request that your office formally gazettes - I request that someone does not disturb the minister when I am speaking - that your office formally gazettes what a Muslim woman is expected to wear. My daughter was successful because we insisted, but many Muslim women are pushed out when they go to get passports while wearing headscarves.

Finally, is it true that the coming of the National IDs made passports less of official documents? When we go to the police over any matter, even reporting the loss of a SIM card, they decline to receive passports and insist on getting the National IDs. Can we know from you whether the coming into force of the National IDs made the passports less official documents for any official communication, like the reporting of the loss of documents and even for use in banks? Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Gorreth Namugga?

5.36

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogola County South, Ssembabule):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am also the former Minister for Science, Innovation and Communications Technology. *(Laughter)* I was only reminding colleagues.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Today, we are dealing with the current ones. *(Laughter)*

MS NAMUGGA: Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is one of the areas that has been cited and my experience serves a lot, Mr Speaker. When I saw the minister very excited as he was submitting that he was given money under the supplementary, I got very worried. We have instances where there are suppliers who have not been paid yet their money was declared under the supplementary.

I request the minister not to commit service providers under instances where they do not have money. We have domestic arrears of over Shs 10 trillion. Ugandans are suffering – they provided services to the Government and they have not been paid for the last six years. Therefore, honourable minister, do not get excited over a supplementary. We pass supplementary budgets without money or clear sources of revenue. I caution you, as a former minister, not to commit the Government under circumstances where you do not have money.

Mr Speaker, point number two – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order?

MR OBUA: Mr Speaker, I did not intend to interrupt my sister, Hon. Gorreth Namugga, but she has put it on record twice that she is a former minister. Ministers, in the case of Uganda, are appointed by His Excellency the President and approved by Parliament and I have never seen the name of Hon. Gorreth. Is she in order to indicate twice that she is a former Minister for Science and Technology yet the minister for science and technology is Hon. Dr Musenero?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I think we can just add “in the shadow Cabinet”. However, the good news is that she is the Vice-Chairperson, Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) (Central Government). Therefore, you will appear before her and she will say, “I warned you and you did not listen”. *(Laughter)*

MS NAMUGGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thought my colleague knew that the fact that I am on this side automatically shows that I am in the “shadow”. However, the point is noted.

Mr Speaker, the other issue is about the delayed procurement processes. We are very lucky that the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets (PPDA) Act and its regulations is a new law that has stipulated processes by reducing those timelines and the procurement cycle.

Honourable minister, I request that – because the law was effective 5 February – these are taken into consideration such that we avoid all those delays that were arising out of delays in the procurement process.

Mr Speaker, there are many agencies that have failed to utilise their budgets because of delays in these processes. Therefore, I encourage the honourable minister to ensure that we mitigate any further delays that lead to inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the provision of Government services.

Lastly, how I wish we could adopt Hon. Betty Nambooze’s idea of dropping the project of renewing the IDs as it is very costly to the Government. In line with the fact that you are even looking forward to merging agencies and saving Shs 1 trillion, this Shs 300 billion could be a saving for the Government to invest in more productive areas than this one. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I look forward to an ID which I will come with and swipe at the airport and go through without – I look forward to a more integrated ID that can take me anywhere and that has all features. I hope that is what they

would like to give us. Honourable Member for Kiboga -

5.40

MS CHRISTINE KAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Mr Speaker, my people from Kiboga, especially the Banyarwanda, are denied passports. The rest of us use our IDs to process the passports. I do not know why, when it comes to this tribe, they are segregated. The point at which they are segregated is even after they have paid money. I do not know: will their IDs be renewed this time round? They are worried that if they cannot proceed with their IDs to process passports, it is a challenge.

Mr Speaker, we also need to strengthen the photocopies of the IDs. It is very dangerous to move with the original everywhere. I do not know how the photocopy can, in some way, be recognised to process certain things. It is dangerous and that is why replacements are many and tedious. It is a challenge to our people, especially the elderly and the people with disabilities. I beg to submit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Tochi -

5.41

MR PETER OKOT (DP, Tochi County, Omoro): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the report. We must also appreciate our staff who work in the different National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) offices across the country because they are battling outdated machines but trying their best to make sure that our citizens get the National IDs.

I would like to have assurances from the minister. We all agree that the current machines are dilapidated but he also informs us that, currently, they are being tested – data is being tested using the old machines. However, the procurement has been set in motion to bring new ICT materials and equipment. What assurance can we have from the minister that once these new machines come, we will not have problems transferring the data from the

old to the new, given that we even have time constraints before us?

Finally, I believe that the 10-year expiry period starts counting from the day you get your National ID. However, now you are bringing in new National IDs with new features. Will things operate the way we did with passports when we introduced the machine-readable passport that when it expires, you receive the new ID with the new features? We need that assurance. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssasaga?

5.44

MR ISAIAS SSASAGA (FDC, Budadiri County East, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern is about citizens who voluntarily do not enrol for the National Identity Cards. We deal with students and the biggest challenge they face when they seek to be admitted to public institutions or when they go for the students' loan scheme is that their parents must have been enrolled and must have National Identification Numbers (NIN).

We have religious sects where the parents do not go and register for National Identity Cards. They even prevail over their children to the extent of disowning them from their homes if they make attempts to register for their national identity cards. They claim those IDs have a number, and they do not believe in the numbers.

I am looking at a provision for such type of parents who are denying their children the right to register and they themselves are not registered for national ID cards. What should we do with them?

Some of them have attempted to use those of relatives as they are sitting Form 6 or as they are joining the universities, but in the process of verification, the committee discovers that the National Identification Numbers (NIN) used are not of their biological parents. Some of them are eliminated or discontinued from some of those schemes. What shall we do or

what is the ministry proposing for such type of Ugandans? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Point of Procedure?

MR IDDI ISABIRYE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rule 52(2) of our Rules of Procedure requires that if a minister presents a statement, the debate should not take more than one hour. This debate has taken close to an hour. Are we proceeding right, Mr Speaker, if the debate has taken an hour?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the point raised by the honourable member is instructive in our rules; “Shall” and I had not taken notes. I had just wanted to pick nearly all of you and give you a chance to speak. I found that, indeed, we have gone one hour and 27 minutes from the time. Next item.

STATEMENT ON THE
COMMEMORATION OF ARCHBISHOP
JANANI LUWUM DAY

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, take note of these issues that have been raised. These are issues you are going to handle with the committee. You know I became generous; this is the second time it is happening. When I read Rule 52(2) of our Rules of Procedure, it is very instructive. Yes, Hon. Nambooze.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. You are the custodian of the rules of this House and we believe and trust that you are a person of good judgment and fairness. Honourable MPs have been given time to raise several issues and some of them are demanding immediate answers, not for us but for Ugandans outside there.

Mr Speaker, the fact of the matter is that this House would have debated the issue of IDs yesterday. It is only that you were so kind to allow a matter of national importance to be raised by Hon. Naluyima that the minister came up with this important matter.

Wouldn't it be procedurally okay, Mr Speaker, if you would exercise your powers and magnanimity to allow the minister to give, in brief, some answers to the burning questions that have been raised by Members? I do so pray.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I totally agree with you because these are very critical issues. The minister's responses are part of the debate. That is the only problem we have. In such a matter where it is very clearly stated, even me as a Presiding Officer, I am stuck. That is why I keep quiet over a matter. If a Member raises it then my hands are tied.

However, I think we can agree, as a House, and use five minutes for the minister to respond or give him another time so that the minister goes back and responds to these issues in writing. Should I give you space? Honourable minister, how long do you think it will take you?

5.50

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Mr Speaker, even in a day I can put down the responses because I captured them and I can present them.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So can we do it tomorrow?

GEN MUHOOZI: Obligated, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, tomorrow, once I list it as a substantive item and he brings answers, it becomes a new statement and I can allow more Members. I will start with the Independents, the Leader of the Opposition, the chairperson of the committee - I had wanted him to make a comment on this. These are your rules, honourable colleagues, so when they come in, I have no way out. It will be among the first items tomorrow, honourable colleagues. Next item? We had already called it. Minister for the Presidency –

5.51

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT (ECONOMIC MONITORING) (Ms Beatrice Akori Akello): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a statement on the 47th Commemoration of St Janani Luwum Day due for 16 February 2024.

On Friday, 16 February 2024, Uganda will celebrate the 47th Commemoration of St Janani Luwum Day. The day has been commemorated annually since 2015 when His Excellency the President announced that 16th February would be designated as St Janani Luwum Day, in honour of the 2nd Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Boga-Zaire who was brutally murdered by the military Government in 1977. The day was subsequently declared a public holiday and is commemorated annually at the late Archbishop Luwum's burial site at Wii-gweng Village, Mucwini Parish in Kitgum District.

The commemoration of St Janani Luwum Day is organised annually by the Church of Uganda in collaboration with Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, led by the Directorate for Ethics and Integrity, the Local Organising Committee based in Kitgum, and the family of the late Archbishop Janani Luwum.

The commemoration falls under the mandate of the Minister of State for Ethics and Integrity who has delegated me to read this statement on her behalf. This is because the Directorate for Ethics and Integrity has the mandate of coordinating and monitoring religious activities and operations in the country.

Mr Speaker, the day when Archbishop Janani Luwum was brutally murdered is commemorated annually because his devotion and martyrdom was specially recognised by the Church of England, which is the mother Church of the Anglican faith. He was given a special place in the history of the Anglican faith as one of the 10 Martyrs of the 20th Century.

The annual commemoration is to honour, celebrate and provide thanksgiving for the

life, testimony, martyrdom and example of St Janani Luwum as an outstanding leader, a great martyr and a compelling role model for the world, regardless of faith and background. His martyrdom provides a powerful message of forgiveness and reconciliation among all believers in God. This is a national day involving all stakeholders including believers from all denominations, the Government, the Diplomatic Corps, the civil society, the media, the private sector and the international community.

Mr Speaker, on 13 April 2022, a team led by the Archbishop of the Church of Uganda met with His Excellency the President together with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and discussed the development of Mucwini into an international pilgrimage and tourist site. His Excellency guided that the masterplan should include a modern sports stadium, which can generate income for the church, for sustainability and maintenance of the site.

I am glad to report that as a first step towards the development, the Janani Luwum family officially donated the land on which the late Archbishop was buried at Wii-gweng, Mucwini, to the Diocese of Kitgum, Church of Uganda. We applaud the Janani Luwum family for this act of selflessness and nationalism.

A Certificate of Title in the name of the Diocese of Kitgum is being processed; and after it is issued, it will be submitted together with the Bills of Quantities for the masterplan to the Ministry of Works and Transport, for approval. It is only after the requisite approval is obtained that a submission can be made to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, to finance the capital development.

The theme for this 47th Commemoration is "Conforming to the Truth of God's Word, not the Patterns of the World." It is taken from the book of Romans Chapter 12 verses 1 and 2.

There is a pattern of habits that are currently invading society and the Church of Christ,

which is attracting many people especially the youth. This theme is intended to draw people to God, other than following worldly trends. In the midst of the many challenges that we face, there is need for unity and to stick to the truth, which is the word of God.

The main commemoration event will be a church service at the late Archbishop Janani Luwum's burial ground at Wii-gweng, Mucwini in Kitgum District, followed by speeches. The chief guest is expected to be His Excellency the President of Uganda. The main celebrant will be the Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, the Most Rev. Dr Stephen Samuel Kazimba Mugalu. Preparations for the liturgy are being led by the dioceses of Madi and West Nile.

The outcomes of the previous commemoration of St Janani Luwum Day are increased enthusiasm of Ugandans to participate in the commemoration event. Pilgrims trek from all the nearby districts as well as from Kampala to Mucwini, and spend several days in singing, prayer and communion. The event has fostered reconciliation and unity.

This year, a group of four-foot pilgrims led by Thomas Tokwiny Mussolin walked from Kampala to Mucwini. They started their foot pilgrimage at the Church of Uganda Provincial Office at Namirembe Hill on Wednesday, 31st January, and arrived in Gulu a week later on Wednesday, 7 February 2024.

In Gulu, they met up with the second group of 300 pilgrims, who were led by Mr Apollo Oola. The entire team was flagged off by the Bishop of the Diocese of Northern Uganda, the Rt Rev. Godfrey Loum on Friday, 9 February 2024, and are marching together in unity and fellowship. They are expected to reach Mucwini on 15 February 2024, on the eve of the commemoration.

The expected outcome of the commemoration is increased commitment by Ugandans in adhering to the truth, which is the word of God, other than being influenced by materialism. There is also expected increased unity, so that

Ugandans can work together with a common aim, for development.

Mr Speaker, it is my honour and privilege to invite you, the honourable members of this House, to the 47th Commemoration of St Janani Luwum Day at Wii-gweng, Mucwini in Kitgum District on Friday, 16 February 2024, starting at 9.00 a.m.

I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. This is an information paper, so, I will not allow debate on it. I just encourage all of you, honourable colleagues, to go and attend.

**MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON THE MOTION
FOR RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT
URGING GOVERNMENT TO SIGN
AND RATIFY THE TREATY ON THE
PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The committee chairperson told me that the honourable youth Member, Hon. Boniface Okot will represent the team.

6.01

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern Region): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Before I delve into the report, I beg to lay on the Table the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs on the Motion for a Resolution of Parliament urging Government to Sign and Ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, you have 10 minutes. Please go through and summarise. The whole report will be captured on the *Hansard*.

MR BONIFACE OKOT: Okay, Mr Speaker. I also beg to lay minutes of various meetings on the subject matter. Straight to the introduction: On 26 October 2021, Hon. Martin Ojara

Mapenduzi, Member of Parliament for Bardege-Layibi Division, Gulu City moved a motion for a resolution of Parliament urging Government to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The motion was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs for scrutiny and report back within 45 days as required by the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The committee could not complete its report within the stipulated time because it lacked substantive input of the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, under which the subject matter of the treaty falls. However, the minister appeared before the committee on 11 November 2021 and informed the committee that:

1. The motion seeks to urge Government, hence the Executive, to sign and ratify the treaty. In performance of such a duty, the Executive is advised by one of its organs, which is the National Security Council, which advises on matters of national security.
2. The Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs operates in a framework, which requires that matters relating to national security are discussed by the High Command and the Defence Forces Council before taking a stand as provided by Sections 3 of the National Security Council Act and Sections 14 and 15 of the Uganda People's Defence Forces(UPDF) Act.

Mr Speaker, you will recall that upon the expiry of the 45 days, the committee requested for extra time in accordance with Rule 218(2) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, and you granted the request. Thereafter, the committee made several attempts to get a position from the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, before presenting this report to the august House, but it was in vain. Copies of the correspondences are hereby attached.

Following the engagements which the committee held with several other stakeholders, the committee now presents its report as follows.

Mr Speaker, I will skip –(*Interruption*)

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The defence minister is not here. Are we moving – Oh! My apologies.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Enos, are you here, if I may ask? (*Laughter*)

MR BONIFACE OKOT: Mr Speaker, I will skip item two, which is on the mandate of the committee. I will also skip the methodology and then I will share with the House the motion, which is on page 3.

It should be recalled that the treaty was adopted by the United Nations (UN) on 7 July 2017, opened for signature on 20 September 2017, and it entered into force on 22 January 2021.

The mover of the motion stated that:

1. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was the first legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons;
2. Uganda actively participated in the negotiations leading to the formulation of the treaty, and was among the 122 states that approved the idea to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons; and
3. The delay by Uganda to sign and ratify the treaty diminishes Uganda's standing on the international stage, where Uganda is recognised as a model country in handling matters of international concern –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, go to observations and recommendations. This motion was presented to the House, and we went through it so –

MR BONIFACE OKOT: I will go to page 5, which is on findings and observations of the treaty.

Mr Speaker, while the committee is mandated to cover bilateral, multilateral and intergovernmental relations, its role with regard

to examination of the said treaties, protocols and international agreements is limited. This is because the role of Parliament is restricted to agreements that are signed, concluded and laid on the Table as required by law.

6.2. On ratification of treaties. Whereas the motion seeks for a resolution of Parliament, urging the Government to sign and ratify the treaty, the committee observes as follows.

1. The duty to make treaties, conventions, agreements, or other arrangements between Uganda and any other country, or between Uganda and any international organisation or body, in respect of any matter, lies within the mandate of the President or a person authorised by the President, as provided by Article 123 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.
2. The duty to ratify this particular treaty lies within the mandate of Parliament as provided by Section 2 of the Ratification of Treaties Act.
3. Although the Ratification of Treaties Act provides that Parliament shall ratify treaties relating to the armistice, neutrality or peace, or in the case of a treaty, in respect of which the Attorney-General has certified in writing that its implementation in Uganda would require an amendment of the Constitution, the treaty, though related to the armistice, has never been signed by Government.
4. Government's role in the ratification of the treaty, which has not yet been signed by the Executive, would tantamount to exercising powers that are a preserve of the Executive. In this regard, later on in this report, the committee will make appropriate recommendations to the Executive to examine the treaty and determine whether to sign.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: 9.0? This is because I read your report, and you clearly

state that we do not have the power. Therefore, why should we – I would like us to go directly to the issues. Where we do not have power, we do not have time to waste.

MR BONIFACE OKOT: 9.0. The committee's recommendations.

Signing and ratification of the treaty

While the mover of the motion urges the Government to sign and ratify the treaty, considering that the Government can only sign an international agreement, treaty or convention, after careful study of the same, and is satisfied that the signature and ratification are of relevance to Uganda, as indicated by the Attorney-General, the committee recommends that the Executive should understudy the matter and make appropriate decisions in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

That notwithstanding, following a comprehensive study of the subject matter, the committee makes the following additional recommendations, which are on the last page.

Recommendations

1. Amendment of the Atomic Energy Act, 2008. This Act should be amended to provide for nuclear safety, security, safeguards and liability.
2. The Government of Uganda should also interest itself in the following conventions and treaties, which are critical for safe nuclear power development. The list is there.
3. The capacity of the Atomic Energy Council of Uganda should be built and enhanced to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
4. Border control measures. The Ministry of Internal Affairs should strengthen cross-border cooperation and coordination to ensure adequate border control measures, so as to avoid infiltration of illegal arms, which may include nuclear weapons.

5. To secure health nuclear materials.

Uganda, guided by experts in security matters, decided to vote in favour of the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Therefore, Uganda should ensure that nuclear material in health practices is secured so that it does not end up in the wrong hands that could use it for non-peaceful applications.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this report be adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague. The only thing I see in this report, honourable minister of defence, is when a committee of Parliament requests your submission on the matter, please comply, cooperate. Such a report is really bad for you because if correspondence is available, but there was no response at all – honourable minister, do you want to comment on that?

6.12

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (Mr Vincent Ssempijja): Mr Speaker, we were invited to the committee, I personally attended, and I informed them on this procedure, which he has ably presented to Parliament that we have to consider this in the High Command and in the Army Council, which has not been considered.

I continued to engage the Commander-in-Chief about this, and he replied to my requests and I gave copies to the chairperson of the committee.

Mr Speaker, I could not go beyond what I cannot. All the same, this is, of course, a sensitive matter and in the wisdom of the President and in his own writing, he said, look at the environment. He wanted us to look more seriously into the matter, because all of the “big brothers” did not sign the treaty, including those who hold nuclear weapons. So, some of us who are not part of that need to look at it more closely so that we do not just rush to -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, I do not want to go into that.

MR SSEMPIJJA: I do not want to go into the details. Thank you very much. Much obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I just want to urge you that next time, when the committee reaches out to you, you come in time, because they said that they delayed because of you. At last you appeared, but they delayed because of you.

Honourable colleagues, this is a matter which the committee has stipulated properly. Let us leave the Executive to do their work; it is within their mandate. *(Applause)*

I put the question that the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs on the motion for a resolution of Parliament urging the Government to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Next item.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
DEFENCE AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS ON
THE INQUIRY INTO THE OPERATIONS
OF THE UGANDA POLICE FORCE
EXODUS SACCO

6.15

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Mr Wilson Kajwengye): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the minutes of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs that sat and did perform an inquiry on the operations of the Uganda Police Force Exodus SACCO.

This report, like many other parliamentary reports, is of much significance to our forces, to our police and to all of us. I will skip some matters because the report is heavy, but I will make sure that pertinent observations and recommendations are captured. I will need your guidance.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sure, honourable.

MR KAJWENGYE: This is a report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on the inquiry into the operations of the Uganda Police Force Exodus SACCO. During the plenary proceedings of Wednesday, 1 February 2023, the Rt Hon. Deputy Speaker directed the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs to inquire into the operations of the Uganda Police Force Exodus SACCO, following the Minister of Internal Affairs' statement on the involuntary deductions of the police officers' salaries as contributions to their savings with the SACCO.

The committee indeed inquired into the operations of the SACCO and now reports.

The background to that is well captured. The documents that we looked at are several. The problem statement, the methodology, we had the terms of reference.

Let me state this, because these are important. They form the basis for our inquiry. The terms of reference are as follows:

4.1. General reference

The committee was tasked to inquire into the operations of the Exodus SACCO and report back.

4.2. Specific references

The committee considered the task assigned to it and came up with the following objectives:

- i. To ascertain the governance and management of the Uganda Police Exodus SACCO.
- ii. To establish whether the Uganda Police Exodus SACCO complies with the regulatory requirements.
- iii. To establish the policy on the savings, withdrawals and loan management of the Uganda Police Exodus SACCO.
- iv. To establish whether there are unclaimed savings of the deceased members of the Uganda Police Exodus SACCO, and the policy in managing such assets.

- v. To inquire into any other matters incidental thereto, and make appropriate recommendations.

Methodology

The committee met all the relevant ministries and agencies, including internal affairs, the leadership of the police, the leadership of the boards of the Exodus SACCO, previous and current, the lower-ranked cadres in the Uganda Police Force, the Auditor-General, the Registrar of Cooperatives, Hon. Geoffrey Macho, Member of Parliament, Busia Municipality. We looked at the relevant documents and the challenges are there.

Findings, observations and recommendations

It is critical to note that under Article 2 of the Bylaws of the Exodus SACCO, the objects of the SACCO include providing its members with savings and related services at competitive rates of interest and minimising financial risk on such savings; providing loans and any other necessary legally authorised and economically feasible financial services demanded by its members.

In the exercise of its mandate, the SACCO is guided by a management structure that influences its operations and processes. The committee set out to inquire into the operations of the Exodus SACCO under the following terms. I have already enumerated that. But these are important matters, Mr Speaker.

To ascertain the governance and management of the Uganda Police Exodus SACCO. One needs to look at the governance and management structure of the SACCO. The observations of the committee are to the effect that the governance, management and operations of the Exodus SACCO are guided by the legal regime for cooperatives, including the Cooperative Societies Act, Cap. 112 as amended.

Tier 4 Microfinance Institutions and Money Lenders Act, 2016, the Cooperative Societies Regulations and Exodus SACCO Bylaws. The committee established that Article 15 of the Bylaws (herein referred to by Bylaws) provides

for the Savings and Credit Cooperative Society's structure. The business is run by;

- i. The general meeting (also referred to as the annual general meeting)
- ii. The committee
- iii. The supervisory committee; and
- iv. The manager.

The general meeting derives its powers from Regulation 20 of the Cooperative Societies Regulations and Article 16 of the Exodus SACCO bylaws. I can continue, Mr Speaker, but much of the observations accrue from what is stated herein. I beg your guidance whether I read word for word or I go to the observations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just go to the observations. We were focusing on the deductions. That was the major issue.

MR KAJWENGYE: Thank you.

Observations on the mandate and governance

The committee observes that the failure to distinguish the affairs of Exodus SACCO from those of the Uganda Police Force in the years of inception was a recipe for mismanagement, considering that the SACCO was not yet formally registered and had no bylaws in place to govern operations. Inevitably, the SACCO Board (the interim committee then) during the inception phase, yielded to the whims of the Police Council during the decision-making processes. This interference and failure to delineate the affairs of the Exodus SACCO from those of the Uganda Police Force top management raised concerns on potential boundary violations despite the two entities being distinct.

The lack of feedback creates an un-informed membership regarding the annual general meeting resolutions and in the process fails to meet the members' aspirations and expectations completely.

The committee recommends, therefore, that:

- i. The police leadership should desist from meddling in the affairs of the SACCO to allow for the independent control of the SACCO affairs by the board and management as prescribed by the SACCO Bylaws.
- ii. The SACCO management should develop effective mechanisms of communicating to the membership about the annual general meeting resolutions and developments in the SACCO, given that the Uganda Police Force is composed of officers, most of whom have not acquired advanced level of education. As such, the SACCO should regularly inform its membership about their cooperative values, responsibilities, and allow easy access to various reports available.
- iii. Election of leadership of the SACCO should adhere to the democratic principles enshrined in Section 16 of the Cooperative Societies Act, CAP 112.

We also talk about membership of the SACCO, the observations and the recommendations here about membership are, the committee, therefore, recommends that:

- i. The registrar of cooperative societies proceeds over the Exodus SACCO under Section 2(2) of the Cooperative Societies Act to compel the board and management of the Exodus SACCO to audit and compile an updated, comprehensive and reliable membership register.
- ii. Every member who has joined should be issued with a certificate of membership of savings and shares.
- iii. The membership should remain voluntary. Thank you.

TOR 2: To establish whether Uganda Police Exodus complies with the regulatory requirements.

Recommendations

- i. The committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry of Trade, Industry

and Cooperatives, Bank of Uganda and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should review Section 110 of the Tier 4 Microfinance Moneylenders Act, 2016, with the view of tailoring regulatory requirements to facilitate the growth of SACCOs as opposed to strict regulations that would create distortions and tilt membership subscriptions in cooperative societies such as the Exodus SACCO.

Here we mean that when the law was made, the SACCOs still had a small number of membership. The threshold was put at Shs 1.6 billion but all these SACCOs in the country are beyond Shs 10 billion. So, the law needs to be amended accordingly.

Mr Speaker, we also recommend that going forward, the management of the Exodus SACCO should adhere to the audit provisions under Section 22(A) of the Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Act (, and under exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the registrar, can the circle employ the services of an auditor for more than three consecutive years.

This is brought about by the fact that the committee found that the board was employing an auditor year in and year out, and each time this auditor came in, he would reconstitute the books. This is an anomaly, and thus the recommendation.

- ii. The Institute of Certified Public Accountants (CPA) should strengthen its supervisory role on the practitioners such as Allied Certified Public Accountants, to ensure compliance with professional standards, including relevant ethical requirements and practices.

7.3 TOR 3: To establish the policy on savings, withdrawals, and loan management of the Uganda Police Exodus SACCO, whether it exists. We have observations on page 22.

Observations

The committee observes that:

- i. At the inception of the SACCO, as reported above, the unchecked role of DPCs outside Kampala in transmitting the membership returns (i.e., field membership forms, application fees, and cash contributions) to the SACCO headquarters in Kampala was a severe risk.

The SACCO had no system to effect deductions from source. This created the record gaps, given the inadequate verification of the authenticity of the receipts that were issued and given back to the officers who had expressed interest of joining the SACCO.

Aware of the authoritative nature of the leadership of the police, a junior officer could not question their superior's integrity, regarding the authenticity of the issued receipts.

These circumstances were a recipe for DPCs to commit fraud in the transmission chain. The committee opines that this significantly contributed to the SACCO's member's inconsistent records and account ledgers.

- ii. Due to the inadequate verification of the process of membership contributions and insufficient records from inception, the SACCO management, by extension, could not comprehensively update the members' register.
- iii. As a result of this lapse, each member's percentage shareholding and savings could not reliably be established.

Recommendations

The committee, therefore, recommends that;

- i. The Registrar of Cooperative Societies proceeds over the Exodus SACCO under Section 2(2) of the Cooperatives Act and immediately institutes a membership audit of the society.

Effectively, the mandatory deductions on the officers' salaries and contributions for members'

savings should stop until a comprehensive membership register is compiled on condition that only willing members are registered. The stoppage of deductions should only apply to savings and not loan repayments.

All members with outstanding loan obligations should continue to pay the SACCO.

ii. All deductions that were/are made in form of retirement benefits contrary to The Pensions Act, (Cap 286), 1946 should be refunded with interest to the affected personnel because it would totally be illegal.

TOR 4: We were made to establish whether there are unclaimed savings of the deceased members of Uganda Police Exodus SACCO and the policy for managing such assets.

We went through that and these are our recommendations. But, first of all, we found out that in that table 4, the summary of the deceased members of the Exodus SACCO, we found that the total number of deceased members were 234, unclaimed accounts were 228, and claimed accounts were 6.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the Exodus SACCO should develop a policy on claiming the savings of the departed members.

7.5 TOR 5: To inquire into other matters incidental thereto and make appropriate recommendations.

7.5.1 Handover reports and their impact on the operations of the Exodus SACCO and the accounts thereto and the documents as contained.

Observation

The committee observed that SACCOs financials are not being managed in adherence to sound accounting principles and standards.

The mistrust of the various boards as manifested in the recurrent audits, coupled with allegations of fraud and accusations of mismanagement over the years, has significantly affected the operations of the SACCO as a going concern.

The committee's considered opinion is that the inconsistencies in the data compilation is the major cause of discrepancies and unreliable financial positions, which has significantly affected member's savings.

We, therefore, recommend;

- i. That the Registrar of Cooperatives proceeds over the Exodus SACCO under Section 2(2) of the Cooperative Societies Act and immediately stops mandatory deductions on officers' salaries and contributions for members' savings until a comprehensive membership register is compiled on the condition that only willing members are registered.

However, the stopped deductions should only apply to savings and not loans. All members with outstanding loan obligations should continue to pay the SACCO.

- ii. The SACCO books of accounts should be managed in adherence with the professional accounting standards.

Under 7.5.2 we are looking at the viability of the SACCO to its members. Table 4 has very good information; I urge you, honourable colleagues, to read it.

We recommended as follows:

1. The committee reiterates that the Registrar of Cooperatives proceeds over the Exodus SACCO, under Section 2(2) of the Cooperative Societies Act, and immediately stops mandatory deductions on officers' salaries and contributions for members' savings, until a comprehensive membership register is compiled, on condition that only willing members are registered. Again, the stoppage on deductions should only apply to savings, not loans. All members with outstanding loan obligations should continue to pay the SACCO; and
2. The deductions should be remitted with immediate effect to address the lead time.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, the operations of the SACCO significantly evolve around finances and the welfare of its members. The report reveals poor finance management and inconsistent audits of the SACCO's financials. The inconsistencies in data compilation present gross discrepancies and unreliable financial positions, which have significantly affected members' savings.

Additionally, because the SACCO is an independent private entity, the Auditor-General has no legal basis for auditing the SACCO's books of accounts, given that it does not draw funds from the Consolidated Account.

Therefore, the committee calls upon Parliament to direct the Office of the Registrar of Cooperatives and Bank of Uganda, as the regulators, to exercise their mandate to streamline the operations of the SACCO, as required by law, by instituting an independent audit of the Exodus SACCO.

Effectively, the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives – who has just entered – should move the Registrar of Cooperatives to initiate this process.

Mr Speaker, there are appendices to this effect. I submit, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable chairperson. Honourable colleagues, we have been with this report for some time. Sometimes, when I tell the chairperson to summarise, it is because the report has been with us. I encourage us to read, not wait to benefit from the submission on the Floor.

Chairperson, I read the report; it is very comprehensive and I thank you for a job well done. *(Applause)* Clerk, ensure that it is captured fully on the *Hansard*. I will start with Hon. Macho, who raised the matter.

6.38

MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson and his

committee for doing very wonderful work. Committee chairperson, I thought that when you joined the civil service, you forgot our good training that we had with the Speaker in the Chair in the National Youth Council. If I were the appointing authority, since a Cabinet reshuffle is nearing, you would have been one of the people to sit on that Front Bench because of your good performance. You have performed extremely well –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: He has even changed his seat. *(Laughter)*

MR MACHO: Like *Ejakait*, the state minister for energy, your performance is excellent. At the same time, I thank the Minister for Internal Affairs for having allowed this. I moved this in the last Parliament, but the minister, by then, did not allow it to surface.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for having allowed the committee to come up with such a wonderful report. I have no questions at all. Today, it will make the police force or manpower of this country very happy.

Mr Speaker, I request you to allow us, if possible, to even repeat this tomorrow in front of the cameras because this is a very wonderful report. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, you are live; our proceedings are live.

MR MACHO: Mr Speaker, I am requesting for the cameras, majorly the Fourth Estate, not the “Second Estate”. My colleague is saying that I am there; I am there, but not on the national media houses of this country. I do not know why, when it comes to 5.00 p.m., UBC, our national television, does not air the proceedings of Parliament – at a time when good matters like these are being discussed and when we want to thank you for having presided well, and the chairman for becoming a minister –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Macho.

MR MACHO: Lastly, Mr Speaker, the committee was on point. My prayer is that the recommendations that have been read out can be supported by my friends who are in this august House and the minister, to make sure that the police force can at least have hope again.

At the same time, as I conclude, I have some doubts. The committee, in the recommendations, has instructed the registrar for SACCOs to handle most of the recommendations. However, it is the same registrar and the same ministry under query for the disappearance of the SACCO money. I do not know whether the registrar in charge of the SACCOs will make sure that the recommendations of the committee are effected to the letter.

Honourable minister for trade, my people challenged me –(Member timed out.)

Mr Speaker –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Macho, that is the problem of smuggling yourself onto –(Laughter) Just conclude; the problem is the time you took.

MR MACHO: I would like to conclude, Mr Speaker, by inviting the minister for trade to Busia. We are cross-border traders, but my people have never seen you. (Laughter) It is –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I have never seen a satisfied Macho. (Laughter) Honourable colleagues, unless you have a contrary view, this is a very clear report. This business of standing up to emphasise what the committee has said - if you have a new idea, bring it, but do not stand up on emphasis.

Hon. Ababiku? Let me see if there might be some new ideas.

6.41

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. However, I am concerned about the unclaimed savings of

those who died. We know the standard of living in which our brothers and sisters serve. I am of the view that the minister responsible takes this up and ensures that through the files of these people, their families immediately benefit from these savings.

Two, I am also concerned about the authoritative manner in which the management of the police is done. I have two siblings who are police officers. The life they live is different from being disciplined. Their leaders, the District Police Commanders (DPCs), do not often give them adequate time to express themselves, even when they are in pain. They are human beings.

My recommendation, therefore, is that the minister in charge of our police officers goes and talks to these DPCs and Regional Police Commanders so that these people appreciate that they live in an environment that cares for them. Thank you.

6.43

MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the elaborate report. The emergence of SACCOs in this country was for a good cause. Many entities, other than the Uganda Police Force, are establishing SACCOs in this country. I thank Hon. Macho for bringing out the issue of the Police or the Exodus SACCO. I would like to bring to the notice of this House that even local governments - I am on the Committee on Public Accounts (Local Governments)- have started SACCOs in their entities.

In the last meeting or engagement with the local entities, we were in Jinja, where we met Kaliro District, where staff had started a SACCO group, and the manager of the group was the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) and similar issues were happening. That is just one example. So, my request is that when the Registrar of Cooperatives or the line ministry is looking into some of the recommendations, let them look further and inquire from other SACCOs. Let them sample them.

Ugandans are suffering and are losing a lot of money in this process of operating in SACCOs and yet the purpose of saving for them is to keep their money and probably generate more money. So, let us look into that so that those who are yet to be affected or those who are already affected and the voices not yet brought here, are looked into.

Mr Speaker, the recommendations were left open. Hon. Macho said he raised this issue last term. I want to pray and add my voice that since the recommendations, of course, we could not tie them to time, I pray that the relevant ministry or the entity that is responsible for taking on this action is given some time so that we do not finish this term and we do not get feedback on this. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, even if the recommendations are not time-specific, at the conclusion when we are invoking Rule 220 of the action-taken report, it automatically gives the timeline because we give the minister time to report back and in that report, the minister will show the action taken. So, it is already covered. Hon. Ogwal Moses?

6.46

MR MOSES OGWAL (NRM, Dokolo North County, Dokolo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for that report. Mine is on the issue of the forces suffering. I think the leader, especially the minister, is from a military background, where there is a very successful SACCO, the Wazalendo SACCO. I am requesting him to use his experience within the military to see how they can help the Police Force so that they can enjoy the benefit of the individual as a minister and his background.

The other issue is, as my colleague had mentioned, the SACCO is very key. We have so many SACCOs under the Parish Development Model (PDM). They are having challenges. We need to clearly look at the regulatory regime for the SACCOs. We are going to have challenges if we do not centre on the issue of regulating the SACCOs. We have the Uganda Microfinance Regulatory Authority; I think those are the people who are supposed to do

it. But what resources are we giving these people? What authority are we giving them to do that work, which is of a bigger part of our population?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are merging them.

MR OGWAL: Those are the issues we should look at. You are merging regulatory and look at this finance-related SACCO. I think the House should look at it clearly and see how important the SACCO-related issues are. And –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, Hon. Moses Ogwal.

MR OGWAL: Thank you. I think these issues are not management lapses. It is clear corruption. We should make a stronger recommendation for this to be treated as corruption and messing up many people's lives. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Gilbert Olanya, then the honourable member for Nwoya.

6.49

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This Parliament has given good news to our police officers. Police officers used to stop Members of Parliament on the road, complaining that you, Members of Parliament, please help us. Today, you have given good news to our police officers. I know they will sleep starting today.

Mr Speaker, I would like to inform my colleagues that the police SACCOs used to start deducting money from police officers right from the training wing. The police are paid when during training. You come from training, and they tell you this percentage went to the SACCO. If you ask to withdraw that money, they will never allow you to withdraw your money, but you keep on saving.

As the committee recommended, it should be voluntary saving, that is the way to go. Let the money of the police officers be given back. Let

the savings be done voluntarily. You cannot force somebody to save his money.

For the officers who passed on, as Hon. Jesca Ababiku put it, let this money be given to their families. I am sure many families do not know where to start.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Gilbert Olanya, I am really surprised. You appreciate the job well done but you refused to sign the report. You are a member of the committee who did not even sign the report and you are praising the report. Nwoya? You know the rules; a member of the committee is not supposed to debate. The problem is, you did not even sign the report but you are praising it more than those who signed it.

6.51

MR GEOFFREY OKELLO (DP, Nwoya East County, Nwoya): Thank you, Mr Speaker and the chairperson of the committee, for the report. A SACCO is a civil society organisation which is unique and defined by the fact that it is membership-owned, membership-run, and the profits go to members. The report has highlighted a lot of challenges but also advantages that the police SACCO has. I would to raise only two issues.

One, which is financial, is that it is tempting the District Police Commander to transmit money physically. I recommend that there should be a way, a non-cashless transmission system that should be developed so that money can be transferred just like using *MoMo* Pay, without handling cash. That would save a lot of trouble for the police commanders.

Secondly, the management should be made professional, and try to emphasise the voluntary nature of the membership and open nature of the membership. The other principle that is very important, is democratic control. Where you see policemen of a high rank and lower rank, normally when you check on the committees, you find that it is made of only high ranking police officers yet, in a cooperative, all members are equal.

Therefore, there should be a recommendation to give an opportunity to all subscribing members, whether they are of a lower or higher rank so that this one is democratic.

I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I have been scanning for those Members of Parliament whom I have not given an opportunity today. I now want to put the question that the report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on the inquiry into the operations of the Uganda Police Force Exodus SACCO be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, this is one report, which touches a very sensitive matter. This is where you can come in, like Hon. Moses Ogwai put it, and show these people how best to do it, like how you are doing it in Wazalendo. For example, it is very imperative for you to immediately stop mandatory deductions. It is against the law. Deductions should be voluntary. Imagine us putting mandatory deductions here in the parliamentary SACCO. Would I survive here?

Honourable minister, I request you to immediately take up this matter and as per rule 220 – would you like to comment? Let the minister first comment on this.

6.55

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee for this elaborate report. I cannot thank you enough. However, I would like to make some additions, if you may.

Like Members said, the basis of SACCOs is voluntary. There is no conscription about this matter. It should be out of somebody's volition to subscribe to a SACCO. The founding reason for this, like the one of the army, was welfare; to afford cheap credit to the rank and file.

Granted, we had issues at the beginning of management. Some of the issues still subsist, but I would like to urge Members that rather than stampede the crash of this SACCO, why don't we maybe approach it with caution? Convince people to stay, instead of saying, "Remove your money, go." I could hear some sentiments because of the problems, people saying, "Get your money and run." I would like to observe that.

Then, Mr Speaker, on the deceased people, we need to put in place the procedure for the succession of the estate of deceased persons, whether testate or intestate, and that comes with education of the rank and file on how they can access the money of their deceased partners or breadwinners. This money is theirs and they are entitled to it.

On stopping deductions, could I also suggest that maybe you propose the AGM to sit so that they agree – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order, Hon. Jonathan Odur!

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, the House has already adopted a report, which will be transmitted to the minister to take actions and report back to the House. Is the minister in order to try to revisit the matter that has already been decided upon and the House has unanimously supported it?

GEN. MUHOOZI: I will take you from the honourable member. I will await the report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, what we are emphasising here is a matter of the law. This is what the law on cooperatives says. It is voluntary; so, there is no way of saying, "For us we went because we are forces and made our own law. We must deduct." On matters of the law, unless you change it, you cannot do much about it.

Number two, honourable minister, if you perform well - like you have said, the one of Wazalendo was about welfare – you will find this business of conscription is not necessary.

Police officers will rush and even bring much more to the SACCO. Therefore, it is all about you performing well. Allow them a say. This small money of theirs is hard-earned. To try to control so much outside the precincts of the law is a very dangerous attribute.

Honourable minister, this House will need an action-taken report within three months. I hope that will be okay as per Rule 220 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Uganda.

The is House adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 6.59 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 14 February 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)