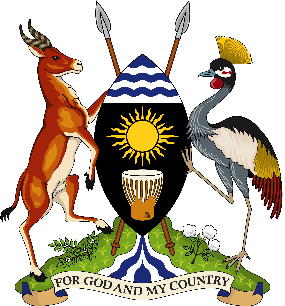
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**PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA**

**Tuesday, 12 July 2022**

*Parliament met at 2.06 p.m. at Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

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

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today’s sitting. I join the Rt Hon. Speaker in welcoming you to the session that we have just started. I would like to share her comments, especially on the way we shall be running the House because most of the issues she raised are issues that had come from the Business Committee meeting. For those who did not attend, I encourage you to read the *Hansard* and see the communication of the Speaker on that day, so that we can move in a harmonious manner.

There was concern over the absence of occupants of the Front Bench, but I am glad - now that Hon. Nandutu has come - she will be able to carry the mantle. Others are coming - with our ever-present Hon. David Bahati and Hon. John Mulimba. You can see how colleagues appreciate when you value this House and what we do here, by being present. Hon. Bahati, thank you very much for always being with us here.

Colleagues, in the VIP Gallery, we have Mr Yaron Tamir, Honorary Consul of Uganda to Israel. Mr Yaron is the head of the AgroStudies Institute of Israel. They take 250 Ugandan students every year to Israel for training in Agriculture from the various institutions of higher learning and those students return loaded. Some have started their businesses and others are employed somewhere, but it is a very important programme that I visited. If you know any of those graduates and you have a farm, they can give you the best advice.

We want to thank you for the great work you have done for Uganda. As a reward, the Government of Uganda made him the Honorary Consul of Uganda to Israel and he is based in Jerusalem. Thank you for coming, Mr Yaron, together with Madam Shuval Inbar. She has been one of the best coordinators and trainers of our students, and that is a programme, which has tremendously improved the agriculture sector, but also helped very many young people to start their own businesses. Thank you for coming and we are glad you have come to follow the proceedings of this House today.

We also have eight Ugandan pupils under the banner of Young Engineers Uganda, who participated in the just concluded Pan African Robotic Competition in Dakar, Senegal, where they emerged fourth at the continental level and first in East and Central Africa. *(Applause)*

As a result, they have qualified for the World Robotic Championship, which will be held in May 2023 in the United States of America. *(Applause)*

They include:

1. Queen Ankunda Kajwengye, aged 15 years – I do not know whether she is related to our very own Kajwengye *-(Hon. Kajwengye rose\_)-* Oh, that is your daughter – congratulations, Honourable. *(Applause)*
2. Lowena Mwiza Rugyendo, aged 14 years. You can wave at us, Lowena. *(Applause)*
3. Gabriel Josephat Kawalya, aged 12 years*. (Applause)*
4. Pearl Ayebare, aged 11 years. *(Applause)*
5. Ethan Samuel Kazoora, aged 10 years. *(Applause)*
6. Celline Nyonyozi, aged 10 years. *(Applause)*
7. Aleem Israel Mangalji, aged 8 years; (*Applause*) and
8. Leona Pauline Ainemukama, aged 9 years. *(Applause)*

I request the Clerk to get the contacts so that we are able, colleagues, to send our children to such trainings during holidays. That will be very important; then hon. Macho will stop complaining about regional balance on academic matters. *(Laughter)*

Colleagues, during this recess, I visited some of our missions abroad, and I also met some of the Ugandans in the Diaspora; in Canada and the United States of America. I was following proceedings here even when I was away. During these interfaces, our people in the diaspora raised very many issues, some of which I noted. As you know, the diaspora contributes or brings in over $1.4 billion per annum. So, this is a constituency we have to start looking at seriously. We waste a lot of money going to look for investors of $2 million when we have our very own who bring in billions of dollars. We need to handle their issues.

I attended the unveiling of the Uganda Martyrs Shrine in Los Angeles, which was unveiled by Archbishop Odama, and the people were very excited. We feel that we should follow up on this and improve on our numbers resulting from faith-based tourism. Faith-based tourism is very important now that we have a shrine in New York. We have other religious places to look at; it should be very important for us to start considering faith-based tourism as a very important income-earner for the country.

There is also the issue of Ugandans who would love to invest at home. They are not given information. Our first line of ambassadors should be our very own people who are staying in these countries. Not everyone will run to the embassy – some of them are working for multinationals; for big companies - but they do not know about the investment climate in this country.

Some of them think that most of the investment opportunities and incentives here are reserved for foreigners yet even locals have very good incentives to invest here. The Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development should find a way of sharing information. I got some of this information from embassies; the ambassadors did not know about the incentives we have for local investors.

People are asking: “Can I register as a foreign investor in my country?” We told them that no; all these opportunities are available for you. So, Minister for Finance and Minister for Foreign Affairs - Hon. John Mulimba, you are here – we need our embassies to be given adequate information on the incentives available to each and every Ugandan, both local and international.

When I told them about some of the incentives available, they could not believe it. They said, “No, then, we should come and invest in our own country.” So, this one needs to be –

Of course, on the issue of commercial attachés, we need to give it serious attention, if we are to benefit as a country.

The other issue is the renewal of passports and the acquisition of national identity cards. One has to travel from California to Washington for four or five hours just to take biometrics. Then again, he or she travels back to go and pick up that passport or identity card. In the end, a Ugandan who is in America and wants to acquire a passport ends up spending around $4,000, moreover on top of the time spent. This is why some people say that the Ugandan passport is the most expensive because of what we are doing.

Therefore, we need the Minister for Internal Affairs and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to come here and update the House on the measures being taken to address this concern. We need a consulate, for example, in California, Texas - In Canada, people come from Vancouver, which is a five-hour flight to Ottawa yet there are many Ugandans in Toronto, but we do not have any service there; they have to go to Ottawa. So, we really need to invest in this, so that people will love our country and they will end up investing more in our country.

Honourable members, these are very pressing issues for Ugandans in the diaspora. I know colleagues, who have been travelling and have been facing the same questions. It is high time we addressed them as a country.

Honourable members, I also found the issue of our experts in these countries - we have very many experts. I see we are employing experts here yet Ugandans are the best experts, wherever they are. Most of them said they would be willing to come back and work here, but they need to be well coordinated.

The biggest issue they raised was the coordination of diaspora issues, which they say is scattered. We have it under the President’s Office, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. So, there are scattered efforts, and whenever they come, they do not speak the same language. Therefore, they want an office that is clear on diaspora issues and beyond political party mobilisation desks at the NRM, NUP or wherever. Honourable members, we need formal diaspora desks, which are clearly defined.

The students said they have very many issues since we do not have education attachés. Honourable members, these education attachés would also be lobbying for our universities abroad in order to get research funds and collaborations. Universities are running on overheads they get from research. That is why you hear of Harvard, among others. By the way, the research budget of the Bloomberg School of Public Health at the Johns Hopkins University is $3.2 billion per year. Out of that, 55 per cent goes back to the institution to develop it.

If we had education attachés who work closely with the embassies, the universities here and the universities abroad – hon. Magoola, being a researcher, will tell you that he would have made a lot. But our researchers here fend for themselves – struggling without any help. Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs, we are interested in the issue of ensuring that we have education attachés. Engage with the Executive so that they can locate funds for this issue.

With those very many words, let me invite the acting Leader of the Opposition (LOP) to make a statement about my communication.

2.21

**MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu):** Thank you. Mr Speaker, I would like to welcome you back from that journey and I thank you, for the good information you have given us. However, to energise it, let me give you some information that will help the ministers.

I have been on the Committee on Education and Sports since I came to Parliament, and we had the chance of visiting these areas, where we have students on scholarship, among which is India. In India, we have very many students - and even other countries have our children. A country like Rwanda gives a child a month $500 as upkeep, while we give them $100 per month, yet, our children take almost eight months without getting that upkeep. As a result, they begin misbehaving.

The Minister for Education and Sports should come here and give us an update on how far they have gone. Otherwise, these people give us very good courses. Therefore, our role should also be maintained - that little part we are supposed to play. A child can go to Cuba or Russia or Israel and takes five years without coming back home, moreover he or she does not get the upkeep in time. This is unfair.

When it comes to business - I have talked to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - especially the former minister, Hon. Sam Kuteesa - that we have business. Uganda has the best pineapples in Europe; we have the best food. We have asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to open a market for Uganda in Europe, especially in Britain, where Ugandans take their goods for sale without any problems.

Mr Speaker, what is happening, as you stated, is that Ugandans export matooke, potatoes and all these agricultural products - those who get them at the other end sometimes say they are all spoiled. We are losing money in that form. Therefore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should come out and meet with the people who deal in horticulture, and sort out these problems so that we get money.

Finally, on the issue of passports - I am a bit happy with what is happening now. We apply online. I am also happy with immigration. Lately, you can get a passport within two days or even within a day, depending on your desire. So, how do we fail to give passports to those outside the country, yet we are able to get them here?

Mr Speaker, these complaints have been rolling on and on, until you became the Speaker, and you met them. Therefore, while you sit there with all the advantages you have and the chances of visiting these people, please push hard as we also push, to see that these people do due diligence in meeting their obligations to avoid such imbalances. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable. The Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign Affairs should take up these issues. At an appropriate time, I will give you chance to report to this House.

Honourable colleagues, you know our procedure - and I would like us to do business and complete it. I do not want us to be bogged down. You know the procedure of registering issues of national importance. *[Mr Macho rose\_]* Hon. Macho, just hold on a little.

Honourable members, I will only pick five issues, which were registered and those which I will not pick, I will push to tomorrow. However, most of the issues I received are issues of policy. I have guided that if you have an issue and it is not related to disaster or an emergency, utilise the Prime Minister’s Time. Put it in form of a question.

We also have Questions for Oral Answers; so, ensure that it goes under that. I am only going to entertain issues of an emergency nature.

**MR SILWANY:** Thank you. Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you, for your communication. I have two pertinent issues. One is to thank the young children for participating in sports. I encourage more young people in this country to come up and participate in the different sports activities so that we can qualify and shine all over the world. However –

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable member, I think we need to have our *Hansard* record clear. This was not sports. It was robotic development. *(Laughter)*

**Mr silwany:** Okay, I beg your pardon. My second issue is that last week, in Parliament here, we agreed that whenever we have a Parliamentary session, we will need to have 30 per cent of the ministers in attendance. It was last week on Thursday - not even two weeks, a week or four days - today, we do not still have the number.

Mr Speaker, you have been addressing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but you were addressing an empty chair. Wouldn’t it be procedurally right for this Parliament to come up with a final decision to have ministers here whenever we sit, so that they are often available to respond to matters raised by Members of Parliament?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Hon. Silwany. For clarification, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hon. John Mulimba, is here. Therefore, on issues of foreign affairs, I was not addressing an empty seat.

However, I have seen Hon. John Mulimba trying to redistribute the ministers so that the bench looks full. The Rt Hon. Prime Minister has come. Maybe, now that she is in the House, ministers will also join in soon. You are welcome, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. I am sure they are watching and so, they are going to rush here.

Otherwise, this is a very serious issue, which we cannot just take lying low. However, that issue should not derail us from doing our work. If the ministers are not here, that won’t stop us from making decisions. If we do that - what if they decide not to come? They will have failed us. What if it becomes intentional that if we want to derail Parliament, we do not attend?”

Therefore, let us pass our resolutions and ensure they are implemented, whether the ministers make an input or not, because they are supposed to be here. That is what the law says.

**Mr macho:** Mr Speaker, Commissioner Silwany submitted on the matter I am going to submit on. I was about to put hon. Bahati on notice to tell us whether he was standing in for the Rt Hon. Prime Minister or for his docket, as the trade minister.

However, Mr Speaker, it is also not fair for the Prime Minister not to be helped by the senior ministers. When you look at the frontbench, you will notice we do not have any senior minister in the House. That is disrespectful of the Prime Minister because it is always in order for Cabinet ministers to be in the House when the Prime Minister is here.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, do you hear the Members’ concerns on the issue of ministers and senior ministers not being here?

2.30

**The prime minister and leader of government business:** Mr Speaker, let me welcome you back from the recess. The ministers are all on notice and are aware that Parliament is sitting at this time. I know some of them who were at State House are on the way coming. However, you need to recall that we agreed that in order for us to have both the work of Government continuously going on and at the same time have Parliament doing its business, we would have at least 30 per cent of our colleagues present here. I know they are on the way, but I am also trying my level best to crack the whip.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, about these young engineers who made us proud. I request that you give them an appointment so they are presented to your office. Many would have gone, but they moved around trying to fundraise for these pupils to represent our country in Senegal. Only those of the rich like Kajwengye afforded to go. Most failed because they could not; they reached out to some of us, but we were helpless because of the pressures we also have.

Maybe we need to think of some way to help people who make our country proud. They have qualified for the World Cup in designing robotics. In 2023, they will be going to the US, but some of them will again get stuck. Therefore, maybe as a mother, once they visit you, I know you will welcome them and try to find a solution.

Clerk to Parliament, please co-ordinate with the Prime Minister; I can see she has accepted to meet the team. *(Applause)*

**Mr ssemuju:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. In your communication, you spoke about attendance. Rule 15 states, if you can allow me to read:

*(1) “There shall be in Parliament, a Government Chief Whip appointed by Government from among Members of Parliament representing the ruling party.*

*(2) The role and functions of the Government Chief Whip is to ensure due attendance, participation in proceedings and voting in Parliament of Members of the ruling party.”*

Mr Speaker, the rules say, *“…there shall be...”* Why has the ruling party defied these rules? All the comments that have come from Members immediately after your communication are a cry of non-attendance. We are now asking the wrong people to answer for an existing office in the structure of Parliament.

The procedural issue I am raising is whether it will not even be important for you to suspend the proceedings of this Parliament until the Rules of Procedure of Parliament are complied with. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, remember when we lost a Speaker here, we could not even bury him because the point was, “There must be a Speaker.” As his body was being processed, we were here also positioning ourselves for an election. Can't we suspend proceedings of Parliament until this particular rule is complied with?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Hon. Ssemujju. This is an issue, which we shared with His Excellency the President. Of course, when you relate it to the one of the Speaker - the Speaker is elected while a chief whip is appointed. When we shared it with the President, he said he was still considering the matter.

However, the Government Chief Whip works under the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is the principal person in this regard to lead Government business in the House. She is here and we have taken that matter to the attention of the appointing authority. As the leaders of this House, we shall continue following it up, but we are moving in the right way. We do not have any defect in whatever we are doing here because of the absence of a Government Chief Whip.

Colleagues, let us go on to matters of national importance. [HON. HENRY KIBALYA: *“Further Procedure.*] Hon. Kibalya, we do not have a point of further procedure in our rules. *(Laughter)*

2.36

**MR DAVID LAGEN (NRM, Agago County, Agago):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to submit, especially on matters of national importance.

On 20th June this very year, at exactly 3.00 p.m., the town council and subcounty of Adilang received unusual rainfall with serious hailstorms. This was a unique thing in the history of this district. We have never seen hailstorms to that extent – that destroyed over 1,998 acreages of crops. There are 382 households that have been affected. If you see the place, it has become a desert. You cannot see the crops – crops like maize, groundnuts, sunflower, soya beans and bananas. This has also affected cattle and goats; 10 goats and two cows were killed by the hailstorms. The community is now at a total loss –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What are your prayers, honourable?

**MR LAGEN:** My community is suffering because there is already famine. My prayers are that:

1. We need the Office of the Prime Minister, especially the ministry for relief and disaster preparedness, to urgently respond and give our community food items; and
2. We also need seeds for replanting because the seeds they planted were destroyed. At least within two to three months, they will be able to harvest.

It is my humble prayer that my submission is taken into consideration.

I have the evidence with me – the report that was written from the district – and I have already submitted it to the Office of the Prime Minister. I am kindly asking you to let me lay these reports on the Table.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable. You can lay them on the Table.

**MR LAGEN:** Thank you.

2.39

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Mr Speaker, I have taken note of my brother’s concern. We are going to follow it up and make sure that those people are served. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Rt. Hon. Prime Minister. Honourable member, you can read the title of the report.

**MR LAGEN:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The title of the report is, *“Report on the destruction caused by hailstorms in Adilang Subcounty and Adilang Town Council.”* I also have my letter, written to the Office of the Prime Minister.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. So, what are you doing? Lay them on the Table.

**MR LAGEN:** I beg to lay this report on the Table.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Go on, honourable member. I know Members are saying - my brother here - that it has gone to the Prime Minister and all that. You see, the issue is that, colleagues, sometimes we give you opportunities because your communities need to know that you followed up these issues. *(Applause)* That is number one.

Number two, the delays also force Members to come and raise these issues here. That is why when they reach out to me, I feel it is important to allow a Member to raise such an issue.

**MR AKOL:** Mr Speaker, the issue of disasters has been brought several times on the Floor of Parliament. Members always go to the Office of the Prime Minister and write to the office for disaster preparedness, but they do not act. The answer you will get on the Floor of Parliament here is: “We will act on it.” However, you will never see any action at all. That is why sometimes Members come here.

A case in point now - I wish to bring to your attention that I wrote to the Office of the Prime Minister on the 2nd of last month, when the people were attacked in Apaa. Over 300 houses were burnt. They promised me that they were going to send the items and all that, but up to now, nothing has happened. It has now become a habit of registering on the record of the *Hansard* that, “we promised to act”.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, are you the one who wrote?

**MR AKOL:** Yes, I wrote a letter.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Now, let me guide you. You can take your seat and I guide you. Sometimes, we also cause ourselves problems. The Office of the Prime Minister - and they have presented their procedure here over 10 times - when a disaster happens, ensure that the district disaster committee goes on the ground, makes an assessment and the CAO writes a report. You can be copied in as a Member and you can come and follow it up here, but you are not supposed to write. This is because those items will be taken to the CAO. That is why I asked whether you are the one who wrote to the Office of the Prime Minister or the CAO.

**MR AKOL:** Mr Speaker, in this case, the CAO and the Speaker wrote a letter. I also wrote a backup letter to make it more serious *–(Laughter)-* but no action was taken.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, you have heard the concern of the Member *–(Hon. Ssewungu rose\_)*- wait a bit, Leader of the Opposition. Today, Hon. Ssewungu is acting Leader of the Opposition; I have been informed.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Thank you. We thank the Speaker for always giving us this opportunity to present matters of national importance. What I know, based on truth, is that when you go to the Speaker, he rings the ministry. That is why the minister must come here.

Now, these two areas are distinct. You wrote – you went to the Prime Minister because you got a disaster. However, after two weeks, there was no response. The matter on this Floor should be different from what we are hearing. If someone is laying a document he took to the Prime Minister two weeks ago and the Prime Minister comes to the Floor and says, “I am going to work on it” yet she is not aware of the contents of that document, it means there is somewhere where communication is not taking place.

Mr Speaker, I pray that as you give us opportunities to present our matters of national importance, it must be something that has happened and we need urgent attention. However, once you go to the Prime Minister's office and take your documents there, then, you cannot bring it here after three weeks as another matter of national importance -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssewungu, you are taking away my job. *(Laughter)*

**MR SSEWUNGU:** I am seeking your guidance, Mr Speaker. What would be the best approach? If I have taken the first option, should I come here when it has failed or should I come here before I go for the first option?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Since I have survived a coup from Hon. Ssewungu, I will share his views. *(Laughter)* Follow his guidance, colleagues. Otherwise, I have just survived a coup; he had taken over.

2.44

**MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso):** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, please, order in the House.

**MS NALUYIMA:** Mr Speaker, I am the Shadow Minister for Local Government. On 7 July 2022, the Permanent Secretary/ Secretary to the Treasury wrote a letter to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government. On the 8th of July, we got a response from the Uganda Local Government Association over the contents of the letter that was cancelling the appointment of 110 accounting officers of local governments in Uganda.

Mr Speaker, there are several issues that form part of the contents of both letters, which after this submission, I will beg to lay.

I rise on a matter of national importance that concerns service delivery in all our different local governments, which matter could even cause several issues to the populace of this country.

I beg that this House notes the concern and follows up with the finance and local government ministers to study, in detail, and find out the issues and circumstances surrounding the cause of the cancellation of letters of appointment of over 110 officers in this country; these are officers concerned with local government service delivery, which concerns all of us –*(A Member rose\_)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, you do not access a microphone before you are given chance. Please, continue; what is your prayer?

**MS NALUYIMA:** My prayers are that this House asks the finance minister together with the local government minister to come and explain in detail, having studied these two letters, the circumstances surrounding local governments that led to the cancellation of the accounting officers appointments. I beg to move.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MS NALUYIMA:** I beg to lay these letters; one from the Uganda Local Government Association and another from the Permanent Secretary/Secretary to the Treasury to local governments.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Well, these are Government documents, honourable member, you do not need to lay. We usually do it for unique documents, which everyone does not have access to and, therefore, you want them to be in the public.

Honourable, you accessed the microphone before I gave you permission *-(Interjection )-* now you are thanking me for catching you live. Okay, go on.

2.48

**MR PETER OCEN (Independent, Kole South County, Kole):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague for raising pertinent issues in relation to the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs). The CAOs are at the centre of implementing Government programmes. As I talk, one of our CAOs, on Friday night, was brutally murdered like a chicken. As we talk, many CAOs are now in fear because in many of these local governments, the CAOs and the district chairpersons are at loggerheads.

At the moment, with the cancellation of all the appointments of the CAOs, I wonder how Government programmes are going to run. The new appointees are going to come in, but of course the cancellation should have come way back so that it gives to these people time to prepare and handover.

Mr Speaker, as we complain about the CAOs, since we love them because they are the implementers of all Government projects in the districts -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, listen to each other. A colleague might not be saying what you are interested in, but the chance will come when you also need to be heard. Therefore, it is important to listen to one another. *(Applause)*

**MR PETER OCEN:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. What I was driving at is that -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** But conclude.

**MR PETER OCEN:** Yes, I am concluding now. What I am driving at is in reference to what happened on Friday night to the CAO of Bukwo, the late Charles Robert Ogwang. I would like to know from Government whether these CAOs are going to get some protection because in most of these districts, there are disagreements between the CAOs and the political leaders.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, the issue is protection.

**MR PETER OCEN:** We need protection for the CAOs.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** On that same matter, Hon. Judith Alyek had come to my office and I had told her tomorrow - but you can raise your issue so that we handle it together.

2.51

**MS JUDITH ALYEK (NRM, Woman Representative, Kole):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to say something in relation to what Hon. Peter Ocen of Kole South has raised.

On the morning of 8 July 2022, the acting Chief Administrative Officer of Bukwo District, Robert Charles Ogwang, who was a born in Kole District, was murdered in cold blood by unknown assailants at Kirowa Cell in Matugga while on his way to Lira.

His official Government vehicle that he was travelling in, registration number UG 0865Z was riddled with bullets and later set ablaze.

Mr Speaker, I am the Chairperson of Lango Parliamentary Group. As Lango Parliamentary Group, we condemn, in the strongest terms, this barbaric and inhuman atrocity by unknown assailants.

We also note that at the time the deceased worked at Bukwo District Local Government, there were documented reports of conflicts between several district leaders in which a number of allegations were made against him.

Mr Speaker, the late previously worked in Oyam and Apac districts and no allegations of such nature were raised. We, therefore, find them highly suspicious and deeply questionable.

We thank the Uganda Police Force for the investigations so far on the matter by confirming that the murder was not robbery, but an act that was premeditated; it was pre-planned and targeted.

Mr Speaker, Lango Parliamentary Group has these prayers:

1. That the Uganda Police Force conducts a full-scale investigation on the assassination of Mr Robert Charles Ogwang, the acting CAO of Bukwo District Local Government. The assailants should be brought to book within the shortest time possible. We want to see this because it is a painful situation that Robert Charles Ogwang was murdered.
2. That the internal conflicts that we heard about in Bukwo Local Government, in which the deceased was drawn, be further investigated by the police and the Ministry of Local Government because foul play cannot be ruled out in this matter; it should be keenly investigated, Mr Speaker.
3. The Lango Parliamentary Group demands an update by the internal affairs minister and local government minister on this matter.
4. The late CAO, Robert Charles Ogwang ,be accorded a decent burial in his ancestral home in Ayeri Subcounty, Kole District, Lango Subregion on Saturday, 16 July 2022. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, we all share the pain of the family of the CAO and of course, our colleagues from Lango. You will extend our condolences to the family as the House – *(Hon. Alyek rose\_)*

No, you cannot access the microphone when I am speaking. You are still on it - Okay, please lay. *(Laughter)*

**MS ALYEK:** Yes. I would like to lay this letter on the Table. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, on issues where there are investigations, especially police investigations, and matters of a criminal nature, let us restrain ourselves as a House. That thing of updates to the House - these are investigations. What we should demand is that thorough investigations are done, and once they are completed, and the police feel the information can be made public without compromising the case in any manner, then we can be updated.

But as Lango Members of Parliament, you can, at individual level, continue engaging and working with the police closely, especially if you hear any clue. I felt we needed to put that on record. Honourable, what documents do you want to lay?

**MS ALYEK:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a copy of the letter written by the District Chairperson, Bukwo Local Government on the deceased. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay, thank you. You can just mention the reference.

**MS ALYEK:** The report is on the behaviour of the late Acting Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Mr Ogwang Robert Charles. It was written on 11 June 2022, one month before the murder and signed by Chelimo Julius Moses, the District Chairperson of Bukwo. I beg to lay, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay. Do you have another document?

**MS ALYEK:** Mr Speaker, I do not have another document.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable. Take your seat.

**MS ALYEK:** Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, kindly be very cautious with such matters because we do not want to paint a picture of politicians or leaders coming to conclusions. These are issues of communities; one community can go for another.

Therefore, let us give the police a chance. I have read in the papers and they are really moving quickly. Let us give them a chance. Can we go back to the issue of Hon. Betty Naluyima? *[Hon. Anthony Akol rose\_]* Hon. Akol, what do you want to contribute on that issue?

2.58

**MR ANTHONY AKOL (FDC, Kilak North County, Amuru):** Mr Speaker, the issues were getting confused. The issue that was raised at first was about the letter written by the PS/ST, terminating some accounting officers. And, one of the Members said, “We love them, they are doing great work”. *(Interjection)*

Mr Speaker, I have been in the Tenth Parliament and this is my second term. We have really been frustrated by the accounting officers. I think there is need for action to be taken. And, there must be somebody who can decide on that. If we do not do that, we are not going to get the service delivery we need in this country.

At the same time, it is important to listen and find out where there were delays, to meet the Public Finance Management Act requirements. For example, if the problem was the system in place - I interacted with the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development - I called because I was concerned. One of the ministers told me that their system was failing so it was not possible for some accounting officers to meet the deadline.

Mr Speaker, this has to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. We should not generalise and say, “All of them are innocent”. We should also not say they are all hardworking. I think there is need to analyse this on a case-by-case basis and come to a conclusion. Otherwise, I do not agree with the decision that all of them should be recruited back or they should go back. We need to make sure that analysis is done and handle these on a case-by-case basis. That is my concern.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, these are straightforward matters, and the Member raised very straightforward issues.

In fact, I am happy we have someone who can crack the whip. For the first time, we have someone who can crack the whip, but how does he do it, especially regarding what Hon. Anthony Akol has brought up?

My concern was to see how the Government was engaging Government. I saw the Minister for Local Government in the newspapers protesting over the same, and they have responded by protesting the manner in which it was done. This means that the communication between Government agencies is a problem. I think what should have been done is that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should have met the Ministry of Local Government and said, “We are having a challenge in your ministry”. Okay?

Then, they agree and say, “These ones are incompetent or these ones are” – and then handle the issue. Now, since the Member has requested that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, together with the Ministry of Local Government come and present here, I think it is prudent to leave it to the Prime Minister, who will call these two ministries and realign them.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, would you like to make a comment on that issue? No, honourable, wait. Let us listen to the Prime Minister because time is not in our best alley.

3.01

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Mr Speaker, today, we had a meeting concerning the same. You are aware colleagues that we have a law in place, which informs the accounting officers to produce budgets on time.

Some of these accounting officers did not abide by the law and so, the Permanent Secretary/ Secretary to the Treasury had to crack the whip. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, if we do not crack whips *–(Interjections)*- some of these people are failing the Government. Today, we had a meeting and we are going to handle this case by case. Those that we find are still relevant will remain, but there are those who have made it a habit, year in, year out.

Mr Speaker, allow us to do our work. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please.

**MS NABBANJA:** I also wanted to talk about the late CAO. I would like to grieve like other colleagues, for the loss of our brother, the late Charles Ogwang, the Acting CAO of Bukwo.

Police have made some arrests, as you are aware, and they are doing investigations. I believe we shall get the culprits this time round. Fortunately, there are some tactical mistakes they made and I got some clues that at least, there is some light at the end of the tunnel. So, I request that we allow the police to do their work.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MS NABBANJA:** On the other hand, I want to appeal that moving very late at night is dangerous. *(Laughter)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, thank you. On the issue of the accounting officers, we are allowing you to do your work, but your ministers are inviting us into their boardrooms.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, if ministers have issues, tell them to always have a meeting point and resolve issues without exchanging in the media, then we shall make our work easy.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when do you think you will update this House on this matter because you have said you are going to handle it on a case-by-case basis? We need an update on how you have handled the matter.

**MS NABBANJA:** Mr Speaker, next Tuesday, we shall have gone through all these and I will report to this House.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Hon. Faith Nakut?

3.05

**MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak):** Mr Speaker,allow me to thank you for two things: one, for clarifying on issues that qualify to be matters of national importance. Last Tuesday, I submitted an issue that is really urgent, but it got crowded by other important policy issues, which would have fitted in the Prime Minister’s Question Time. So, I thank you for that.

I also wish to thank you for sending us for recess. My colleagues and I, the MPs in the Karamoja Parliamentary Group utilised our recess well. We went to mobilise our people for peace and for the Parish Development Model.

Unfortunately, in our movement throughout the region in Karamoja, we found out that our people are starving and literally dying. I visited some villages like Nagule-Angolol Village where I found a burial of a family of three; they had died of starvation.

As of Friday last week, documented deaths in Napak that had been verified were 46. In Kaabong, they were 189, in Moroto, they were 45 and in Kotido, they exceeded 300 –*(Interjections)–* yes.

We acknowledge that there have been responses by the Office of the Prime Minister. On the 7th of June, food was distributed in Karamoja, with each district getting 150 tonnes of maize flour and beans. It targeted the most vulnerable.

Unfortunately, the quantities supplied were not reasonable enough to feed a family for a week. Each family got a kilogramme of beans and about three kilograms of posho. These can be consumed for only a meal or two and the family gets back to nothing.

As we speak, there are thousands of people – the food security report puts the number of people at risk at 518,000. These are people waiting to die if no action is taken. That is why I raise this matter now. I should have raised it on the 5th.

My prayers are that the Parliament asks the Office of the Prime Minister to find food from whichever source so that Ugandans –*(Interjections)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. *Panadol*, please be seated, if it is related to the same, we will give you –

**MS NAKUT:** We will give you time to provide information.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Prime Minister, you are going to answer – I will give you chance. Hon. Mugema, please take your seat.

**MS NAKUT:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was saying that the Office of the Prime Minister provides food. My colleagues and I believe that Uganda can manage to feed starving Ugandans. There are issues of procedures, of meetings, discussions – those can wait or can be handled as food is being transported to the starving people. The urgency is real. Any delay means lives lost and it is a shame for a country like ours to have people die of hunger.

My other prayer is for the Committee on Presidential Affairs to visit that place. Let us go to Karamoja and see for ourselves – to rule out politics as I had seen it in the media. Some ministers were saying that we were politicking. Please visit. Mr Speaker, send the committee so that they see for themselves; so that they witness some burials of people starving to death. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, Hon. Mugema?

**MR MUGEMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is good additional information. You see, my district, Iganga, houses very many Karimojong from Amudat and Moroto; they constitute about 30 per cent of my voters.

As we speak, majority of them who had even gone back to check on their cows are dying of starvation. Some have even died from Iganga. I have utilised all my money to buy them food yet Government is doing nothing and it is the same Government, which ate their cows. You ate their cows and they no longer earn a living; they are totally starving. I have even got some pictures of some of my voters who are starving.

Madam Prime Minister, I beg to submit these pictures so that you can look at them to have your motherly heart moved for these people who are dying of starvation. They are real voters who vote President Kaguta Museveni. They even wear yellow 24/7, but they are dying of starvation.

I, therefore, request the Prime Minister to ensure development in that part of Uganda and maybe give them food, including my voters who are dying of starvation. I beg to circulate these pictures and lay them on the Table.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Mugema – anyway, Clerk, receive the document. Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, first hold on. Hon. Mugema, I need peace in the House. Do not circulate documents in the House. These are the days of COVID-19. You might be circulating COVID-19. Please keep your documents. You can share with colleagues in their pigeon holes.

3.12

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Thank you. Mr Speaker, the Cabinet Sitting of yesterday noted the concerns of our brothers and sisters in Karamoja and came up with the following proposals.

One, that the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development comes up with a budget (Shs 135 billion) to provide food to our brothers and sisters in Karamoja for at least three months, including seeds and seedlings for them to plant so that they can survive –*(Interjections)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, please listen!

**MS NABBANJA:** Secondly, they directed my office to provide food immediately. I would like to assure you, colleagues, that some food has gone. Over 200 metric tonnes of food has now left the Prime Minister’s stores to Karamoja. *(Applause)*

Three, we want the minister for Karamoja affairs – my sister is going to add to what I have told you – but we will see how to secure – because one of the reasons our people are not productive is insecurity. We will continue pacifying that area –*(Interjections)*- Mr Speaker, protect me from Hon. Mugema.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Mugema, the Prime Minister is seeking for protection. Hon. Mugema, kindly let the Prime Minister speak.

**MS NABBANJA:** The people in Karamoja are fellow Ugandans. Like I told you last Thursday, we shall do everything within our powers, to make sure we do not lose any more lives. *(Applause)*

Lastly, I would like to inform my brother that the NRM Government has never taken even one head of cattle from Karamoja. If anything, it is the Government of Uganda that is protecting our people from losing their animals.

So, is it in order for the young man to –*(Laughter)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, kindly take your seats. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you have been updating and meeting MPs of Karamoja sub-region regularly. I think it is important to meet them again so that you discuss the new measures and steps being taken.

3.16

**MR FRANCIS ADOME (NRM, Moroto Municipality, Moroto):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I thank you for the guidance. However, the biggest challenge that we have, as Karamoja region, is that we are not being listened to.

Mr Speaker, it is true that recently, we received some money – about Shs 39 billion – through a supplementary budget. We called for a meeting, as leaders of the region. We said let us sit down and maybe agree on some of the priorities that can be able to solve some of these problems. This issue of hunger has been there for quite some time.

The biggest problem I see, as part of the leadership of Karamoja, is lack of a participatory agreement between Government and some of the leaders. They need to listen to us and take advice from us. *(Applause)* What we are doing by taking relief is not sustainable. It is about time we came up with solutions that can solve this problem.

The Government is losing a lot of money in purchasing this food. Why can’t we put that money into the right use? If it is about mechanising - Karamoja has green belts. There are regions within Karamoja, which can produce food. We can create a food basket for the region. *(Applause)* We can have food security, but – (*Member timed out*).

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, I am not opening up this matter. I am already extremely behind schedule. Hon. Francis Adome, you have raised your point. We have noted it. Prime Minister, meet with the MPs from Karamoja. The Prime Minister has a meeting, on Thursday, with MPs from Karamoja and Teso – the ones from Teso also want you. Everyone wants you.

So, Prime Minister, when coming on Thursday – in your opening remarks, you can update us on what you will have done with the people.

Hon. Santa Alum -

3.18

**MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam):** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Prime Minister, this is also for you.

**MS ALUM:** Mr Speaker, I rise on an issue of national importance concerning scarcity of food in Oyam District. *(Laughter)* Our district was hit by hailstorms, in many parts. I would like to thank Government for responding in some of the areas like Minakulu Subcounty. However, others were not responded to.

Mr Speaker, as I talk, there are very many people who are sleeping hungry because of lack of food. The women are hit hardest. They are moving up and down, trying to look for food, which they cannot find. The children and the elderly are almost failing to walk.

Mr Speaker, recently, we had a strike in one of our schools, arising out of scarcity of food.

My prayer, Mr Speaker, is that the Office of the Prime Minister gives us food to address the issue in the short-run. However, as we have noted, this is not tenable. My long-term prayer – Mr Speaker, we do not even have seeds. The seeds that we planted all dried out because of the dry spells. People are roaming around. We are expecting rains soon, but even if the rains come, people will have nothing to plant. I request that Government, through the Office of the Prime Minister, provides us seeds so that when it rains, we have something to plant. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Beatrice Akori, I saw you high jacking the microphone and – Hon. Ssasaga, just wait a bit. A Member is making her maiden presentation.

3.21

**MS BEATRICE AKORI (NRM, Woman Representative, Agago):** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I wanted to give additional information when hon. Nakut was making her presentation on the issues of Karamoja. Agago borders Karamoja subregion. As I speak, more than 2,000 Karimojong fled and are living in Agago. They are starving – they are dying in Agago. In Agago, we have nine subcounties affected by the cattle rustlers. Those nine sub-counties do not even have time to cultivate. As a result, right now, they are starving. We are from there.

I request that the Prime Minister – we know you and trust you because you always give us a quick response. Even in this situation, I am very sure that you are going to respond to the plight of the people of Agago, who are also starving due to lack of food. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, on this matter, there are MPs from the affected areas. So, I am going to allow Hon. Isaac Otimgiw – that one will handle for West Nile. Hon. Susan Amero will handle for Teso. Then, I have *–(Members rose\_)-* Please, let me first – Procedure? Before Hon. Isaac, there is a point of procedure from Hon. Ssasaga.

**MR SSASAGA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, please, I am allowing this because it is a very critical issue for the whole country.

**MR SSASAGA:** Mr Speaker, thank you. The issue of famine cuts across the whole country much as Karamoja is one of the affected regions – for example, if you go to Sebei, cross to Bugisu where I come from, cross to Lango and Bukedi and even parts of the central here. Where food is, there are those who cannot afford it because of the escalating prices and, then, there are areas where food is completely unavailable. So, all of them come to the same equation: either food is there or there is no money to buy food.

Procedurally, I was thinking, Mr Speaker, that since it is an issue that cuts across, if we start speaking about famine across Uganda, we shall speak until the cows come to roost. Maybe the Prime Minister could come next week – comprehensively – and tell this House how they are addressing the issue of famine and escalating prices in this country, as a Government. *(Applause)* Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Ssasaga. I have taken note and I will give my guidance. I would like to get Members’ views and then I can give my guidance. Otherwise, if I guide and then get Members’ views, it won’t make any sense.

3.23

**MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank Hon. Faith Nakut for bringing this matter to light in the House. This, like my colleague just concluded, is a national issue now.

I just came back last week from Nebbi after I moved around on the PDM sensitisation. Every subcounty has exactly the same problem of hunger and no food. They are crying for seeds and everything.

I think when Cabinet sits, they should not only discuss issues of one region; it is now a national problem. They need to come with a comprehensive issue on hunger. Otherwise, our population is suffering and we expect Government to give a national response. Let them send people throughout the regions of this country so that they can gather information.

The CAO sent a letter to the Prime Minister’s office last month regarding the famine situation in the greater Nebbi region. On that one, as well, we have not yet received the response. I hope the Prime Minister will respond to that.

Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Susan Amero.

3.25

**MS SUSAN AMERO (Independent, Woman Representative, Amuria):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Like my colleagues have just said, I think the whole issue is that Government should come out clearly on how they are going to intervene in the situation.

It is not that the Karimojong are lazy or that people are not planting crops. We are seriously faced with the issue of climate change. All along, we have been discussing issues of water for production, but investing a lot of money on things that do not benefit the people. At this time, we should be thinking about how we can do irrigation so that people are in production.

Otherwise, it is not only Karamoja that has a food shortage; Teso has also been badly hit. As we speak, we have done everything, but the rains are not there; so, we cannot harvest anything.

Last week, the Minister for Teso Affairs was telling us that he is bringing 20 tonnes of posho; what does that do? That is not even a meal in Teso. I am begging the Prime Minister to seriously consider looking for money for every part of this country. We are constrained, there is no food and people are starving, but people cannot just keep talking about one area. Thank you, very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Prime Minister, since you have already met as Cabinet and you have already agreed - Hon. Oboth, am I safe? I have never seen him attentive like this and standing next to me. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, since you met on Monday, like you said, and have agreed on measures, please, on Thursday, bring a comprehensive statement with measures being taken to address the famine situation in the country.

Depending on that statement, we shall determine whether we should give it to the Committee on Presidential Affairs to go ahead and beef it up and we make our recommendations. I believe Thursday would be good. Today, is my first day in the session, and I am being generous. Please, do not think tomorrow will be like this.

3.27

**MR MUWADA NKUNYINGI (NUP, Kyadondo County East, Wakiso):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of urgent national importance, first, as the MP for Kyadondo East and second, as the shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs. I am glad that in your communication, you considered the plight of Ugandan nationals in the diaspora.

I rise on a matter concerning the safety of Ugandan nationals caught up by the civil uprising and uncertainties in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. For weeks now, international media has been reporting a civilian uprising in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka against the ruling Government and an eventual pronouncement by the Government there of a pending resignation.

The resigning Government is raising concerns of a possibility of escalating instabilities that will be created by a vacuum in Government. I have received calls from a number of Ugandan nationals living in Sri Lanka. We have students, business persons, tourists and some travellers stranded because of some uncertainties and cancelled flights.

I now pray that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Government of Uganda briefs Parliament on the total number of Ugandan nationals trapped or stranded in Sri Lanka.

Secondly, the measures being undertaken by the Uganda Government, to ensure the welfare, safety and in the event of escalation, the readiness to evacuate these Ugandan nationals. I beg to submit.

3.30

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Regional Affairs) - Mr John Mulimba):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is following up on matters which are happening in Sri Lanka very closely. We have already asked our Embassy in New Delhi, which is accredited to Sri Lanka, to issue a travel advisory. That is number one.

Secondly, to request all Ugandans who are in Sri Lanka to contact our embassy and also contact the Consular post that we have in Sri Lanka because we have our mission in New Delhi where Sri Lanka is accredited. We do not have a mission in Sri Lanka.

Mr Speaker, you will note that as Government of Uganda, we have not officially gotten any complaint from any Ugandan out there. However, because of the developments which are taking shape in that country, we are concerned and have issued directives to our mission to issue a travel advisory, but to also give warning to our Ugandans in that country not to associate themselves with people who are in the civil strife.

When we get the record of our -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, you do not have to insist. When you request a Member -

**MR MULIMBA:** I do not know what kind of clarity you are seeking for because a question was asked and I am now giving a response.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Go on, honourable minister.

**MR MULIMBA:** Mr Speaker, at the earliest when we get a response from our mission in New Delhi regarding the accurate numbers - we do not know the accurate numbers because you recall that Ugandans who travel abroad, do so in many different ways. Others go unofficially, others were in transit – Therefore, immediately we get the correct position of anybody who is distressed or those who are stranded, we shall report. That is what we are doing in the medium-term. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister.

3.33

**MS SYLVIA AWAS (NRM, Woman Representative, Nabilatuk):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to raise an issue of national importance on Nabilatuk. There is disarmament going on in my district and in Karamoja at large.

The people of Nabilatuk were taken under cordon and search and have disappeared from the district. Since 14 June, over 400 people have disappeared and I do not know where they are. My appeal is that Government should return those people so that we screen them and take them to court, because since 14 June when they were taken, they have never appeared in court.

I went looking for them on the 20th and I found 79 suspects on remand, and most of them are below 18 years. I am requesting Government to screen these people properly and take those children under 18 years to the remand home, and the rest be produced in court. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when I call on you, you can call on any of your minsters.

3.34

**THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (KARAMOJA) (Ms Agnes Nandutu):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Regarding the matter that Hon. Awas is raising, security embarked on disarmament of Karamoja and according to the division commander, they have a list of people who are armed and when they realise that somebody is in a certain area, they do a cordon and search. That is on-going because they have been instructed to ensure that there is no more insecurity in the Karamoja region.

Mr Speaker, I will consult the division commander to find out how many people were arrested. If they have not been produced in the courts of law, that should be done. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Finally, let us have Hon. Gilbert Olanya.

3.36

**MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kalak South County, Amuru):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance concerning the diversion of Parish Development Model (PDM) funds for the payment of staff salaries.

The PDM is a new Government programme, but it has never kicked off. When we were launching PDM in my district, together with the honourable minister Hilary Onek, Mr Speaker, the CAO of Amuru District Local Government claimed to have gotten permission from the PS/ST, Mr Ramathan Ggoobi, authorising him to use part of the PDM funds to pay the salaries for subcounty chiefs and town clerks.

Mr Speaker, this is how Government programmes, and funds are normally abused. When we asked the CAO, he confirmed and gave us a letter written by the PS/ST Ramathan Ggoobi, authorising CAOs to use part of PDM money for the payment of the staff salaries.

Aware that district local governments have their own votes for paying salaries, PDM funds must not be used for the payment of the salaries of the staff.

My prayer is that money meant for the PDM programme in Amuru District Local Government is not diverted; and the money which is diverted by the CAO should be reimbursed. Let the money benefit our people in the parishes. The money should not be mixed up in the payment of salaries.

Secondly, civil servants who are fond of diverting money meant for a particular programme should be dealt with seriously. We need clear implementation of Government programmes.

Mr Speaker, we thought PDM funds would help our people who are deep in the parishes, but right now, we are not happy, as the community of Amuru District Local Government. We need our funds to reach the parishes as has been designed by the Government.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Honourable. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, before you come - Hon. Kibalya came to me over the same.

**MR KIBALYA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

In the same spirit, in my district – Kamuli, where the Rt Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga comes from, as the Woman MP *-(Laughter)–* as we were closing the financial year, Shs 17,000,000 had been apportioned to each parish.

Last week, there was a meeting where the district administrator and some officials from the district came and addressed all the committees responsible for PDM. They told them that each parish now has Shs 9,000,000, from Shs 17,000,000. And, they told them *–(Interjections)-* Katakwi is saying Shs 7,000,000. They told them, “Do not plan for Shs 17,000,000. Go and plan for Shs 9,000,000.” They even told them: “Your MPs have this information, so, you should meet them and they address you and give you the details”. Mr Speaker, we do not have any information as to how Shs 17,000,000 changed to Shs 9,000,000 or Shs 7,000,000. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you have heard it all. It seems it is a problem in many places. You might find some got zero!

3.40

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS** **(Ms Nabbanja Robinah):** Mr Speaker, allow me to thank my brother, Hon. Gilbert, for supporting a Government programme, especially, PDM. *(Applause)* It is true that some districts received less money in the last financial year. We had a number of meetings – because we were not yet prepared to roll out – we agreed that that money is taken back to the Centre so that we can send it once, but some districts had already rolled out this money to parish SACCOs.

I want to assure this House and the country that the money we planned for, in the last financial year, that is, Shs 17,000,000 per parish, will not be diverted. It will go back to the parishes. Even money that has not gone to the districts will be sent to the districts together with the money for this quarter.

On the money that has been diverted by the CAOs, we shall investigate and whoever is culpable will be arrested.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, we plan to send this money in two quarters depending on the season. In the first quarter, like you have been told by the ministers, we shall send Shs 50,000,000. Districts that did not return the other money to make it Shs 17,000,000 will send the balance. In this case, if each parish – like hon. Kibalya has said, got Shs 9,000,000, they will send Shs 8,000,000 to make it Shs 17,000,000. Then, they will send Shs 50,000,000 in July-August and Shs 50,000,000 in January-February. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Chairperson of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government? *(A* *Member rose\_*) No, they have not given you space. Honourable members, that is not how it works.

Honourable colleague, talk to me when you are seated. But you are still walking; you are on your journey -(*Laughter*)– Leader of the Opposition, I will give you a chance.

Chairperson of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government, get interested in this matter; follow up. At a certain stage, we might require you to report to the House. Work closely with the Rt Hon. Prime Minister because she also needs to get first hand information.

Honourable colleagues, during responses to urgent questions, last week, the Minister of State for Sports undertook to Table the Public-Private Partnership Agreement for the Redevelopment and Upgrade of Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium. Therefore, vary the Order Paper to accommodate the laying of this agreement. Honourable Minister?

3.44

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) ((Mr Denis Obua):** Mr Speaker, I had - first of all - risen on a point of procedure -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, you are laying the document on the Table. For the other one, I will give you a chance.

**MR OBUA:** Thank you. Last week, on Thursday, Parliament directed the Ministry of Education and Sports to lay on the Table the Public-Private Partnership Agreement signed for Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium.

I now beg to lay, one, the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) for the Construction of a Perimeter Wall and Lock-up Shops Around Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium between the Trustees of Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium and Ham Enterprises Uganda limited. This PPP was signed on 22 October 2013.

Mr Speaker, before I lay, I request that for the record, because under our national Constitution, one can still be held liable whether you are in office or out of office, to read those who signed in the different *-(Interjections)-* absolutely. There is a provision under the Constitution on accountability.

On behalf of the trustees of the Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium, this agreement of 22 October 2013 was signed by:

1. Mr Godfrey Mabirizi, who was the chairman, board of trustees;
2. Mr Eddie Ssambatya, the vice-chairman, then;
3. Mr Ivan Lubega, the secretary to the board of trustees; and
4. Ms Afusa Nabukeera, who was a member of the board.

On the side of Ham Enterprises Uganda Limited, it was signed by:

1. Mr Hamis Kiggundu, the managing director;
2. Mr Abdul Musoke, the manager operations; and
3. Shamira Namutebi; the designation is not indicated.

I beg to lay.

The second document is Addendum No.1 to the Public Private Partnership agreement for the redevelopment and upgrading of the Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium signed between the trustees of Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium, and Ham Uganda Limited. This particular PPP was signed on 10 May 2017.

The parties that appended the signatures include:

1. Mr Charles Ego Engwau, the vice-chairman, board of trustees;
2. Mr Ahmed Masembe Bogere, board member;
3. Ms Afusa Nabukeera, board member;
4. Mr Boniface Oryem, board member;
5. Mr Dennis Ssembatya Lutaaya, board member;
6. Hajat Minsa Kabanda, board member;
7. Miss Farida Mayanja Mpiima, board member; and
8. Mr Fred Katerega, board member.

And on behalf of Ham Enterprises, it was signed by Mr Hamis Kiggundu, the managing director, and Mr Edward Kaggwa, as a witness, I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MR OBUA:** The last one is Addendum No.2 to the Public-Private Partnership Agreement for the Redevelopment and Upgrade of the Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium between the Trustees of Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium and Ham Enterprises Uganda Limited.

This Addendum No.2 was signed on 15 March 2019, and the parties that appended their signatures thereto include:

1. Hajat Minsa Kabanda, the vice-chairperson and chairperson, management committee accounting officer;
2. Ms Afusa Nabukeera, board member; and
3. Mr Ahamed Masembe Bogere, board member
4. Mr Boniface Oryem, board member; and on behalf of Ham Enterprises Uganda Limited, Mr Hamis Kiggundu, CEO; and Mr Edward Kaggwa, the General Manager, Enterprises Uganda Limited.

I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, that marks the end of laying of the three documents. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. I refer these documents to the Committee on Education and Sports so that it can aid you in doing your oversight role on this same matter, which I know you are handling. Do you need to make any comments on this, LOP?

**MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu):** Mr Speaker, I seek your indulgence because sometimes we seek clarification on matters that can be helpful and very useful, but you find the Frontbench fighting it.

First of all, Mr Speaker -*(Interjections)-* I sought your indulgence. Any expenditure or virement of money, without the authority of the PS/ST creates an audit query. Therefore, that is what I was seeking to know from the Prime Minister; that in case, any accounting officer or if a district used money meant for the parish model without the authority of the PS/ST, does it mean that he was acting *ultra vires*?

Secondly, on the issue of Nakivubo, I would like to thank the Minister for Education and Sports, for making a good disclaimer by reading all those who signed. However, the main issue is that there is a Bill they are supposed to Table in Parliament, which Bill gives Government its interests in the transaction.

What is that, Mr Speaker – the Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium Act? Because, while the investor made an agreement with Government, developed the place and is already doing business, the playground or that stadium is not taking course. It is only the Bill, and it was read by the President, at one of the State-of-the-Nation Addresses.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, I have guided that the documents be referred to the Committee on Education and Sports to aid them in their oversight role. That is what you are talking about; that is oversight. And, as a member, I am very sure you are going to do a thorough job on this.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Yes, but I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, for that. Whether it goes to the committee in which I sit, there are latches in not bringing that Bill to Parliament yet the President read that Bill among the Bills that were supposed to be processed some four years back.

Therefore, the ministry - and we have read this matter as a committee several times. So, let him also give assurance to this House that the Bill is coming to Parliament. Otherwise, whether you take all these agreements to wherever, without bringing the Bill to Parliament - that Bill is the one that is going to show us the interests of Government against those of the investors.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, I expect that in your committee report, and I hope you will include it.

LAYING OF PAPERS

REPORT OF THE INAUGURAL COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES, AFRICA REGIONAL CONFERENCE HELD FROM 14TH TO 18TH OCTOBER 2021 IN NAIROBI, KENYA

**MS LAURA KANUSHU (NRM, PWD Representative):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. With your indulgence, I would like to read the few objectives of the conference, and a few recommendations so that Members can get a glimpse of what this was about.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, youhave your five minutes; you know what to do and how to use them?

**MS KANUSHU:** Thank you. I have been informed that this report has been uploaded. So, I believe that Members have it. I just want to read the objectives on page three. This is the Report of the inaugural Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPWD), Africa Region Conference, held from 14th to 18th October 2021, in Nairobi, Kenya.

The objectives of the conference were:

1. To bring together members from the African region;
2. To discuss and understand the strategic plan of the CPWD Network, and identify disability champions from each of the participating branches;
3. To share information and experiences in national implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities; and
4. To identify challenges faced by persons with disabilities, understand the role of CPWD in mitigating the challenges and adopt resolutions to help mainstream considerations of persons with disabilities in CPA activities.

Mr Speaker, I will read a few of the resolutions, which are on page 28, for those of you that have the report.

1. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) regional member countries should expedite the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – which Uganda has already done.
2. Parliaments in Africa should prioritise enactment and adoption of progressive legislations and policy frameworks suitable for addressing economic, social, cultural and political civil rights for persons with disabilities.
3. Governments should focus on the provision of social amenities and recreational facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities to enhance their participation in development activities.
4. To enhance participation in education and improve the social welfare of persons with disabilities; there is a need for early identification, assessment, intervention and school placement of children with disabilities in an appropriate educational setting.
5. Persons with disabilities should be treated as rights holders. Institutions will be duty-bound, by law, to ensure that persons with disabilities are facilitated to realise their rights to physical access, transport, communication, education, healthcare, employment and access to justice.
6. Legislative interventions and affirmative action strategies should be prioritised. The disability mainstreaming committees should be established in ministries, departments and agencies to facilitate measures for attitude change, monitoring and evaluation of programmes, increased employment opportunities and retention and promotion of persons with disabilities in their places of work.
7. State parties should define, in their legislations, the principle of reasonable accommodation in all areas in line with Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and ensure legal recognition of “denial of reasonable accommodation” as a form of discrimination.
8. There should be a long-term strategy aimed at raising awareness and combating discrimination against persons with disabilities, including aspects covered by the convention.
9. Parliament should ensure that national, sub-national and programme budgets are disability-focused by entrenching financing on disability concerns through a programme-based approach within all sectors.
10. Government should also ring-fence disability financing, while institutionalising the mainstream processes of disability issues.
11. Public and private sector actors should strengthen efforts to ensure that health policies and programmes, including sexual and reproductive rights, are fully accessible to persons with disabilities, especially women with disabilities.
12. African governments should pursue tax policies that are adaptive to expanding access to assistive devices - here we mean wheelchairs, crutches, white canes, hearing aids, etc. - as well as provide tax rebates on their earnings to stimulate investment and improve livelihoods.

Lastly – Mr Speaker, I will not go through all the recommendations – political parties and election management bodies to develop cogent measures that encourage a culture of inclusivity of persons with disabilities by way of nomination and campaign financing. This will expand the participation of persons with disabilities in policy decision-making representation.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the Report of the Inaugural Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPWD) Africa Region Conference held from 14 - 18 October, 2021 in Nairobi, Kenya. *(Applause)*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, honourable colleague. This is a very important document for all of us. Clerk, please, upload it on our online document repository so that we can use it in the several committees because these are overlapping recommendations. Of course, the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development should pick serious interest, but there are overlapping recommendations across all sectoral committees.

You need to use it whenever we are processing, especially the ministerial policy statements and the laws, to ensure that, indeed, our disabled people are considered in many aspects.

**Mr isingoma:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to raise another matter regarding rule 38 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Uganda. According to this rule, we should have got in this House, by now, reports – twice – from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the decisions of the African Union – the resolutions – and the way they pertain to this House.

However, to the best of my recollection, since I started sitting in this House, we have not even got a single report from the ministry regarding the decisions of the African Union. Interestingly, I do not even remember ever seeing the substantive minister in this House.

Therefore, are we proceeding well when we have started the second session of the 11th Parliament and we have not got a single report from the Minister for Foreign Affairs in as far as this rule is concerned? I beg to submit.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, honourable colleague. As far as today’s session is concerned, we are moving well. *(Laughter)* I just wanted to first give you that assurance.

In as far as this report is concerned, I need to cross-check with the Clerk because sometimes some of these documents are on the Clerk’s desk. When we are scheduling items on the Order Paper, we consider the urgent issues first. Therefore, I am going to cross-check with the Clerk tomorrow and ensure that indeed, this rule is adhered to *–(Mr Ssewungu rose\_)-* on the same matter, Hon. Ssewungu? No, this is a report for information and we have said committees can use it at any time. If we open a debate on it, we shall be in trouble here. I do not know what time we shall finish.

Procedure?

**Mr opio:** Mr Speaker, the procedural matter is on the laying of the items on the Order Paper. Recently, I raised a matter of national importance. The prayers were that the Attorney-General be directed to lay the list of the livestock compensation beneficiaries from Acholi, Lango and Teso subregions. Last week, the lists were available, but they could not be laid because the item was not on the Order Paper. Therefore, I would like to request that provision be made so that they can be laid this week. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Clerk, if those documents are available, ensure they are put on the Order Paper tomorrow. Thank you, honourable member, for alerting us on that.

**Mr ALLAN mayanja:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rule 33(3) on laying of reports of parliamentary delegations abroad states that, *“The Speaker shall appoint time, not exceeding 45 minutes, for debate.”*

Mr Speaker, under this rule, I have noticed that time has not been allocated by you to allow the House to debate the Member’s report, which has just been laid. I seek your guidance.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you, honourable. I am the custodian of these rules. As the custodian of these rules, I am very cautious when making the Order Paper and all the issues.

This document – whatever you debate – is just for information purposes for this report. This is something I sent to all committees, Members and even the Members of Parliament with disabilities to pick out very salient issues, which can come in the form of action points and resolutions in this House because we have not ratified anything. Sometimes you debate, but end up – I usually focus on the outcome. That is why I guided that way, honourable member. The debate can even go on beyond the Table here. Let us go to the next item.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE SUPPLY OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

4.06

**THE MINISTER FOR STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (MINERALS) (Mr Peter Lokeris):** Mr Speaker, Uganda currently is the net importer of petroleum products and operates a liberalised market since 1994 where prices are determined by the forces of demand and supply. The subsector is guided by the Petroleum Supply Act of 2003 and the attendant regulations.

The purpose of this statement is to appraise Parliament on the product supply, associated prices and actions by the ministry.

Currently, about 80 per cent of the country's petroleum product requirements are supplied through the Kenya route using the Open Tender System, which Uganda joined in 2011 after a series of engagements with the Government of Kenya. Tanzania, which was providing 5 per cent of Uganda’s product requirements has now increased its supply to 20 per cent.

The strategies to keep the country well supplied, therefore, hinge on the effectiveness of the import routes and the in-country storage facilities. In this case, Mombasa and Dar-es-salaam ports together with other terminals in Kenya are being utilised by oil marketing companies to import products into Uganda.

Mr Speaker, you may recall that in April 2022, the Government of Kenya introduced changes in capacity sharing that require:

1. The oil marketing companies in Kenya to declare 60 per cent of all imported products for the Kenyan local market and 40 per cent for transit. In this regard:
2. Kenya Pipeline Company is to ensure that all pumpable stock within its system adheres to the ratio of 60:40 Kenya local market to transit ratio; and
3. That Kenyan oil companies with higher transit stocks than the prescribed ratio to immediately localise the excess stock. This directly affected the companies doing business in Uganda with investments in Kenya.
4. Localisation of the whole parcel of Super Petrol aboard MT Campo Square with 85,000 metric tonnes or 133.509 million litres that were discharged starting the weekend of 30 April 2022 and subsequently dedicated to the Kenyan local market, leaving the Ugandan market with no supply.
5. Localisation of the whole parcel of diesel aboard MT Elka Athina that was discharged on 12 May 2022 with 86,000 metric tonnes or 104.748 million litres was also dedicated to the Kenyan local market.

The above decisions affected the security of supply of petroleum products in Uganda, although the country has not reached stock-out levels.

Actions taken by my ministry

My ministry analysed the implications of the changes in supply through Kenya and did the following:

1. Engaged Kenya's Ministry of Petroleum and Mining in virtual and physical meetings on 4 and 17 May 2022, respectively to discuss the implications of their decision on supply to Uganda.
2. Held regular meetings with Ugandan oil marketing companies regarding the country's security of supply of petroleum products under the circumstances, while requiring them to ensure acceptable prices.
3. Engaged Tanzanian authorities in a meeting held from 28 to 30 June 2022 to have Uganda's oil marketing companies actively improve supply through the Central Corridor aimed at improving the security of supply.

The outcomes of these meetings

Some of the outcomes from the above engagements are:

1. Adjustment of Kenya's sharing ratio of Kenyan local to transit 60:40 to 55:45; theirs has reduced to 55 instead of retaining it at 60 and ours has risen to 45.
2. Ugandan oil marketing companies' loadings out of Tanzania rose from 5 per cent to 20 per cent and this has kept the country well supplied.
3. Tanzania's road toll reduced. It used to charge about $16, but they have reduced it to $10 per 100 km with effect from 1 July 2022.

We expect that the positive effects of the above measures will be seen in the coming days.

Transportation of petroleum products over Lake Victoria M/s Mahathi Infra Uganda Limited has been developing a system to transport fuel over Lake Victoria by barges. Construction of storage facilities of 72 million litre capacity is complete. Assembling of the first barge with a capacity of 4.5 million litres has also been completed and is ready to transport the fuel.

Other than tarmacking of the four-kilometre Kawuku road, that is, off Kampala-Entebbe Road and Bwerenga Road to the storage facilities, the key challenge to operationalising this project is the finalisation of the Oil Spill and Shipboard Pollution Emergency Plans, which were discussed with our stakeholders on 8th July.

We hope that this impediment will be resolved on the 15th of July, thereby buttressing the country's preparedness in case of any supply disruptions during Kenya's electioneering period given that the barge can make two round trips per week.

Current pump prices in the country

Mr Speaker, as we continue to focus on supply to allow the interplay of market forces of demand and supply on these pump prices, you may appreciate that the prices of petroleum products have been increasing globally.

The increase in global prices was initially triggered by the post-COVID-19 opening of the global economy, which required many more products than suppliers could meet. This resulted in product scarcity and supply prices increased.

The freight also increased due to the fact that there was a high demand for ships, yet during the lockdowns, businesses were slow and new ships were not being manufactured – *(A Member rose\_)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, leave the minister to finish his statement.

**MR LOKERIS**: … and some old ones that were no longer seaworthy could not sail. This has resulted in high freight costs.

The Russia-Ukraine war has further affected the supply chain resulting in high supply premiums since products from the region can no longer be accessed.

The USD-Uganda exchange rate has also affected the prices tremendously with oil marketing companies facing exchange losses.

Action required

Mr Speaker, while prices of oil products are currently high, the focus remains on sustaining supply to allow the market to continue to determine pump prices.

The ministry commits to:

1. Continue to engage the Government of Kenya to keep their supply route active;
2. Encourage Ugandan oil marketing companies to further increase their usage of the Tanzanian route so as to reduce the risks associated with supply disruptions or interruptions; and
3. Closely monitor the industry to ensure that it continues to thrive in a free and fair competitive environment. I beg to submit. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Members, I will allow a debate of five minutes on this matter, and then we move.

4.19

**MS IRENE MULONI (NRM, Woman Representative, Bulambuli):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the honourable minister for the statement he has made on petroleum supply.

We know that the Kenya elections will happen in less than a month. I do not know how prepared we are, as a country, in ensuring that much as the prices are skyrocketing, we will be able to get fuel flowing so that we are able to move to the next item.

The other issue I would like the honourable minister to update us about is that in the Petroleum Supply Act, there is an emergency petroleum supply plan, which details a number of issues that the ministry should be able to take so that as a country, we are able to know, at any point in time, the volumes of petroleum supply that we have in the country. So, how far has the ministry gone with digitising that information so that on a daily basis, we know how much fuel we have in the country? Thank you.

4.21

**MR JOHN TEIRA (NRM, Bugabula County North, Kamuli):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the honourable minister for the report.

In 2011, one of the key issues, which captured the Presidential manifesto, was the transportation of fuel on Lake Victoria. In your report today, you still mention the transportation of fuel on Lake Victoria, 12 years down the road. Do we have a clear plan, other than the oratory gestures on this matter?

We have debated here about the prices of commodities; food, and fuel is a very big aspect, yet the minister does not seem to appreciate the reality on the ground by directly addressing this issue. The report fell short of showing us exactly what is going to be the way forward in the short-term. I seek guidance on that matter, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will pick Hon. Nsamba, Hon. Florence Akiiki and then conclude with the Shadow Minister for Energy and the Leader of the Opposition. *[Several Members rose\_]*

We have other items where you will contribute, colleagues. In addition, as you can see, I am trying to pick those who have not spoken since we began the session.

4.22

**MR PATRICK OSHABE (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As we speak, the Government of Sri Lanka fell just because of the fuel crisis. The reluctance the minister showed here about the fuel crisis - it looks like the minister did not appreciate how big this problem is.

The fuel dealers - the demand for fuel will remain the same, but the continuous increase in prices reduces the amount people can import. Therefore, instead of the minister coming here just to talk about things they are theorising about - we have a problem before us.

This morning, I went to a petrol station and I asked them to put for me a full tank in my car. They said, “No. We cannot give you a full tank. We are only giving you less than Shs 200,000.” If that can be told to a Member of Parliament, then it tells you the problem is bigger than the way we are looking at it.

We demand that the minister gets more serious about this problem; fuel has become a problem, Mr Speaker. The International Energy Agency is calling upon governments to advise their people to drive slowly to reduce work to half days and work from home. There are so many pieces of advice; we are asking our Government to advise Ugandans on what is going on because it is a global crisis. Many governments today are failing to get the quantities of fuel they need.

The minister must confirm to us that in Uganda, we are safe. What he is saying, he has no evidence about it at all. We needed to hear about our fuel reserves; what is in our reserves? How much longer can we go on with what is going on, Mr Speaker?

Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. Clerk, I am doing two minutes. Colleagues, we are lucky in this House, we have a fuel dealer, hon. Isingoma. He might give us useful information before I pick Hon. Florence Akiiki. Let us tap into the resources we have around.

**MR ISINGOMA-MWESIGWA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for recognising me. Yes, it is true; I have some useful information for the honourable members.

Mr Speaker, we have the East African Common Market Protocol and according to this protocol, the East African region is supposed to be one single market, but this is not the case as far as fuel is concerned.

Fuel business, especially the importation into the region is controlled exclusively by companies, which are either Kenyan or Tanzanian registered. There is no way the Ugandan registered companies – because we happen to be fuel importers ourselves, but there is no way you can participate in the tendering process. All these processes are targets and, are participated in by Kenyan and Tanzanian companies. That is why it is easy for the Kenyan Government to localise entire consignments of ships –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What is the problem, honourable?

**MR ISINGOMA-MWESIGWA:** The problem is - that is why we need to take on our people in the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development. They need to engage their counterparts in these countries to open up the process, to allow even our companies here, to participate in the tendering process, which is monthly. That would ease the situation and even these strategies would be reduced or even wiped out altogether. However, that is not the case, Mr Speaker, as we talk. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. That is very useful information. Honourable minister, we shall need to know, what you are doing to ensure our companies are allowed to participate in the tendering process. Because I saw the letter from Kenya - now Kenya just writes to their company and says, “If you do not domesticate these volumes, we are going to withdraw your licence of operating in Kenya.”

Now, we would also be able to say the same for our country. And, the only reason is that fuel passes through Kenya, but we have fuel, which passes through here to other countries. So, honourable minister, we need clearance on that; don’t we have the capacity to participate in the bidding process yet we have a private sector that has grown? Hon. Florence Akiiki? Honourable member, please switch on the microphone to be on record.

4.28

**DR FLORENCE ASIIMWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Masindi):** Welcome back from the first session. The issue I am raising is about the preparedness we have for fuel or petroleum products. We have over and again talked about the tanks in Jinja.

In the first session, we talked about them being empty. The minister has not told us whether those tanks are still empty or full; or still being rented. Last time, the information we got was that they are being rented and not owned by Government. Can the minister tell us the use of those fuel tanks in Jinja? Are we filling them now that the elections in Kenya are coming on the ninth?

Secondly, as you are aware, the prices cannot be controlled and a number of bus operators have now closed shop. That means we are going to have more problems of unemployment. So, the issue of fuel products cannot be underemphasised. Yes, I am aware that some of these conditions are beyond us, but I think we need to prepare ourselves. The minister has to come up with a proper plan, especially for the youth. Most of us have got vehicles, which consume fuel like water. So, I think we need guidance on our consumption. You find a home having three cars - Ugandans have to be guided. Can we – take on Premio cars and park some of these huge cars to use them at a particular time “T?” I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable. Okay, shadow minister for energy. Honourable, tell me, what is the issue? It seems you are boiling with the point.

4.31

**MR JONATHAN EBWALU (Independent, Soroti West Division, Soroti):** Mr Speaker, the crisis of fuel is all over the country. Unfortunately, the dealers have started hoarding fuel. I left Soroti yesterday, at about five o’clock, and there was no fuel in Soroti, but I was informed that they are hoarding fuel.

I think it is important that – the minister talked about - but you know, he was not talking like the minister that I know. I think some of us are comfortable with the status quo. We would want the minister to tell us what they are doing as Government, one, in the immediate, the mid-term and long-term? In your report, that has not come out.

Mr Speaker, when I reached Tororo from Soroti, I found that fuel costs Shs 6,900 yet Tororo is near Kenya. In Jinja, it is different. So, I would like to request that Government comes out to check on these fuel dealers. How come we can have fuel in Kampala costing Shs 7,000; in Mbale at Shs 5,500; in Soroti fuel is Shs 6,000; and in Kalangala, fuel at different prices?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Shadow Minister for Energy? Oh, Christine, I thought you are the Shadow Minister of Energy. I was asking because when handling the EACOP Bill while I was Government Chief Whip, that is how they introduced her to me.

4.32

**MS ASINANI NYAKATO (FDC, Woman Representative, Hoima City):** I delegated to her. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the honourable minister, for the statement. However, as Parliament, we are disappointed because it is an empty statement. Every other day, we have heard Government say –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, be courteous to the colleague. A colleague cannot come, submit a statement and you say it is empty. You can say it is not satisfactory, but it cannot be empty; that is not good.

**MS ASINANI NYAKATO:** Most obliged, Mr Speaker. This is not the first time the Minister for Energy and Mineral Development has lamented about Russia, Ukraine, COVID-19, Kenya elections, and other issues of the kind.

Mr Speaker, as colleagues have said, when we go back to our constituencies or out there, most cars are parked. I remember when we were passing the Excise Duty (Amendment) Bill, we emphasised that most businesses were on a standstill. People are confused; they do not know what to do. Businesses are closed because of the fuel prices.

You know very well – one time, one of the ministers, Hon. Ntabaazi, was complaining about how a truck, which used to leave Kikuubo using fuel of Shs 1,000,000, now uses twice as much fuel – using Shs 2,000,000. By the time the products are delivered to the retailers, automatically, the retailer has to recover the money which has been consumed in the fuel, hence increasing the prices.

Now that this Government has signed a final investment decision, we want the Minister for Energy and Mineral Development to update this country on how far Government has gone in establishing our own refinery.

Last time, when the Committee on Trade, Tourism and Industry traversed this country, finding out – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, your time is up. Please, take your seat. The problem is that you have not helped us. We have a situation where we need solutions. As a shadow minister, you have not given us alternatives to what the minister has said. So, we have remained the same. You have complained. We have complained. Now, it is only the minister who has given solutions, which we are poking holes into.

I am looking for a way forward – for alternative solutions. The minister has said that they are working on a barge which is going to bring in fuel. We said: “No, this badge will not help. Therefore, what you do is try to bring fuel by train or something like that.” That is what would help us.

4.36

**MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am glad you have reconsidered that we give ideas on how this problem must be dealt with. It is a crisis, which if we do not pay attention to, can actually escalate into something bigger.

I have read through the minister’s proposals. Indeed, they cannot address the issues at hand. He seems to suggest that the problem is a transportation one – a mere supply chain issue – yet there is the issue of how much we can import, store or be able to work with if we want to bring costs down.

Right now, in Congo, fuel is cheaper than it is here, yet Congo and South Sudan take fuel through here. What is happening? That is an issue the minister should interrogate.

Secondly, it is not true that Uganda has been stopped from participating in international markets to buy fuel. A Member misinformed this House and I think that is wrong. What countries do is to hedge. Ideally, the minister should have anticipated this. Kenya is going to have elections and there could be disruptions. Therefore, our Government should have gone into forward contracts with other governments to guarantee supply.

Three, the International Energy Agency requires that countries must stockpile to last for at least 90 days. The minister has not told us how much *–(Member timed out.)*

4.38

**MS PATIENCE NKUNDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kanungu):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I would like to give more information on this fuel crisis. In Kanungu right now, the fuel is at over Shs 7,000. I am one of the lucky people who got to fill my tank today at Shell –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Did you take a full tank? *(Laughter)*

**MS NKUNDA:** Yes, I did. I got a full tank at Shs 530,000. I use one-and-a-half tankful of fuel to go to Kanungu. That means I have to spend Shs 800,000 before I get to Kanungu. To make a few rounds in Kanungu and the return journey, I need Shs 3,000,000 to go home every weekend.

Honourable minister –*(Interjections)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** They are not on record, honourable. Please, proceed.

**MS NKUNDA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Today, I do not know how you expect us Minister for Energy and Mineral Development – to go back to the constituency? Where do you expect us to get the difference between what we need and what you pay us? Voters accuse us of getting a lot of money in this Parliament. Our own people cannot afford to buy fuel today to run around.

In addition to that, my people of Kanungu are dying of hunger because we were attacked by wild animals from Queen Elizabeth National Park – in the subcounties of Kihihi and Nyanga.

I urge you, Mr Speaker, to tell the Prime Minister to provide food for the people of Kanungu before they die. *(Laughter)*

4.41

**MS FLORENCE NEBANDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Butaleja):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to add my voice to thank the minister for the report. I will address myself to the issue of people being unhappy. It is an international problem, by the way. Last week, on BBC news, Uganda was rated as one of the countries with people who are least happy. It is a big problem.

These are some of the issues; I link them to management and regulation. These companies feel free to change prices at ease because they are not regulated. I do not know what the issue is. Maybe the minister could come out clearly and tell us whether they fear them or if there is something between them. I believe that they could be hoarding fuel silently to make money and also take advantage of the elections going on in Kenya. I believe the issue is regulation and management. The minister needs to come out clearly and comment on that. Otherwise, they are going to take advantage of the situation.

4.42

**MS HELLEN WANDERA (NRM, Woman Representative, Busia):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. On the issue of fuel, I am going to add to what hon. Nebanda has said. I was in Nairobi and all the petrol stations had the same fuel prices. However, here in Uganda, you find Shell has a different price while MOGAS has a different one.

My prayer, or my proposed solution, is that the minister considers setting the same price. If it is Shs 8,000, let it be that and if it is Shs 7,000, let be that –*(Interjections)-* I am just using that as an example –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, a Member is giving her view. That is her view. Go on, you are protected, honourable member.

**MS WANDERA:** Thank you for the protection. I would like them to set the same price so that we may be sure of the fuel prices in Uganda.

Since last year, we have been lamenting about the same issue – fuel crisis – but there is no affirmative action. As Members of Parliament, we need affirmative action and we explain to our voters.

I come from the border. Whenever I go back, that is the same question they ask me. Actually, we cross to Kenya to look for fuel and we come back to Uganda. We are coming to an election period in Kenya: how are we going to be helped? Honourable minister, we need your help.

4.44

**MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. Thank you, honourable minister, for sharing. Members have talked about the timeframe and we want the short-term, the medium and the long-term. During our budgetary processes, we had highlighted the need for us to benchmark the neighbouring countries to see how they have handled the issue.

The tendency of comparing our performance with other poor-performing countries is also not good. We need to come up with solutions that our country specifically has come out with. Comparing us with the UK and Kenya is actually an insult because we have not exhausted the actions we proposed.

We had also proposed the issue of promoting the growth of biofuel crops like Jatropha. We would be processing Jatropha right from May last year. The issue of food scarcity is accelerated by the problem of fuel; people cannot ferry food from Kiboga to Karamoja and they have decided to sit with their food.

Honourable minister, fuel discussions with the other countries need to be accomplished in the shortest time possible. If it is to reduce the taxes per barrel by Ugandans, then let us do it. What we see now *– (Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, this is an issue where each and every Government is getting a bashing from their Parliament. When I was in Canada, a litre had jumped from 0.25 cents to 0.85 cents; three times. We have the issue of sustainable supply, especially because of the Kenya elections that are coming in. This is the time when I do not envy being in the minister’s position because he is between a stone and a hard place. It is all over the region.

When we are also pushing the minister, I really want us to be reasonable and know that we should face the reality. We are coming from all these other countries and the situation is really bad. Should they meet as leaders of the region? Should we tell hon. Nsamba that at PAP, this should be one of the issues you should be raising. As Africa, how are we protecting ourselves? The resources coming out of Africa -

Honourable member, I know you have a procedural matter, but sometimes, these are issues where Members freely express themselves. I do not want to bog them down with procedure and all that. It is a chance for them to - some of you are senior legislators. Allow colleagues also to speak freely on some of these matters.

4.47

**MS HELEN NAKIMULI (NUP, Woman Representative, Kalangala):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Just like you guided, the minister should go back and make a revision and come up with a correct report. In line with that, I would also like to draw from Kalangala. Kalangala is a fishing community just like many other Islands. From June to August, the winds have been very strong. It is very hard for anybody to traverse, even for us, Members of Parliament who have those very fast boats.

The people of Kalangala do not fish this time round. That means their boats are up and they do not have food. The fuel prices in Kalangala start from Shs 10,000 to Shs 12,000. It is very hard for a fisherman to go out fishing in waters next to Kenya or Tanzania. When they go there, they come back with 10 kilogrammes of fish.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** In the normal days, it has been around how much, honourable? A litre of fuel -

**MS NAKIMULI:** Fuel was Shs 4,500 to Shs 5,000.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** And now it is?

**MS NAKIMULI:** Shs 10,000 to Shs 12,000. Also, Mr Speaker, the prices of fish have lowered. You can imagine, the price of fuel is high and the price of fish is low. Before, it was Shs 15,000 a kilogramme, minimum. As we speak, it is at Shs 7,000 to Shs 9,000 compared to the prices of fuel. I think it is so unfair to the people of Kalangala. As we speak, they also do not have food. Mr Speaker, thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, we have a special case. The reason I picked Kalangala is because it is an island. I was looking at a special case of people on the islands. We want to know if there are special interventions for the people on the islands, especially in terms of fuel.

Allow Hon. Oseku and I conclude with Hon. Ssewungu. Honourable colleagues, there are other statements where I know you will be the same people standing up to contribute. I am not importing any new people into Parliament, it will be you standing up to contribute and I will give you a chance.

4.50

**MR RICHARD OSEKU (NRM, Kibale County, Pallisa):** Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker. The issue of the fuel situation in the country is appalling - I will not take long. I will follow the guidance that you gave on the issue of food security. The issue is cross-cutting throughout the country. We are talking about pump prices, but you go to the communities where most of our people stay and they are buying fuel using cups and bottles. The prices can be as high as Shs 15,000 to Shs 20,000.

Our people have difficulties accessing medical care because they have to use the *boda boda* transport, but they are telling them to pay Shs 20,000 to the health centre. Our people are suffering; they cannot even afford the high food prices because fuel is the driving factor.

Mr Speaker, beyond the minister, I think that as Parliament, we need to take a position. I would like to say, like you guided with the issue of lack of food, perhaps if it pleases the Rt Hon. Speaker, the minister ought to go back to Cabinet and they review the issue. Please *–(Interruption)*

**MR ONZIMA:** Thank you, honourable, for giving way. I just wanted to give some information. When you look at this issue of fuel, it is a global problem. It is not an issue that is related to tax incentives. It is not an issue that is related to transportation. The issue is demand and supply. Just like we have inflation for food where a lot of money purchases very few food items, it is the same case with fuel. When Russia’s fuel was banned on the international market and yet Russia is the third-largest producer of fuel, this impacted the supply and that is why it is a global thing.

I have heard Members of Parliament talk about the oil reserves. Those oil reserves were established by those Governments when the Government was allowed to do business. However, remember many of those things were privatised and many of these were given to individuals. At the moment, when you look at the issue of fuel, the issue we should be talking about is, how can we enhance the ability of the private people where they have challenges –*(Interruption)*

**MR OSHABE:** Mr Speaker, we have, in this country, a national oil company that trades in fuel; it is a Government company. When we talk about reservoirs, we do not want to reach a time when there is no stock at all.

I have been talking about the reluctant minister - now, we have a reluctant colleague, who thinks we cannot have a reservoir through the national oil company. Mr Speaker, if we provided money to the national oil company and said, “Stock this amount of oil”, we can have reservoirs that can take us through this period.

Therefore, is the Member in order, to stand here and tell us that it is only the Governments of Idi Amin, Obote that could store energy and that this Government cannot? Is he in order?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, other than looking at it as a point of order, what if the Member says, “I did not have this information?” Do you get it? The Member might not have had this information. So, you have informed the Member that Government has a national oil company, which we appropriated money for, as a House, to stock our reserves.

Hon. Onzima, I would say you have received good information rather than a reprimand from hon. Oshabe. You can utilise that information.

**MR ONZIMA:** Mr Speaker, when I gave information to him, it was in line with the manner in which the fuel industry is being handled at the moment. Government has not entered into that, but let me not go into that debate. Let me proceed with the issue -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is a humble way of accepting information, honourable. Proceed.

**MR ONZIMA:** On this particular situation - I watched the news - Mr Speaker, we may have a problem with fuel here -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Are you still giving information?

**MR ONZIMA:** I am still giving him some information -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, it is you to reclaim your -

**MR ONZIMA:** Today, we are talking about fuel here - we are lucky that we do not use a lot of gas here. Countries that use gas are paying harder than those that use fuel. It is terrible in East Asian countries. Thank you, for giving way.

**MR OSEKU:** Thank you. As earlier stated, this is a very serious matter that we need to refer back to the minister, just like you had guided, Mr Speaker. The minister should come back with a comprehensive report - with all these gaps that have been identified through the debate here, we need a comprehensive report so that we have solutions, rather than lamentations that have been coming up. We want Government to come up with a position on how to intervene or check all these problems.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Ssewungu? Hon. Milton, you do not have oil on that side? You will speak on matters regarding foreign affairs.

4.58

**MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu):** Thank you, Mr Speaker and I would like to thank the minister for the statement.

Honourable minister, on page two of your statement, you have given us, at the bottom, some outcomes of the actions - those captured in number eight, are positives according to what you have given. Meaning, the country will have some relief, but you are still not giving us any solution.

Mr Speaker, let us look at these figures. Kenya is selling fuel at Ushs 4,857. In Tanzania, it is Ushs 4,844, in South Sudan, it is Ushs Shs 4,770, DRC it is Ushs 4,412. In Burundi, a litre is at Ushs 4,990 and then landlocked Rwanda is selling at Ushs 5,372. Honourable members, let us not talk about Uganda because we know what is happening.

What is taking place in Uganda is that our price is rising according to the month of the year. In May, it was Shs 5,000, June Shs 6,000. Now, it is rushing to Shs 7,000 in July.

Mr Speaker, the challenge we have here is that the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development has failed to monitor these companies importing fuel. Petrocity has a reservoir, Hass has a reservoir, Stabex has reservoirs, but you find a company going to Shell or Total to buy fuel. That company then sells at a lower price, while Shell is selling at a higher price.

What is important is the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development taking a keen interest - even though we have no law, they should be following up with all these companies - How much do they have in their reservoirs?

The moment you have that, you will have close monitoring. Otherwise, Uganda Revenue Authority looks at all these vehicles bringing fuel daily and taxes them. However, once they put their fuel in their reservoirs, there is no further follow-up to know that this is the amount of fuel we have.

I remember during the walk-to-work, this Parliament agreed to provide regional reservoirs for the country, and I think we released some money here. Now, what is happening?

As I conclude, honourable minister, let us go back. We are saying, we cannot give all the powers of management of fuel in Uganda to multinational companies. Government must come in, to control. That is what the Speaker said in Kenya; that if you are raising the prices, we are taking away our licenses. Mr Speaker, what is happening Uganda is that there are very many vultures enjoying money at the cost of others.

Lastly, honourable minister, I have given you these figures regarding the cost of fuel in the East African Community member countries because we, Ugandans, want to see some reduction that can keep us going.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssewungu, it is very important that when you give figures, qualify them so that in the *Hansard*, we know the source of the figures.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Mr Speaker, the source of this information - First of all, we are members of the East African Community. Secondly, we travel to these countries. Thirdly, just go on social media - the internet - and look for the prices of fuel in Kenya. This is open information. But as you have ruled, Mr Speaker, I will, tomorrow, lay on the Table that source of information.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Clerk, as per now, on the *Hansard record,* write that according to hon. Ssewungu. *(Laughter)*

**MR SSEWUNGU:** As the Opposition, we had prepared a statement on how the fuel crisis can be handled, but it cannot be presented now. Mr Speaker, I pray that I hand over this statement through the Clerk to the ministry so that they can read and see it. If they feel we have some positive contribution that can solve this impasse, they can take it, but if they feel it does not help, they can remain.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable Leader of the Opposition. Colleagues, on this matter, I am going to guide you. This is a very important matter. I can see how each one of us wants to submit. It is not that we want to submit because of anything, but it has an impact on us, our communities and we are all anxious.

Honourable minister, I read through your statement. When you look at the submissions of Members, you see that there are many gaps you should fill. But to do it better; I am going to refer this matter to the Committee on Energy and Mineral Development. I can see the chairman of that committee here. Where the minister needs to come with the technical people, because it might not be satisfactory- the committee on Natural Sources - it might be not satisfactory for us to only have the minister here; he needs a backup. What we need are clear answers and some of them are held by technical people.

Also, the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow minister for energy, are going to give alternatives when they are prepared. And then, the committee will bring a report, which we shall discuss here; we shall give it enough time so that all colleagues can comprehensively submit.

Honourable chairperson, if we give you one week, you should be able - because it is an urgent matter. It is not a matter we should take very far. Honourable committee chairperson, we give you one week of comprehensive meetings with the dealers, the minister, the shadow minister and Members who are interested; you should inform them.

However, also get an extract of this *Hansard* so that it can guide you on the issues. Our focus will be on the solutions so that we make very clear recommendations to Government – in the short, medium and long terms.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE STEPS TO EASE STRINGENT VISA CONDITIONALITIES FOR UGANDANS

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Foreign Affairs.

5.05

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Regional Affairs) (Mr John Mulimba):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. At the 26th Sitting of the Fourth Meeting of the First Session of the 11th Parliament of Uganda, held on 28 April 2022, the House noted with concern -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, please; hon. Kibalya, I know what issue you are rising on but you have been seated there and you have been moving out to have breaks. I saw the minister has been seated there all day; you have even changed location. So, he also needs a break, he is coming back.

**MR MULIMBA:** Mr Speaker, as I was saying, at the 26th Sitting of the Fourth Meeting of the First Session of the 11th Parliament of Uganda, held on 28 April 2022, the House noted, with concern, the increased cases of Ugandans being denied visas. The Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament directed that my ministry presents a statement to the House on this matter.

World over, countries issue visas through embassies, high commissions and consular posts to applicants intending to travel to their respective countries, taking into account various considerations, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Reason for travel;
2. Applicant’s financial position;
3. Applicant’s travel history;
4. Political relations between the two countries; and
5. National security, among others.

Diplomatic missions in Kampala and regional capitals continue to process and grant visas to Ugandan applicants.

However, a number of Ugandans have been denied visas due to several reasons that include:

1. Failure to properly articulate the reasons for travel to consular officers at the embassies or consulates. This is especially in the cases where face-to-face interviews are conducted. Whereas one may have the requisite documents to support his or her application, he/she oftentimes may fail to articulate the reasons for travel, hence leading to visa denial;
2. Late submission of visa applications - diplomatic missions have timeframes within which they process and issue visas. Some Ugandans are generally known to be last-minute applicants. Delay in submissions of applications for a time-bound engagement abroad often leads to visa denial, especially for diplomatic missions where visa approvals are done in their capitals;
3. Submission of false documents to backup visa applications is another common reason for visa denials. These falsified documents include: bank statements, invitation letters, birth and marriage certificates, among others;
4. Overstaying visas - Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, you know this is a criminal offence punishable by being banned from travel to the affected country for a given period; and
5. The COVID-19 pandemic affects travel globally. Diplomatic missions scaled down their operations, thereby leading to visa application backlogs.

Mr Speaker, I wish to underline and inform this House that the issuance of visas is a sovereign right. And different countries have different policies, which are used to protect countries’ interests. Uganda too has its own visa policy and the parameters for visa issuance or denial. On the same note, countries may choose to provide a reason for visa denial, but are under no obligation to do so.

However, Mr Speaker, in a bid to reduce cases of visa denial and restrictive migration policies, my ministry continues to engage with other countries on this issue. As a matter of fact, my ministry yesterday concluded a five-day Joint Commission for Cooperation with the Republic of South Africa in which immigration issues were discussed.

Mr Speaker, you recall that one of the destinations that have been quite restrictive for Ugandans has been South Africa, but we have fully engaged them on this matter and the outcome, which I do not want to announce here today because we are going to have a joint communiqué tomorrow, is positive and promising.

Let me highlight some of the other measures that my ministry has undertaken to ensure that Ugandans are subjected to minimum visa restrictions and immigration policies.

Bilateral visa arrangements

My ministry continues to negotiate bilateral agreements with a number of countries for the exemption of visa requirements. The minister has concluded arrangements with the 65 countries so far, where Ugandans do not require visas to travel. The list is herewith attached.

Similarly, my ministry has concluded bilateral agreements with Italy, India and South Africa, like I said, among others, where Ugandans holding diplomatic and service passports are visa exempt. We continue to engage with a number of countries to facilitate bilateral visa exemptions, as well as grant of visas on arrival to cater for emergency situations, although this would require reciprocity.

Issuance of diplomatic notes for government officials on official travel

For Government officials intending to travel on official Government business, my ministry issues a *note verbale*, also known as a diplomatic note, to respective diplomatic missions as a way not only to facilitate, but also to authenticate the application.

Mr Speaker, I would like to underline here that this is not only in respect of those who are holding service or diplomatic passports, but also going for official Government business.

The regional engagements with partner states

At a regional level, the minister has concluded agreements with regional partner states where Ugandans do not require visas. This is a practice in the East African Community, like you all know, and most COMESA member countries.

The ministry continues to raise these issues of visa denials and restrictive visa terms and conditions within diplomatic commissions.

And, I can report to this House that tremendous progress is being made in this direction, though a lot still needs to be done. I must credit diplomatic commissions, particularly those in Kampala for the consideration they gave to Ugandan visa applicants where most visa requests were granted – that is during COVID-19. This was demonstrated at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, when a number of Ugandans were granted visas to travel abroad at a time when there were many global travel restrictions.

Mr Speaker, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs engages our counterparts, fully cognisant that granting or denying visas are matters of sovereign rights of countries, we appeal to Ugandans who intend to travel to always do due diligence on visa requirements specific to countries they intend to travel.

Ugandans are further urged to desist from falsification of visa-supporting documents and instead be transparent throughout the visa application process.

In situations where Ugandans are denied visas and the matter is brought to our attention, especially on subjects of health and education, the ministry engages with the relevant missions and governments over such a matter.

We also encourage colleagues and Government officials to submit their visa application documents ahead of time as some of these visas are issued from the countries’ capitals, outside Uganda.

Colleagues should also note that while most diplomatic and service passport holders are exempted from visa fees, some countries require payment of visa-processing fees, especially where visas are issued outside Uganda.

In conclusion, as a ministry, we share the plight of Ugandans who continue to face restrictive visa regimes. However, my ministry is doing everything, within our means and mandate, to ensure that we work closely with diplomatic missions in Kampala and within the region, and also at bilateral and regional levels to address the challenges of restrictive immigration terms and conditions, as well as knowing that this issue is a sovereign right of a country in question. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, honourable minister. This is a good response. I have looked at your list - and of course we know - as a student of International Relations, I raised this matter to you cautiously. That is why I talked of measures you are doing yourself. I do not expect you to say you are going to force or threaten an embassy.

Some of these measures were not only about giving visas, but about the process. For example, if you say you get an appointment for 11 months - how many? You are talking of a trader! That is why I am telling you that you can negotiate and they lessen the period of getting appointments. For example, if I get an appointment and I am denied a visa, at least I will have appeared and been given a reason. However, not even getting an appointment…

I am talking about young people who have come to be – they are traders. This is where they survive. They are appealing. They are not saying “help us to get visas”, but that the period for appointments is untenable. I need 11 months to get an appointment to go and help my sick person – then you write emails - that is where you should take the focus.

We were happy – for example, when I raised the same issue in the 10th Parliament whereby at 1.00 a.m., people would start lining up at the Chinese Embassy. You engaged them and they introduced that online system. I no longer see those lines. You have made it very easy. That is our focus. We are not saying “go bombard, push or do what”, but engage them.

Some of the missions reached out to me, but I said, “The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should handle this with you”. Uganda – we are playing a critical role on the international stage. Our country is open; so, we are saying, “push harder”. We are encouraging you, honourable minister.

5.18

**Mr atkins katusabe (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese):** Mr Speaker, I thank you for –

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable colleagues, this is a sensitive matter. We have to be very cautious in our submissions. It is about our relations with other countries that are sovereign.

**Mr katusabe:** Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We have Hon. Sarah Opendi here. She will interpret for us. *(Laughter)* Hon. Atkins, you know we love you so much. *(Laughter)*

**MR KATUSABE:** Thank you. I would like to thank the minister. This is a huge milestone. I remember in the 10th Parliament, by the grace of God, I had the opportunity to serve as the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs. This was not the case – that Ugandans now have an opportunity to travel to different countries without even a visa. Mr Minister – and those that support you – I really want to thank you for this great work. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, allow me to also ask the minister to take note of something that I, personally, pursued with the Government of the United States of America. I went to Washington DC and met with senior officials at the State Department. My point was - the presiding officer then, the Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga, invited me to her office and said, “Atkins, I feel kind of weakened or something. You, being the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, can’t you reach out to the United States Government and try to see the scaling-up of our visa years?” Mr Speaker, as you are aware, the United States gives us two years.

I met up with the ambassador then - Ambassador Deborah Malac. I also had the opportunity to meet with State Department officials.

There is a window, Mr Minister, that you should tap into. The United States Government allowed to give us visas of 10 years. However, it was conditioned. Uganda gives the United States citizens six months. Thank God for the generosity and kindness of the American Government: they give us two years.

Therefore, if we want a 10-year visa, then, the United States also says, “Consider our citizens to have the same”.

While serving as the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, I tried to reach out to my counterpart at the ministry and he said: “Atkins, we also use the visas to get money.” I think it is very important we recognise that it is kind of tiresome to go to an embassy to renew your visa every two years. Therefore, honourable minister, I am asking you to consider having an interface with the United States Embassy to explore the possibility of that open window. I appreciate you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

5.23

**MS HANIFA NABUKEERA (NUP, Woman Representative, Mukono):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate you, Minister for Foreign Affairs, but in your submission, you did not talk about study visas. There are students who apply to study abroad and they go through those requirements. They even go ahead to pay fees, which is a requirement, and pay for accommodation. However, at the end of the day, they do not grant them visas or they take a long time to respond to their applications, which hinders their study timelines. I have faced that before.

The second issue is the duration. You said that Ugandans are last minute applicants, but it is not true. There are some Members here who applied for Canadian visas in January and those are six months from January up to now, but they have never gotten a response from the Canadian Embassy. I also request that if someone has not met the requirements they should be informed as quickly as possible. They should also know why they are denied visas so that they can either amend or reapply. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Kajwengye, we shall pick on your expertise as a former Foreign Service officer.

5.25

**MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. When you carefully read through the report, you will notice that out of the 65 countries that our citizens can travel to without a visa, only 17 are African countries. In my opinion, this is a very disappointing figure. The rationale for that is that about one year and seven months ago, Uganda and 53 other African countries agreed to trade under the Africa Continental Free Trade Area.

The essence of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area is that intra-Africa trade rises from the 17 per cent that we currently have to about 50 per cent or so by removing all the bottlenecks to movement of goods, services and our people. Unfortunately, for many of the young traders - like you rightfully said – they are unable to travel as freely as they should and this is killing the spirit of the agreement.

My proposal to our good minister is that we fast-track engagements with countries that have ratified the Africa Continental Free Trade Area for visa exemptions of our young traders. Thank you.

5.27

**MS JOSYLINE KAMATENETI (NRM, Woman Representative, Ntungamo):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the great presentation on visas. However, I have a great challenge with labour export companies. On a daily basis, I am approached by the youths who are taken by these companies, most especially to Dubai. These companies charge them for visas. However, you find that people going to the same country are charged different amounts.

I request the ministers for foreign affairs and for gender, labour and social development to put up clear guidelines. Let them communicate to this country because people are being exploited. They sell their land, animals and buy passports - In fact, he even talked about passports where they charge people different prices. For example, someone pays Shs 400,000 for an express passport and is told to wait for three months. Someone pays Shs 250,000 and is told to wait for five months or some can even get it in one month. Therefore, we need clear guidelines because our youths are suffering. Those who go abroad pay a lot of money and do not get the proper services. Thank you so much.

5.29

**MR WILSON KAJWENGYE (NRM, Nyabushozi County, Kiruhura):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for this statement. Ordinarily, Ugandans would be travelling without delay or hindrances. Indeed, as he correctly put it, permission to enter or what is called “a visa” is a sovereign right.

The most important thing is engagement. The Republic of Uganda must engage on an equal footing with these member states that we are giving visas or that are giving visas to our nationals to enter. I have noted on several occasions that Ugandans who pay to enter country X or Y, especially in Western countries, out of 100 per cent, 40 are allowed. What is the fate of 60 per cent of Ugandans who are not allowed to enter a country after they have paid the visa fees? First, they are demoralised. Secondly, their esteem is perforated and they are not told why they have been denied to enter country X or Y, yet they have lost money.

I think it is incumbent upon the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to engage these countries to say:

1. If you deny a Ugandan a right to enter, you must explain why;
2. If that Ugandan has paid money, that money must be refunded; and
3. If the reason was falsification of a document - if an explanation was given - then a Ugandan can make good on that so that on a second application, he is given a right to enter.

I speak because for 17 years, I have been in foreign service and I have also denied people visas to enter Uganda. One time I was disappointed that a person I denied entrance into the country from the Republic of Pretoria hopped on a plane and was allowed to enter in Entebbe. Why? Again, it is because this is something that we need to rearrange. When you are entering a foreign country, it is the Ministry of Internal Affairs or what they call “interior” welcoming you. When you are leaving a country, it is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that is responsible. Therefore, there should be a close working relationship between our internal affairs people and foreign affairs at the same time.

The point I am making is that Ugandans’ dignity must be respected. You cannot deny one a visa without explanation. You cannot take one's money and deny him entry into a foreign country and he is not refunded. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable. Clerk, let every Member speak for two minutes. It seems I am too generous with time.

5.32

**MR JAMES MAMAWI (NRM, Adjumani East County, Adjumani):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I would like to thank the minister for the elaborate report he has given as far as visas are concerned.

About a month ago, I went to the protocol office to process a visa to go out of the country, but I was told to wait for February next year - which is close to a year - and yet the purpose of the trip is urgent. Mr Speaker, you guided that we debate this diplomatically, but we also want to ask the minister in a diplomatic way that as Ugandans, we are facing a lot of problems as far as visas are concerned. Can the ministry help us? If Members of Parliament are facing this, what about locals who want to go outside the country for their businesses?

We are grateful that this matter is here in Parliament today. Mr Speaker, we were waiting to hear a comprehensive report from the minister. Thank you.

5.33

**MR FRANCIS ADOME (NRM, Moroto Municipality, Moroto):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is true that our citizens are facing a lot of challenges when travelling abroad. What I have noticed is that the biggest challenges are with countries where we get visas on arrival. In most cases, we pay for tickets very expensively. Sometimes we pay $5,000 to travel. However, the moment you land, you are not sure whether you will be let in or not. Most people think it is obvious that you just get there and enter the country.

Mr Speaker, in most cases, when you get there, if you are denied, you are not even given reasons as to why you are denied. They only bring a form, especially in countries like Hong Kong and they do not even speak to you. They just tell you “fill this form”. The next thing is that they put you on a plane and take you back to your country. Even when you get back here, they do not explain to you why you were sent back. They just welcome you and then send you back. This happens regularly.

One time, I travelled and out of the 20 Ugandans who were trying to access Hong Kong, almost 17 of them were sent back without any reason; they just stopped them. There are policemen who wait at the entrance. The moment they see any black person walking, they just tell you to step aside. The next thing is they will make you sit down and fill out a form. They actually tell you to just sign without reading anything. After signing, they hand you over to the next flight back. Imagine after travelling for so many hours. This is something very serious that our country should try and work on.

Secondly, many people are being detained at the immigration and some of them stay there without any reason. So, we need to take further steps to find out why most of these people are denied without any reason -*(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. In relation to that point, colleagues, there is a time we landed in a certain Asian country and blacks were being put aside; we were made to sit and I was one of them. My host had to wait. In fact, we sat for three hours, and at that time, everyone pretends they do not know English. Everyone you talk to - they just make you sign.

When I entered, I later inquired, and someone said “No, some of you swallow trafficking drugs, so they hold you for long to see whether the drugs react, then they take you to a room to extract those drugs” In some cases, it is true; people would be carrying drugs in their stomachs. So, some of the issues we face are due to our conduct.

In some cases - because I am black you make me sit here - one ends up feeling bad and humiliated. This brings us to the issue, honourable minister, which was raised by a Member. We want you to inform us about the list of Ugandans in foreign prisons. They used to be presented here.

The ministry used to negotiate especially in Asia, where people face life or death sentences. One person came to me - the mother was supposed to spend 10 years, but now she has spent 11 years in one of the countries. Honourable minister, I will share with you this information. She is supposed to be released, but she can no longer access visitors, though she gets a way of talking on the phone. We have very many such cases.

On the issue of consular services for Ugandans abroad, we need to look into it deeply. When a Ugandan is abroad, whether he or she is guilty or not; whether he or she is a suspect or not, we must protect his or her rights, as a Ugandan and ensure that indeed, as a country, we try to look after our own people.

5.38

**MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the minister for the statement, and the efforts so far made to promote diplomacy and the foreign policy of Uganda.

The minister has fallen short of informing us about the engagements done so far, where Ugandans are compelled - I should be specific on this one - to travel to Nairobi to have visas processed.

If someone did a security scan, they would find that Uganda is one of the most secure countries on the African Continent. Uganda is known for being very receptive and hospitable. I wonder why Ugandans are always subjected by some countries, including our colonial master, to keep travelling to Kenya to secure visas. I would like the minister to explain what efforts and interventions are in place to sort this out.

Secondly, the minister should also give hope, by creating a desk at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where disgruntled people; those who have been bounced out of malice can run to. Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the minister because recently, he helped a doctor from Makerere. I had to call him first since I have personal ties with the minister. I called him and told him that some officer was stuck. Mr Speaker, the officer had been invited to one of the big countries to make a presentation, but he was stuck because he was asked to fill online. After applying online, there was no feedback yet days were running. Until I reached out to the honourable minister -*(Member timed out.)*

**MS AISHA KABANDA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I do not know sometimes whether we do not debate in vain. If you pay a fee while knowing that the fee is non-refundable, it is clear it is non-refundable, but we debate when the fee is not refunded if a person does not succeed. If you pay in advance well knowing, I think we debate in vain.

However, I am motivated by Hon. Kamateeka’s submission, where she says that in Dubai, visa fees vary from one person to another. I thought I should inform the House that Dubai has made its investment policies so flexible to foreign persons that want to establish businesses there and they give visas directly to investors.

If one establishes a business in Dubai and it is registered, depending on the size of the business, visas are allocated to that particular investor and it is upon that investor to award those visas to the people he or she is intending to recruit in his or her companies. Therefore, that explains the variance in the fee because it is now a particular person that is inviting people. Otherwise, I have engaged those people and met some of them.

I do not know whether it is a matter that would call for legislation to be able to regulate the fee, which comes from particular individuals - such visas come from individual companies. I thought I should give this information.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. I am not picking colleagues who have already spoken. I would like to give chance to those who have not yet spoken.

5.42

**MR GEOFREY OKELLO (DP, Nwoya East County, Nwoya):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to join my colleagues in thanking the minister because I think his statement is organised. It might not save us from everything, but at least the statement is organised.

I would like to raise one issue. Of recent, there have been lockdowns in parts of China, for example, and as a result of the lockdown, a number of Ugandans were held without jobs, with some of them having their visas expire during lockdown. They could neither continue living in China nor continue working, but they had to exit.

Mr Speaker, they require that when you have to exit under such circumstance then you need to process an exit visa, and some of them take about two to three weeks in order to process exit visa.

Last month, I was contacted to support a Ugandan, to get an air ticket because it is a requirement for them to process the exit visa.

I would like to request the Minister for Foreign Affairs to look into this matter. To try and list those Ugandans, who may be held in other countries, especially those under lockdown, that they may automatically not raise either the air ticket or even the visas.

I would like to suggest and call upon the minister to create a desk; Ugandans have all this information. How I wish they could create a desk so that any Ugandan who comes back, and wants to give information to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is able to give such information. That information can be processed and used to resolve other matters.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. We are coming like this - Hon. Silwany, you should be the one to –

5.45

**MR TOM EKUDO (FDC, Gweri County, Soroti):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister and say, we always go in for the budgetary process. And, we have passed our budget, which we are going to use this financial year.

We go in annually in order to fill the gaps and improve on our service delivery. And now, when we have such problems of visas, are we not killing Ugandans? There are people who are sick, who need to be helped. Such people may not be helped because we are not doing the right thing at the right time. So, we need to improve on this. Our people working in that sector need to also work effectively by not delaying such processes when people are dying. And, my question is, if we always pass our budget annually why are these delays there? Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable.

5.46

**MR HASSAN KIRUMIRA (NUP, Katikamu County South, Luweero):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Ugandans travel for different reasons. But the category I would like to focus on is the one of migrant workers, commonly known as *kyeyo* people. I believe it is within the interest of Government to fast-track agreements with countries where our people usually go to work.

This is due to the fact that when these people travel abroad to work, they bring in some money in form of repatriation or profit repatriation. So, it is within the interest of Government to fast-track these agreements.

Mr Speaker, for example, our neighbour here in Tanzania is visa-free to South Africa. I do not think it requires rocket science for us to persuade the South African Government to allow Ugandans to travel to South Africa visa-free. It should be noted that worldwide – actually, according to the International Organisation for migrant workers, over a billion people travel and it is expected to multiply in the near future. These people travel for money. I don’t think Ugandans can miss that lucrative business. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Timuzigu first, then you and *Mama* Cecilia.

5.48

**MR MICHAEL TIMUZIGU (NRM, Kajara County, Ntungamo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. We know that transformation is synonymous with travelling. People learn a lot of things when they travel. They even trade and, therefore, people must travel if we are to transform as a nation.

In this case, we have to make sure that our people are travelling without a lot of inconvenience. And in this case, I suggest that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs works with other ministries and agencies, to effect civic education concerning travelling. The biggest number of Ugandans do not get to know what they require to travel until they have applied for a visa. That is why the minister is indicating that one of the causes of failure for Ugandans to get visas is having no minimum requirements.

Civic education would give people a chance, from primary to university - even educating those people who are not in school using radios and other media, to make sure people understand what they require to travel. Otherwise, it might take too long for us to make Ugandans know what they require to travel.

Secondly, our minister should be assertive because we have discovered that people do not respect Ugandans. I know that is not a must, but we have to show them that we are very good people and so, we have to bring out our assertiveness and make sure all countries *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Ssekitoleeko? Eeh! Hon. Pacuto now you changed strategy to that side.

5.50

**MR ROBERT SSEKITOLEEKO (NUP, Bamunanika County, Luweero):** Mr Speaker, there are also countries, which do not speak English. Now, at times, you get problems once you go there and you want to explain much.

One time, I was stopped somewhere to explain because I was having more than two names, which are not in my passport.

“Hon. Robert Ssekitoleeko” and I was put to task to explain how I got “honourable” to be part of my name.

I went through a lot and I stayed there for a while until someone intervened to explain that that is a mere title.

Secondly, Mr Speaker - and this one goes to the sister Ministry of Foreign Affairs - they should also get in touch to sort out problems that Ugandans are facing. When you go to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, you will find people lining up from 3.00 a.m. struggling to get passports.

So, honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs, work hand-in-hand with the Ministry of Internal Affairs to sort out the issue of Ugandans lining up there because it causes us embarrassments and find out the reasons why they are treating us like that.

When you go to Arua and Mbarara, they tell us that at least, there is a difference, but there, you need also to work on that. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, after Hon. Cecilia Ogwal, I will have hon. Mawanda and then the minister. They will be concluding this matter. Those I have not picked I will start with you tomorrow - no, we have other items coming up.

5.52

**MS CECILIA OGWAL (FDC, Woman Representative, Dokolo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think we need to appreciate what the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has done for us, to negotiate with some countries to allow us to travel there without necessarily having visas. This is a big step in the right direction. This is because several years ago, you would need a visa to go to Kenya and to all the neighbouring countries.

However, I am also a bit curious to know why some East African countries have been listed as countries that would allow us to travel without visas for six months or something like that. They should not appear there at all. The East African Charter requires that we have open borders – we can travel – provided we have identification documents.

I think these are areas you need to streamline to make sure that our people are not unnecessarily inconvenienced.

Mr Speaker, we had a nasty experience with the current Prime Minister when we went to Tanzania and we were even subjected to a search. We had diplomatic passports, but we were searched. To us, it was very humiliating – by a neighbouring country!

I resisted, one, by virtue of my age and, two, I declared that “I am an East African” and I was carrying an East African passport. My argument prevailed. I was right. I think we need to be more assertive.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable. Before the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs comes in, I remember the African Union passed a resolution for Africans to travel freely within the continent.

Honourable minister, maybe you will help clarify this for me – hon. Aza, I am not going to allow you. Please. I made it very clear. I remember – if my memory serves me right – Ghana was the first country to allow all Africans to enter freely, and I am not seeing Ghana on the list. I need that information.

Hon. Muwada, we have leaders in the House and some of the leaders include our commissioners. When a commissioner stands for 10 times, he might end up having problems with me. So, commissioner, please. We give them extra attention as our leaders, especially Backbench Commissioners. Otherwise, issues of our welfare -*(Laughter)*

5.55

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to seek clarification from the minister on two issues: We have a challenge of Ugandans who get visas and they get issues abroad, as we have said.

In all our consular – diplomatic – offices, we do not have lawyers. You find that when a Ugandan commits a crime, they charge them according to the laws of the other country. In most cases, you find even the languages and the system – I will give an example of a country like the United Arab Emirates. They basically use Sharia law. You find that our people from Uganda, who are used to our secular system and do not know about the Sharia law, find it very difficult to face those courts.

Does Government have any plans of supporting these categories of Ugandans? I know of people who have been in prison for more than 10 years. Somebody is put in a cold prison – they have cold prisons and warm prisons, depending on the crime. What is the plan that you have, as Government, to support these Ugandans who are in these countries and are suffering?

I think it is high time we got a forum in Parliament that takes care of labour export because this is something very serious in Uganda that we need to debate –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, fora are a creation of Members. You can create one. So, that is not an issue for the Floor.

**MR SILWANY:** Much obliged, Mr Speaker.

5.57

**THE SHADOW MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr Muwada Nkunyingi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As earlier noted by this Parliament – and as the Opposition – we are worried about the whereabouts of the Cabinet Minister for Foreign Affairs, Gen. Jeje Odongo. His whereabouts are unknown and we are in a mess –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, Hon. Jeje Odongo informed my office that he will not be in office for some time due to some health issues, which he was handling. The state minister is here. However, it is also important for you to always look out for your colleague instead of coming here on the Floor. *(Laughter)*

**MR NKUNYINGI:** Most obliged, Mr Speaker. The minister’s statement conveniently covered diplomatic and service passport holders and did not make an elaborate attempt to account for the inconveniences faced by Ugandans holding ordinary passports.

Similarly, the minister’s statement was short on elaborating the efforts and attempts to strengthen the ranking of holders of a Ugandan passport. As we stand, our passport ranking is so low in terms of acceptance and ease. Little wonder, we are having challenges to do with visas and visa applications.

There are some countries whose nationals are exempt when coming to Uganda, but they require holders of Ugandan passports to acquire a visa to enter their countries. I think the Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to do more negotiation to ensure we have reciprocity in terms of this.

The ministry should have come up and briefed this Parliament regarding bilateral agreements being negotiated in line with equitable consideration. Those who have free or easy access to Uganda should accord us free access to their countries.

Equally, as raised by our senior legislator, when it comes to the East African region, ordinarily, citizens would cross the border using a national ID. However, we have countries where you cannot cross with a Ugandan National Identity Card whereas Uganda accords them free and fair entry.

I would like to bring it to the attention of Parliament that I have interacted with some diplomatic missions and they raised a concern that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not respond to diplomatic notices and communications from these diplomatic missions – even to do with passports and visas.

Equally, they are raising concerns that diplomatic notices – this explains instances why sometimes even Government officials and holders of service passports are denied visas – are now for sale at our Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We are receiving this feedback from diplomatic missions that the response and communication channels from our foreign affairs ministry and diplomatic missions have been almost closed down. The ministry is doing nothing to ensure they respond or communicate to these particular missions.

Lastly, we are urging the foreign affairs ministry to negotiate further with the countries of the world. A Member raised a matter to do with the United States of America. We can negotiate for longer visas, like other countries in the region have done. Kenya and Rwanda have negotiated. What is the problem with the Ugandan Ministry of Foreign Affairs? We need a negotiation undertaken to ensure that we have longer visas for our nationals. It is possible. I beg to submit, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, we have people who have destroyed the image of our country and who have contributed to us being denied visas. Someone has never even stood for a funeral association leadership position and he goes, reaches a country and says, “If I go back to my country, they will hang me. I can’t leave because in Uganda, the regime kills people” and they want to stay. They do not know that they are destroying the image of the country. Some of them claim, “I am a homosexual” and yet they have families here and they have been behaving like he-goats in this town. They are the ones who have terrorised people’s families, broken families, slept with people’s daughters. Then they go to the other side and claim, “I am homosexual and if I go back to Uganda” - Those people have made Ugandans undergo a lot of scrutiny before you are given visas. They are destroying opportunities for people who are genuine. What are you doing about it?

I can give you an example; we have a gentleman from Israel whom I introduced here under their programme of agro-studies. They have been taking 250 students from Uganda to Israel. Each student earns, in one year of studying practicals, about Shs 50 million. They come back and do business. Students linked up with organised cells of criminals and they started claiming criminal persecution and homosexuality. The Israel Government has written that they are going to reduce our numbers from 250 to 50 and if we do not change, they are going to cancel Uganda starting next year so that Uganda will no longer be sending students to Israel.

Some of them are from my area and they reached and said - I said, “But you have never even voted; so which kind of political persecution?” Because of social media accounts, they go and list on homosexual dating sites and create an online publication and write stories of how they were leading campaigns of senior opposition leaders. They are destroying the image of the country and are destroying opportunities for others. The genuine people are being denied a chance. What are you doing about that problem, honourable minister? I talked to one of the ambassadors and he told me that is the solution. Out of the people you take, you give visas genuinely. A country like Canada - that is why they are delaying giving us our visas; because most of those who go do not want to come back after claiming those many issues. With those comments, honourable minister, you can now give us responses before we go to the next item.

Hon. Kabanda, when a commissioner has spoken, the shadow minister has spoken and hon. Ssewungu is saying you have just come, we do not allow you to speak. Honourable minister, continue.

**MR MULIMBA:** Thank you, Right Honourable Speaker. I would like to thank my colleagues for their contributions; they have been of very immense value. Where we can make a contribution as a ministry, we will pick and add to our agenda of furthering progress. However, I would like to state the following general statements, for clarity.

It is important for all of us, especially as leaders, to educate our people to first of all read and understand the national policies of countries in question for where we are seeking visas.

I am aware that most of the countries now have put their visa applications online. I do not think there is any country known to me where you are required to go to the mission or embassy to fill a handwritten application. That online application has terms and conditions which you must read well and understand.

I want to thank Hon. Aisha Kabanda for this information. One of the first items you need to look out for is the processing fees for visa. They will tell you it is non-refundable. You begin to engage while knowing very clearly that this is non-refundable.

Mr Speaker, in my statement I said the engagement bilateraled by other countries for purposes of facilitating visa processing - when we engage, we need to do a reciprocal approach. The first question is, for you in Uganda, do you really refund when you do not grant visas? The answer is, no. Uganda, as a country, when we deny a visa application, we do not refund. The principle is reciprocity. I just wanted to make this abundantly clear for us as leaders so that when we are debating, we do not debate in vain. There is nowhere you have read the terms and conditions - By the way, there is also a provision for “accept”. You click “accept” and you proceed. You do it while knowing you are not going to get a refund.

Mr Speaker, as already alluded to in the beginning, the issue of issuance or denial of a visa is a sovereign right of the country in question. Mr Speaker, may I also add that no country is under obligation to inform the applicant why they have denied or granted you a visa, for security reasons. For colleagues to understand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for example in Uganda, is not responsible for issuance of visas. In many other countries, the issuance of visas is a preserve of homeland security.

Like Members have alluded, ordinarily in the East African arrangement, we would be using our identity cards to travel between the member countries. That is the governing Common Market Protocol. However, because of the emerging security situation, some people are denied. Therefore, when you are denied a visa because of security concerns, no one is going to tell you that we have denied you because you are linked to a terrorist. No, they want to withhold that to also test that probability of their decision. We need to get this abundantly clear from the onset.

Honourable colleagues who have submitted have also touched on the issue of consular services. First of all, let me give a disclaimer under rule 48 of our Rules of Procedure. In respect of supplementary questions, sub rule (3) provides that all supplementary questions must resonate with the answer given to the original question. I would like to, therefore, give a disclaimer on labour exports such that maybe we can have another chance to bring a comprehensive report in respect - because it was not an attendant question to the answer at hand.

In respect to consular services, I know we have so many Ugandans who are under distress in many countries wherever they are living, leave alone those who are for labour exports. However, Mr Speaker, one Member alluded to the fact that we recently passed a budget. I would like you to revisit the graph for the budget for Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a backward trend or in reversal order and look at the last five years. It has been on a declining trend and yet the demands of Ministry of Foreign affairs, in respect to consular affairs, have always featured as a component for funding and we have not done that.

Mr Speaker, I think it is now high time we realised the importance of consular services abroad such that we can beef up the budgets of our missions abroad.

Mr Speaker, recently, we visited Abu Dhabi and the United Arab Emirates. This is where we have the biggest number of our people who have exported labour -*(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, try to conclude.

**MR MULIMBA:** Our missions in those countries are extremely under immense pressure to accommodate even what we did not budget for or what is not financed. So, we will be coming back later to request a supplementary to handle those pressures.

Mr Speaker, there is one question which had been asked by the hon. Muwuma in respect of creating a desk. If you look at our missions abroad, we are operating lean because of budgetary constraints. We cannot afford, under our budget, as of now, to even create another desk and pretend that we can afford to finance it. Probably, we shall be making proposals in the following financial year to cater for some of these. For now, we still insist and ask Ugandans who travel both officially and unofficially, that whenever they get out, they should register with our consular missions and embassies for purposes of tracking when trouble hits.

Finally, I would also like to emphasise that application for a visa is a matter for an individual and the country in question. The Minister of Foreign Affairs can never interfere. That would be called “interference” in respect to helping one process a visa. That is a personal issue. Actually, if we did that, we would be interfering in sovereign matters of the other states. So, I would like to make this abundantly clear to all of us that for anybody to say, the Minister for Foreign Affairs will jump in, to assist an applicant is very wrong.

With respect to students and those seeking medical attention, whenever we have gotten to learn about them, we have always intervened and cases are clearly enumerated.

With those many remarks, I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, and all colleagues who have engaged. I know we are on track. We have done something, but a lot remains to be done. However, we want to assure you that we are on track for progress. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. You have done a wonderful job. You did not tell us whether Ghana is visa-free. I think you need to crosscheck your update, but also in your list, note that Swaziland changed its name to “Eswatini”. These are very important for you to note so that we have the record very clear.

Overall, honourable minister, we appreciate the work you have done, but we just want you to negotiate more.

On issues of your budget, for example - some of the officers say they are in missions just earning huge money. Of course, the other side is very expensive, but they are not facilitated to do most of the work, especially mobilising diaspora issues. Chairperson for the Committee on Foreign Affairs, please take note.

There is an issue about our serving officers in missions abroad, regarding the allowance they get for the education of their children. It is $2,500. This is extremely - you tell someone to take a child to Washington. In Canada, for instance, I found an officer whose mind is here because she brought a child whose education she cannot afford. The child had to come back to Uganda, but the officer is crying every day; the child is always crying on phone.

Honourable minister, the overall money you needed was around Shs 2.8 billion, a top-up to meet your requirements. So, the Committee on Foreign Affairs should look into that issue.

Honourable members, Shs 2.8 billion annually to reunite families is not much. We should look at it seriously *–(A Member rose\_)* Honourable member, you will continue engaging the minister on your issue. The minister is a diplomat; so issues which he has avoided directly here, involving countries which we mentioned, can cause something. So, let us continue engaging him.

Colleagues, the Minister for Health requested that we handle the issue of malaria on Thursday.

6.17

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Hanifa Kawooya):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. You have rightly requested that we should come here and make a very comprehensive statement about the eradication of malaria in Uganda by 2030.

I know all of you are interested in this because at one time, you have had an intruder in your homes or bedrooms, in form of a mosquito and I am sure you would be interested to have a debate. I came here to reassure you, Mr Speaker, and honourable colleagues that definitely, on Thursday, we shall come here and make that comprehensive response to allow Members to debate. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Clerk, ensure that will be item No.3 on Thursday - Honourable members, I am the one on the Floor. Am I proceeding wrongly? *(Laughter)* In the interest of time, save me.

Honourable members, I have referred item No.5 to tomorrow. Let us handle item No.6.

RESPONSES BY MINISTERS TO URGENT QUESTIONS

1. THE HON. MINISTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE
2. ON THE DELAYED PAYMENT OF PENSION, GRATUITY, INTEREST, A PROVIDENT FUND AND OTHER TERMINAL BENEFITS TO FORMER EMPLOYEES OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

6.19

**THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE (Mr Wilson Muruli Mukasa):** Mr Speaker, I beg your indulgence to summarise this response because it has been on our iPads for quite some time and also in the interest of time.

Mr Speaker, this is the response regarding the delayed payment of pension, gratuity, interest, A provident fund and other terminal benefits to former employees of the East African Community, raised by Hon. Samuel Opio Acuti.

Background

The East African community operated their own pension scheme managed by Crown Agents. It was independent of the state governments. The scheme was provided for under the East African Community Pension Act.

Upon the collapse of the East African Community in 1977, Crown Agents failed to honour the pension benefits of its members. The implication of this was that members of the scheme lost their pension rights. Therefore, the former employees of the defunct East African Community remained at the mercy of their respective governments.

Fortunately, the respective governments decided to take up the pension issue. In the case of Uganda, the issue was taken up under Decree No.6 of 1978 and then Government set up a committee, the Adrian Sibo Committee, to make sure that it works out all the requirements that were needed for people who are eligible for pension under the East African Community.

A report was consequently, produced. It was an inter-ministerial report; a technical committee report, bringing out all the issues regarding compensation for the former Ugandan employees. That was in June 2000. And, that report was quite comprehensive. It included a list of all those people who are eligible.

Now, it was found out in that report that there were some members who had not served the mandatory 10 years to qualify for pension. So, it was recommended that those be given a lumpsum payment. The other legal provisions were also mentioned in the report.

The Pensions Act provides for a qualifying period of 10 years of continuous service for one to qualify for pension. Others who have not served for 10 years, qualified for the lumpsum payment, and this was a decision that was taken at the high level.

However, some of them decided to go to court claiming that they qualified for pension. Their argument was that yes, the fact that they did not serve 10 years was not their fault. Whatever happened regarding the collapse of the East African Community amounted to abolition of office and, therefore, they should be considered for pension. However, the High Court ruled that what happened was not abolition of office; it was a collapse of the community. Therefore, their case in court did not hold water. So, they should have been paid regarding their lump sum claim.

The delay in payment was the result of budgetary constraints. And, the Auditor-General established that there was mismanagement in some cases of the payment arrangement. Therefore, all in all, most of the claimants were actually settled except for 47 members.

Now, the Ministry of Public Service managed to retrieve 16 files of the 47 files of the claimants. The remaining 31 files, up to now as we talk, have not been retrieved yet; we are still looking at our archives. Many of these files were taken by the Criminal Investigation Department during the investigation of the pension scam in 2012. And, when they went to the Office of the Criminal Investigation Department, they were not returned.

However, the 16 claimants whose files were retrieved have as we talk now been fully paid. The other categories of claimants have also been paid. The monthly pension to the former employees who are still alive and who served for the qualifying period of 10 years is being paid according to the Pensions Act. And, as we talk today, by April 2022, 485 pensioners who are alive are receiving their monthly pension, which is quite substantial, amounting to Shs 1.9 billion.

Mr Speaker, gratuity/provident fund settlement -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** But, honourable minister, you said you are summarising the statement. Please go to the conclusion.

**MR MUKASA MURULI:** So, in conclusion, gratuity and provident fund settlements have been fully paid and settled. The gratuity provident fund settlement, that is members who were paid according to the general fund services - that has been fully settled. Now, a gratuity pension for members of the East African Posts and Telecommunication, the 38 files were incomplete by 2000, but later on, information was covered and these have been settled fully.

The East African Railways Corporation; this one has also been settled fully. On the East African Harbours and Cargo Corporation, the outstanding liabilities as we talk now, have been settled fully. About the East African Airways Corporation, yes, these have also been settled and then the payment of arrears, balances plus interest and other court awards, which were verified by the Minister of Public Service, for those that have been verified, have been settled. It is only a few that have not yet been verified, and not been settled yet.

Mr Speaker, I would like really to note the status so far of payment of pension and gratuity for the former employees of the East African Community. And, to note that the status is that there are a few members whose verification is not yet complete and payment to them is still pending, but the effort to verify is going on.

However, those members, especially out of the 47, the 31, have been advised to contact the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, so that at least the process of verification can be completed. And, as soon as it is completed, Mr Speaker, these members will be paid. I beg to respond. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Samuel Opio, any supplementary questions? That is the Member who raised the matter. So, he has the right of -

6.31

**MR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I would like to thank also the minister for the response given on the payment status for the East Africa Community former employees. I have a few supplementary questions that I would like to raise to him.

He has stated, in his communication, that Crown Agents failed to honour the retirement benefits of its members and that as a result, Government had to take up that role. I would like the minister to clarify further because I have, with me, a document from Crown Agents, which was written to one of the former employees when they inquired about their pension funds. And, from what it stated briefly, I can confirm that Crown Agents paid the Government of Uganda all outstanding funds connected with the East African Community.

Secondly, the minister also stated in his response that it is unverified persons – people who did not report – that are not paid. I have with me an advert from the Ministry of East Africa Community Affairs, which is dated 21 February 2022. It is an advert for payment of gratuity and pension arrears for the former employees of the defunct East African Community. There are about 293 names listed here – people who are being invited to come for verification. However, there was a statement that: “If your name is not listed, please, do not come. You will be informed when your turn comes.”

What I am saying is that the issue of people not reporting is not because they failed to, but because they were never given the opportunity to present themselves for verification. The 47 people whose names I presented have several times presented themselves for verification, but been denied because their names were not there.

The other issue I would like to ask him about is that he said all the verified persons were paid. I have another advert that appeared on 26 April 2021 in the *New Vision*. These are people who were called to go for verification last year. There is a name of David Owani who went for verification, provided all the documents, but he has not been paid to date.

Lastly, as I look at the list that you have presented - maybe just to bring it to the attention of this august House, I presented the list of 47 names of claimants who had not been paid and asked the minister to verify their status. The response is that only 16 names are available. For 31, the records are not available.

I want to ask the minister: Is it an issue of missing or hidden information? All this information that we provided to you was obtained in the last three months from the Ministry of Public Service – in a big black register register. I am surprised that you are not able to tell us the fate of the other 31.

Lastly, on this same report, you state that all the 16 persons were paid. I would like to interest this House with this list. We are all aware that there was a pension scam in which persons did not receive their money. I will give an example – you have listed the name of Herbert Akora. His was actually paid to a fictitious person in the names of Lazarus Wabwire. This matter was in the Committee on Public Accounts. Therefore, the issue is not whether Government paid the money, but whether the bona fide recipients received their benefits. *(Applause)*

Another issue on this same list that he has presented – I would like to read just two names very quickly. For example – they calculated in dollars – they indicated that $174 equated to Shs 160,000 and $289 was equated to Shs 269,000. The exchange rate at that time was about Shs 1,000. However, on this list that you have said they have completed payment – there are two names at least. One is Fredrick Ogwal. $13,559 was converted to Shs 1,000,164 and you are saying that the payment has been completed. Another example is Okidi, with $8,649 converted to Shs 692,000 and you are saying the payment has been completed. The payments have not been completed, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, it is not only that. If you look at the name of Herbert Akora, they have given, in the list, $3,969. There is again another list from the same ministry that indicates that his payment was actually supposed to be $5,500.

Therefore, the issue of payment of the former employees has not been completed.

In December 2020, there was a report made by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development upon a petition by the lawyers of these persons. When they did an investigation, where they gave an internal auditor-general, they found that 552 employees of the former East African Community had not been paid a total of $4.13 million – both pension and gratuity.

As I conclude, when the pensions scam occurred and public officers were convicted, justice was served to Government, but never to the victims of that scam itself. The minister has proposed that they should report on those who have not been verified, but this is the third time this matter is coming to the Floor of Parliament. We need to get a permanent solution to it.

I want to propose, in my prayers, that:

1. Rather than report, let the ministry go to all the different regional centres across the country and verify these people. These are elderly people; they are sickly. If you ask them to report here, they do not have the funds. What the minister has been doing is advertising in newspapers, but most of them do not read these papers. They cannot even afford them.
2. This matter be referred to the committees on Public Service and on Local Government because, just like the issue of energy that we have talked about, we are not going to get solutions by statements. The committee must sit and do a full evaluation, investigation and establish this matter. It has been 45 years – justice has not been served to these people.

I beg to submit. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, colleagues. It is only the Member who raised the matter that has a right to speak on it.

**Mr opio:** Mr Speaker, I beg that I lay this information.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Please, lay it on the Table –*(Mr Okupa rose\_)*– The problem is that Hon. Opio said that you let him finish. The moment he finishes, then, you cannot speak because your information is supposed to enrich his submission. *(Laughter)* I am getting you a solution.

**Mr okupa:** Before you give the solution –

**The Deputy Speaker:** Don't you want the solution of the Speaker? In what the minister submitted, I heard a statement that put me back to say that people have not been paid because during the investigation, a Government department picked files, took them and now the ministry could not access them. As a result, you cannot tell people - Government picked files of Government and sat on them and people are victimised!

**Mr okupa:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My late brother, our firstborn, was one of those meant to be beneficiaries. He was an aeronautical engineer. He worked with Hon. Wakikona. When the matter came up, I followed up with the public service and the Ministry of East African Community Affairs. We were told the file was nowhere to be seen. The family is suffering because of the weaknesses of the Government side.

With those cases, honourable minister, how are you going to help such families? That is a living example of someone who worked and there is no record. How do you expect that family to benefit? That was flight engineer, John Okweche.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable members, I am referring this matter to the Committee on East African Community Affairs. That is the relevant committee. I want it to be clear:

1. The committee must visit the regional centres where those old people are. We can say the regions – we might be guided well. It might be in Gulu or Mbarara – there are a few centres.
2. It must run adverts in the media, but also inform Members when they are going to that region so that if there is a Member who has people of that nature, he or she is able to inform them. Before going to a region, please, inform Members in writing, as a committee, that you are going to this region and these are the issues that you are going to be handling. Give a clear notice.

Hon. Opio, I must commend you. Colleagues, we have been suffering to explain “submission by research.” Now, we do not need to explain it further. Whenever it happens, I will go and say, “Please go to the *Hansard* record and look for the submission of Hon. Samuel Opio to see how he presented his case.” There was no one trying to interfere; everyone was listening attentively because he took time in an attentive manner to make research and come and submit. He even went beyond the time, but I did not realise. That is what it means; it is a classic example of a submission after making research.

The committee is given one month - I think one month is enough - to come back here and make a comprehensive report. Honourable minister, please avail your technical people - let it be from CID or wherever; they should all appear. Where did the Government files go? Government took a file? What if someone says you are trying to kill the case because you did not want to pay them?

That letter from Crown Agents can be verified. We can engage Crown Agents and they confirm if indeed they gave them that money, but we must go through the list of people who the ministry says were paid and yet they paid wrong elements. He made a very important statement; he said, “When PAC and Government went to court, justice was served to Government, but when justice was served to Government, the victims were completely forgotten.”

Therefore, as representatives of the people, our focus is going to be on the victims to ensure that indeed, they are paid. In one month's time, I want the committee to report back to this House.

B) RESPONSE BY THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE ON THE NON-PAYMENT

OF SALARIES FOR TEACHING STAFF BY LIRA, GULU AND ARUA CITIES

6.44

**THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE (Mr Wilson Muruli Mukasa):** Mr Speaker, regarding this issue –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can I have a clear copy because mine is empty? Honourable minister, go on. My staff will handle that.

**MR MURULI MUKASA:** Mr Speaker, regarding that issue, as we talk, we have confirmed with the cities that apart from the city of Gulu, all the employees of the other cities have been paid their salaries, including the arrears. It is only Gulu City that has not paid a few of the teachers, as they are waiting for verification from their former Votes.

The inability to pay salaries resulted from the failure to migrate eligible records from the district payroll to the city payroll on time. However, as we talk, this problem has been largely resolved –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Largely or fully?

**MR MURULI MUKASA:** Except for Gulu, the rest of the cities have resolved the problem. That is why I am saying “largely resolved.” Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, when are we sorting out Gulu, honourable minister?

**MR MURULI MUKASA:** Every effort is now being made to make sure that this little hitch is covered. I can conveniently say that yes, by the time we come to the payment of salaries at the end of this month, this will be resolved.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please, honourable minister, once it is done, update the House so that this is sorted. Is Hon. Margaret Rwabushaija around?

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Mr Speaker, I am also in agreement with the minister on this one. They have done something good, apart from Gulu with a few teachers. What we see is that as Government, we should create administrative units to avoid such anomalies. Why don’t you make a feasibility study? These are small anomalies that can be avoided other than bringing them to Parliament and keeping us here. Thank you, honourable minister.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you know that you only ask for clarification when a minister is on the Floor and he grants it. Since he is off the Floor, you cannot ask for clarification. You would need that from me. These are simple rules of debate and procedure here.

II) RESPONSE BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER FOR KAMPALA CAPITAL CITY AND METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS ON THE INADEQUATE SANITATION SERVICES IN KAMPALA CITY

6.48

**THE MINISTER FOR KAMPALA CAPITAL CITY AND METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS (Ms Minsa Kabanda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a response regarding the public sanitation service in Kampala District.

Kampala Capital City Authority is mandated to provide safe sanitation facilities in the city under section 35 of the KCCA Act, 2010 and section 55 of the Public Health Act.

On 4 May, Hon. Aloysius Mukasa, representing Rubaga South Division Kampala, rose on a matter of national importance regarding the inadequate sanitation services in Kampala, particularly toilet services to urban slum dwellers.

Background

I wish to inform Members as follows:

We have:

1. Community toilets; and
2. Public toilets.

A citywide census on sanitation facilities in 2017 and public toilets inventories conducted by KCCA at National Water and Sewerage Corporation indicates that:

1. 70 per cent of public toilets are privately owned.
2. On average, 225 users use one stance per day in KCCA-managed free toilets. This is more than two times the recommended standard of 100 users per stance.
3. There are 790 community toilets. However, nearly 60 per cent of community toilets are non-functioning, especially the community toilets that have been built on different projects over the years and at times with support of development partners.
4. Users of community trust or households do not usually pay a fee to access the toilet. However, households may contribute monthly or when requested towards operation and maintenance costs.
5. 60 per cent of public toilets, both privately and public owned, do not charge user fees. Those that charge a user fee of Shs 200 are paid on average.
6. The pupil-stance ratio in schools are 58:1 in KCCA managed primary schools; and 83:1 in public secondary schools against a standard of 40:1.
7. In KCCA-managed health centres, the user stance ratio varied from 75:1 to 389:1 against the standard of 25:1.
8. Six per cent of the transient population in Kampala (estimated at 120,000 persons) use 400 public sanitation facilities. The rest use institutional commercial toilets at their places of work.

The key issues affecting public sanitation facilities services:

1. The high traffic;
2. Insufficient number of public toilets;
3. Inadequate access of land to construct new facilities. Mr Speaker, this is very important because we lack land where we can construct toilets in Kampala District;
4. Security of tenure given the land ownership in the city which constrains the availability of land that can be utilised by public sanitation;
5. Poor management of community toilets i.e. nearly 60 per cent of community toilets are not functioning;
6. Accessibility; public toilets can only be accessed during their hours of operation, which is usually from 7.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.;
7. Limited budget at KCCA to provide free access to public toilets in the city at only 14 public toilets blocks across the city. This means we have only 14 public toilets in Kampala; and
8. Forty-five per cent of public facilities are deemed unsatisfactory due to poor hygiene conditions.

The Kampala sanitation improvement and financing strategy

The overall aim of the Kampala Sanitation Improvement and Financing Strategy is to guide citywide planning and investment towards achieving equitable and universal access to improved sanitation, hygiene, safe management and faecal sludge and sewage along the entire sanitation chain in Kampala by the year 2030.

The strategy addresses all aspects of the sanitation chain, namely; containment, households, KCCA and private schools, KCCA health centres and private clinics, public sanitation facilities, emptying and transport, faecal sludge management and sewage including treatment of faecal sludge and wastewater, and resources recovery and reuse.

Additionally, the strategy takes into consideration the impact of the transient population from the surrounding districts of Mukono and Wakiso on Kampala’s sanitation system.

We have a strategy proposed to change the current situation. At the household level, in the last 10 years, partners have constructed 462 group-washing facilities and 126 foot-operated washing sanitation stations in various primary schools and health facilities.

Open defecation amongst our strategies will be limited by the provision of affordable and modern public toilet facilities located at strategic locations. It is important that stakeholders join KCCA on a massive campaign on sensitisation and awareness to holistically address the situation.

When we talk about schools, 74 per cent of primary and 85 per cent of secondary KCCA schools do not meet the national standard of the pupil-to-stance ratio of 40:1, and only 43 per cent of KCCA schools have water and soap for handwashing. The strategy claims to achieve the national standard by constructing 250 additional stances annually until 2030. Additionally, a concerted effort to improve hygiene and handwashing practices in schools –*(Member rose\_)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, allow the minister to finish the presentation and then you can seek clarification.

**MS MINSA KABANDA:** No, it is not. I am not reading everything, I am summarising.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, you are not supposed to respond to a Member who is not on record. Now, you are out of order for engaging with Hon. Solomon. Please summarise.

**MS MINSA KABANDA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the last 10 years, KCCA, with partners, has constructed 112 toilet blocks with 1,100 toilet stances in various primary schools. This translates to 111 stances per year against a target of 450 per year. One hundred per cent of these facilities have been put up with partner support.

Mr Speaker, KCCA with partners is constructing waterborne toilets and handwashing stations within selected KCCA health centres. In that, we have public sanitation facilities for faecal sludge, collection and transport.

Investment costs

Investment costs by households to build toilets conforming to KCCA standards is estimated to be Shs 109.4 billion, which will need affordable financing, either in terms of low-interest loans or partial subsidies to facilitate demand.

Mr Speaker, the majority of the investment in sanitation are funded by partners. The Government of Uganda's investment in sanitation is approximately Shs 880 million. The funding gap as per the strategic plan is Shs 600 billion over the next 10 years.

KCCA managed toilets

We have one toilet in the New Taxi Park 1, another in New Taxi Park 2, Wandegeya Wing A, Wandegeya Wing B, Bombo Road, Watoto Church, Centenary Park toilet, Usafi Park toilet, Usafi Market toilet, Entebbe Road toilet, Constitution Square ladies wing, Constitution Square gents wing, Nakawa Market 1 and Nakawa Market 2.

Mr Speaker, Constitution Square ladies' wing toilet has been demolished and a new facility is under construction by the KCCA Citywide Inclusion Sanitation Project (CWIS).

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, I thank you and Members for giving me the time to present to Parliament on this subject, which is meant to address the prevention of diseases that would occur as a result of poor solid waste management and disposal, that have implications on production and service delivery in the city. The country needs a healthy and productive population.

It is my prayer that the different stakeholders join hands with KCCA to manage the issues of sanitation and solid waste management.

Annex A indicates the list of proposed new public sanitation facilities under the National Water and Sewerage Corporation, and Annex B indicates those under renovation. I think Members can look behind and see how we are going to put up new structures for toilets in the Kampala District.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Members, this is not a matter of debate. Whenever it is a response to a Member, only the Member who raised the matter has a right, so only Hon. Aloysius will speak on this matter.

7.00

**MR ALOYSIUS MUKASA (NUP, Rubaga Division Kampala, Kampala):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the minister for the vaguely doctored facts that have been presented before Parliament.

It should be brought to Parliament’s attention that 4.5 million Ugandans access Kampala during the daytime. She factually stated that 16 toilets have so far been constructed by KCCA to accommodate 4.5 million Ugandans; I think this is insufficient and very disappointing.

My prayer is: Can the honourable minister try to avail Parliament permanent solutions through which KCCA is going to construct toilets such that our community can thrive without being infected with diseases. You understand that most of our community members are the vulnerable class, the uneducated, and most especially kids.

Mr Speaker, 70 per cent of my constituency is a slum. I would not object to anyone who refers to Kampala as a very big slum, because it is very much evident not only in Rubaga South, but also in most parts of Kampala.

Mr Speaker, the minister has also openly stated that her budget is always frustrated. So, is there any other solution through which she can maintain or maybe acquire funds, that KCCA might be very much able to buy land so that we may construct toilets, because that is very fundamental?

I beg to submit that. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. This matter – no, these are not matters where the Leader of the Opposition has differences; they are very clear matters. They have people who raised them.

Honourable colleagues, this is a matter, which I require the Committee on Presidential Affairs to ensure that they follow up and look at them deeply, when they are processing the Ministerial Policy Statement and reports from KCCA during the budgeting process. I adjourn the House to tomorrow, Wednesday, at 2.00 p.m. Thank you.

*(The House rose at 7.02 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 13 July 2022 at 2.00 p.m.)*