



**PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA**

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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OFFICIAL REPORT

FOURTH SESSION - THIRD MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 9 APRIL 2025



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA  
IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 25TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Wednesday, 9 April 2025

*Parliament met at 2.27 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

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

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. In the VIP gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of Hansard staff from the Parliament of Zimbabwe. They include:

1. Ms Kanyume Enia – Director, Hansard
2. Ms Chivaura Mary - Principal Hansard Reporter
3. Ms Masunda Fungai - Principal Hansard Reporter
4. Mr Carrington Mbiri - Principal Hansard Reporter
5. Ms Nyoka Abigirl - Principal Hansard Reporter
6. Ms Kane Memory - Principal Hansard Reporter

They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Once again, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Furthermore, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have student leaders from Kampala International University in Makindye

East, Kampala. They are represented by Hon. Nyeko Derrick and Hon. Shamim Malende. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House, please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Honourable colleagues, I thank all committees that have completed consideration of the ministerial policy statements and encourage those who have not yet to ensure that they finish by Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> April so that we have enough time to present and debate the reports.

Also, it has come to my attention that nearly every committee is inviting the Minister for Finance to appear before it. Please, that is not tenable. The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will not be able to appear before all committees.

Therefore, I advise sectoral committees not to invite or require the Minister of Finance to appear before them before processing because the Minister of Finance will appear before the Budget Committee where you will present.

Otherwise, we are going to have a situation of saying we have not yet completed because the Minister of Finance has not appeared. Ensure that the minister in charge of the sectors under you appears before you and that minister should have worked issues out with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development because they have a liaison person who works with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

This business of you being required to appear before every sector committee is not tenable on your part and it is going to delay us. Since you appear before the Committee on Budget to respond to consolidated issues from the various reports, you should put emphasis there.

Honourable Minister for Finance, on Tuesday, I will require you to lay on Table proof of payment and a statement on how you concluded your relationship with Umeme. Then, I will guide how best that statement will be handled because when we were adopting the report of the Auditor-General, we promised that we shall require you to present proof of payment of Umeme and conclusion of your relationship. Therefore, we shall be glad if you do that so that we are able to move forward.

Honourable colleagues, the Parliamentary Anglican Chaplaincy will be having an Easter carol service officiated by His Grace the Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, the Most Reverend Dr Samuel Kaziimba Mugalu. It will be tomorrow Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 4.00 p.m. in the conference hall. This is to inform and request all of you to take note. We shall end the plenary session early so that we can go and be with His Grace.

Also for your information, tomorrow the plenary will start at 10.00 a.m. because you need time to debate these reports. I do not have where to buy time so I will be starting from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. except for tomorrow because it is a unique day when we shall have His Grace present.

However, during the time of processing ministerial policy statements, I want to give you enough time to debate and present your views and the only way we can do that is by starting at 10.00 a.m. We will get a break of 30 minutes for lunch and then proceed up to around 6.00 p.m. If possible, even up to 10.00 p.m. I am still energetic – *(Laughter)* - I am fit enough.

In reaction to my communication, Hon. Nsamba and Hon. Dan?

2.34

**MR PATRICK NSAMBA (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is indeed a challenge for the minister to attend all committees because he is operating alone. We have more than five ministers in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. If they acted as a team around this time - because we do not take a lot of time. Hon. Musasizi or whoever is the team leader can brief them on matters per sector and they can come and respond to these issues. Not to go against your guidance, I am pleading with you to ask the minister to form a team that can respond to the demands of the respective committees.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Kimosho -

2.36

**MR DAN KIMOSHO (NRM, Kazo County, Kazo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern is still on that specific issue because when we are processing ministerial policy statements, it boils down to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

I take your guidance but the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development needs to get more organised and allocate officers. You are asking the sector and they are telling you, Finance but when you look around in the committee, there is no one from Finance.

One wonders, are we doing anything serious or doing a formality? Because you are looking at releases that were not done, suppressions, funding gaps and the sector in itself cannot explain these things.

As you are aware, by the time they come for the budget, there is a rush and one cannot recall all the other issues that happened or occurred during the time they were appearing during the ministerial policy statements.

Therefore, I beg your indulgence that these staff from the Ministry of Finance take note of the concerns even when they cannot respond. They should go back to their ministers and technical people and furnish these committees in time

with information concerning the concerns raised during the processing of the ministerial policy statements.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Kimosho, when you say, by the time you go to the Budget Committee where you, chairpersons, are members, you are in a rush and they are not giving you enough time - I think this is what I communicated earlier on when we were starting the budgeting process, that it has to change. A very good example is that for the ministerial policy statements we adopt today, the Budget Committee should start meeting so that it has enough time. That is why we are putting you under pressure to conclude processing the ministerial policy statements so that the Budget Committee can also start working, in line with you getting enough time.

Budget Committee – the committee chairperson is not here. Starting tomorrow, if your schedule can allow - but I think it could be Monday or Tuesday – let the committees start appearing. The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will be in the Budget Committee to pick out issues because he cannot sort them at sectoral committee level.

I had allowed Hon. Aleper.

2.39

**MR MOSES ALEPER (NRM, Chekwii County (Kadam), Nakapiripirit):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mine is just about the structure of the budgeting process and the enabling law, which is structured differently. We very well know that there is programme-based budgeting that we are following now, yet we use “sectors” when composing the committees that discuss this budget. So, there is a mismatch. Most times, we have raised this matter with the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and they throw it back to Parliament, that they are not the ones processing it.

To handle that aspect of the enabling law and structure it accordingly, it should be done by this side of the Government, which is the Legislature. I am bringing it to your attention that, that is the situation. When we ask them,

they throw the ball back to us. As the leader of this House, we need your indulgence on the same. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable member, this is an issue which I have been very clear on. Remember when we attempted to do it here and then found the conflict between the Rules of Procedure of Parliament and the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA)? We found out that we could not amend our rules to align with the programme-based budgeting before amending the PFMA, which refers to sector-based budgeting. The minister for finance and the Attorney-General made a commitment.

We agreed that by the budgeting cycle for next financial year, we should have already amended the PFMA so that we align our committees properly with the programmes that we are using. That is when I gave an example of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), which I met going to appear before four committees at the same time. They were going to the Committee on Presidential Affairs, the Committee on Education and Sports because of schools, the Committee on Health because of the health units that they run and the Committee on Physical Infrastructure because of the roads.

Sometime back, the minister and Attorney-General told me that they had already finished the drafting process. We said that for that part – honourable minister, we are not trying to open up the PFMA in full. Regarding budgeting, we should realign our committees here and move very well. Therefore, I totally agree with Hon. Aleper and I hope that by the next budgeting cycle, we shall have sorted that. Hon. Kivumbi?

2.41

**MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala):** Mr Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity. For the next one week, I will be the acting Leader of the Opposition as the Leader of the Opposition is out of the country.

Mr Speaker, you have finished your communication. However, the print media today and yesterday has been awash with news of a “gift of Shs 100 million for each Member of Parliament, from the President of Uganda”. As the head of this institution – *(Interjections)* – I am saying the media –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Procedure, hon. Sarah Opendi?

**MS OPENDI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. You communicated to this House and we were reacting to it. What the Member is presenting is outside your communication.

Is it procedurally right for the Member to raise a matter that was not in your communication at this point? Can we conclude with the reactions to your communication and then the Leader of the Opposition can proceed? Is it procedurally right for us to handle a different matter yet we want to react to your communication?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, our Rules of Procedure are very clear that when a Member goes on the Floor to submit, they should submit on the subject matter that is going on. We are still on reactions to the Communication from the Chair. We could conclude that and then I will allow you, the Leader of the Opposition. Okay?

Since he had already started, let him conclude instead of losing that time.

**MR KIVUMBI MUWANGA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As the head of this institution whose name is in the media in that regard, I expected that - since these rumours came out – you would be up to explain what has happened.

I beg you, with due respect, that the country demands an explanation from the head of this institution on what is going on in regard to the Shs 100 million allegation. I beg your indulgence – *(Ms Anifa Kawooya rose\_)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Anifa, there is no one on the Floor. A point of order applies when there is someone on the Floor. Can I have order in the House?

Number one, as the leadership of the House, we are responsible for what is budgeted and appropriated and for the expenditures done by Parliament. *(Applause)*

Number two, honourable colleagues, I will not sit here and start legitimising street talk. *(Applause)* I am a Member of Parliament and I have not received any coin or a call from anyone who has my money. If you know you have my money, please bring it. *(Laughter)* Someone might be eating on my behalf somewhere.

Number three, if you go and have your dealings somewhere, do not involve the House here. We approve all expenditure of the Government. We never approved any item here called “donation from the President to Members of Parliament”. *(Applause)*

I saw those statements. Some were saying “coffee Bill,” others “Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF)”. There is a way we protect each other. If you think you will come out of this institution smarter and cleaner than the rest and you malign all the other people in this House - The moment you put your colleagues in the mud, that mud will also go on you.

I request that if there is any matter of that kind, you can write to the head of the institution saying, “I have heard about A, B, C and D. Please, I want you to interest yourself in the matter and investigate.” Then, it will come to the responsible committee and we look for a way of investigating the matter.

However, I have seen in the papers the institution and Members being soiled. Some are coming up and saying “I haven’t received,” while others say, “I have received”. It is very unfortunate.

Government Chief Whip, have you given out any money? I saw you being put in the papers.

2.47

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Denis Obua):** Mr Speaker, from what I have also heard, I wish to state that each and every Member of Parliament who sits in this

House is paid through a statutory process. The Member who was holding the Floor alleged that “Members of Parliament” - that implies himself inclusive.

The basic principle of law is clear that he who alleges must provide the proof. He said, “Members of Parliament”. Can he confirm to this House where he has received his from because he is also a Member of this House? *(Laughter)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, we have work to do here. I have closed this topic. *(Hon. Amos Okot rose)* Is it on my communication?

2.49

**MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. In your communication, you made mention that the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Planning cannot attend to all sectoral committees.

However, there is leeway. In many cases, we raise questions and give options even to the respondents - something like one or two days. I urge you to consider and allow the minister for finance to be as fast as possible, if those agencies have any query or response that we need before concluding the very matter at hand so that they will be dynamic and not reject and be arrogant. Most of these agencies or ministries fear that their responses do not come as quickly as possible. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister for finance, do you want to comment on this issue of appearing before every sectoral committee? Because it has been a hectic issue and I have received reports. Do you have a few officers attached to committees?

2.50

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. When I laid the estimates, I committed to support all the committees of Parliament in processing and scrutinising the Budget.

What have we done? In every sector, we have an officer called a budget analyst. When committees are sitting to consider ministerial policy statements, each committee is assigned an officer from our Budget Directorate to pick out the issues which will arise that require our attention.

Mr Speaker, it is practically difficult for us to appear in time to every committee of Parliament. Yes, we are a team of five ministers led by Hon. Matia Kasaija but this is the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. We support the functioning of the Government beyond appearing before the committees of Parliament.

When we are concluding the Budget, we normally get a summary of the issues which have been - Like now, I am going to move a motion for consideration of ministerial policy statements and Parliament is going to make observations and recommendations. All these recommendations come to us for attention. I, therefore, would like to agree with you and thank you for picking this concern that we should allow committees, together with their sector ministers - because this Budget is extensively discussed in the Cabinet.

Therefore, the sector ministers who laid the ministerial policy statements here should be able to respond to the issues that happen in their sectors then when we come to the Budget Committee at consolidation stage, I will respond to those issues which would probably have been of urgent attention to the ministry but have not been responded to at the ministerial policy statements stage in the committees.

I therefore would like to invite our colleagues in this House to understand and appreciate the situation we are working in. However, I am available to the extent possible and I will address all the concerns that these committees will come up with at an appropriate time. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have pupils and teachers of Hillside

Nursery and Primary Schools, Naalya, Kira Municipality and they include our very own son, Daudi, the son to the Rt Hon. Speaker. He should be here.

They are represented by Hon. Ssemujju Ibrahim Nganda and Hon. Naluyima Betty Ethel and they have come to observe proceedings of this House. Once again, please join me in welcoming them. I thought Hon. Zaake would clap more because of the colour. *(Laughter)*

Matters of national importance - Hon. Sarah Opendi?

2.54

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, although I had a very important item on the ministerial policy statements. I do not know whether I should just proceed, for the record, so that you can -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Matters of national importance, honourable member. I have you here on record.

**MS OPENDI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I travelled to my constituency on Saturday and I had a stopover in Jinja, at a fuel station. On seeing me, some police officers approached me and requested me to raise this matter; that they have not received salaries for the last - some six months, some four months and some two months and the reason is that the Ministry of Public Service was integrating their system from one to another.

Mr Speaker, it left me wondering. One of them said that some people have ways of surviving but look at the majority; lower police officers - constables. If somebody takes six months without salary, how do you expect this person to survive with his family?

I am raising this matter so that the Ministry of Public Service can explain where the problem is. Even if you are integrating your systems – whatever it is – it should not take six months. Maybe this is why we are having many harsh or rude police officers. What is happening? Can the Minister of Public Service or minister for

finance explain why people would go without salaries? Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister for finance, have you released money for these officers? Why aren't they receiving salaries?

2.56

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi):** Mr Speaker, I need time to check because as far as I know, under normal circumstances, every public office of Government should be able to get a timely salary. Therefore, I need to check where the challenge is, but it is not from the financing side. It could be something else.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let us get an oral answer in tomorrow's session. Hon. John Faith Magolo followed by Hon. Sarah Aguti.

2.57

**MR JOHN MAGOLO (NRM, Bungokho County North, Mbale):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Bugisu has been a subject matter and has faced a number of challenges through landslides and some of the victims were relocated to Kiryandongo and given land, commonly called "Ranch 18".

However, at the moment, that land has been removed from them, the occupants have been evicted and beaten. Right now, 19 of the leaders who tried to help other people to resist have been imprisoned and the rest are on the run.

Mr Speaker, this comes at a time when the Government is talking about the people of Elgon, especially those in areas which are dangerous, to be relocated. It puts that programme in a dilemma if the former people who have been taken are not being taken care of and are being evicted.

Prayers

1. The Office of the Prime Minister should make an intervention to that effect and bring a report to this House on how they

intervened in settling those people to ensure they have a home.

2. To liaise with the Members of Parliament of Bugisu to go to Kiryandongo on a fact-finding mission and ensure that these people are settled.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Government?

2.59

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obuga):** Mr Speaker, may I commit, before the end of business, to link up the Members of Parliament from the area affected with the line minister who is seemingly not in the House, for purposes of addressing the issue raised.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You remember before we broke off, the Minister of State for Disaster Preparedness committed that she was going to bring a statement on the same. I think, Government Chief Whip, what you need to do is to enrich that statement. Let her first meet the Members from the affected areas so that most of the issues are discussed and settled at that level and then she brings a statement here.

Hon. Sarah Aguti?

3.00

**MS SARAH AGUTI (UPC, Woman Representative, Dokolo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern is about the road between Dokolo and Lira City. As they were working on it, the road has been narrowed and we are getting a lot of accidents; a minimum of three times a week.

My prayer is that we request the Ministry of Works and Transport to take note of this and also go and check. It has been narrowed so much so that even private cars cannot overtake if there is a rider on the side. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Minister of Works and Transport?

3.01

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT) (Mr Fred Byamukama):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is true the road the honourable member is talking about is under construction and it is not our intention to narrow it; only that we put some barriers on the stretches where they are constructing.

We are going to talk to our contractors there to ensure they sensitise the communities that as they approach the areas where reconstruction is taking place, they should abide by the procedure. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, let us allow the minister to take action. Please go, clear the barriers, take action on – On Tuesday, honourable minister, you will give us a verbal answer on whether you have taken action.

*(A Member rose)* Clarification is when a Member is still on the Floor. Therefore, the rules do not allow me. Hon. Ssasaga, you have two questions, I will allow one. Choose one of the two.

3.01

**MR ISAIAS SSASAGA (FDC, Budadiri County East, Sironko):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on the issue of the bridge connecting the mountainous areas of Budadiri East over five subcounties of Masaba, Zesui, Gitimu and Leghenya. The bridge was cut off. The earlier communication and correspondences I had made to the ministry was when there were signs of the crack of the bridge. They did not respond until last week when the bridge was completely cut off and it collapsed.

My prayer is that the ministries of disaster preparedness and works come together and fix the bridge because UNRA claims they are now back to the ministry and have nothing they can do apart from the Ministry of Works and Transport itself liaising with the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness.



The second one –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable colleagues, we take one issue per Member. Because we take five questions, a Member can only raise one. Yes, honourable minister?

3.02

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT) (Mr Fred Byamukama):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. We had not known that the bridge collapsed. However, I am going to get in touch with the honourable member after here to get the details so that we can send our engineers and we handle it as a matter of urgency. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Eddie Kwizera?

3.03

**MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimbiri County, Kisoro):** Mr Speaker, thank you very much. In my constituency of Bukimbiri, there are multiple licensed iron ore miners and the rate of degradation of environment is very high. The Government should monitor the people they are licensing because we have appealed to the ministry and we have not seen a response. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Government?

3.04

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua):** Mr Speaker, this is a matter that should be taken up by the minister in charge of minerals and unfortunately none from the ministry is in the House.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So what will you do? You are Government –

**MR OBUA:** Mr Speaker, I am a proactive and result-oriented leader. The honourable member who has raised the issue will definitely be connected to the line minister to see how best it can be addressed.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Yes, Hon. Ssemujju, on procedure.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Maybe, Mr Speaker, Hon. Obua does not know that we know where these ministers sit. When matters are raised in Parliament, they have gone beyond a meeting between me and the minister. I do not think there is any minister in Uganda here who I want to see through Hon. Obua. I can walk to their offices.

The reason questions are asked here is that we come here to represent people who need these answers in Parliament. Otherwise, if it becomes a matter of you linking us with the ministers - linking this one with the minister - that is another way of doing parliamentary work. We need these answers here, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable colleagues, a Government Chief Whip is a bridge between the Executive and the Legislature. A bridge links. I can see the honourable minister is here. Honourable Government Chief Whip, we send these questions to your office early and that is why we usually require Members to register them. Please let the ministers always be here.

Honourable minister for energy, there is a question from Hon. Eddie Kwizera, MP of Bukimbiri County, on multiple licensing for people mining iron ore in Bukimbiri County that has resulted into disenfranchisement of the locals and has caused unchecked environmental degradation and property loss. What are you doing about it as a ministry?

Oh, you came with a statement? You look well prepared.

3.06

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Sidronius Okaasai):** Mr Speaker, I received this when I was coming and it requires a comprehensive answer. I have asked my technical people to prepare it and I will submit it.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, what is very important is for you to commit to either send your technical people or for you to go on the ground and see the situation. The day locals feel they are being disenfranchised from a natural resource within their vicinity, it might end up not giving us good results. I think you need to take it up seriously.

**MR OKAASAI:** Yes, Mr Speaker. You know, such a question actually needs people to get on the ground to assess it and then I will produce a comprehensive report.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Hon. Oguzu, you have two questions but I need you to ask one; choose any of the two.

3.07

**MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This Parliament appropriated money to pay tobacco farmers in West Nile and the finance ministry released this money in the second quarter. Up to now, the trade ministry has refused to pay these farmers.

I even have information that the ministers have halted that process. Can you explain why you have refused to pay the farmers, or tell us when you are going to pay them, so that we know that there is no intent to disenfranchise our communities?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable minister for finance? Trade?

**MR OGUZU:** Mr Speaker, this is to trade, because finance released that money and trade has not paid.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister for trade, money for tobacco farmers in West Nile.

3.08

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati):** Mr Speaker, it is true we received the resources

to clear the compensation for tobacco growers in West Nile. We have finished the verification process and all the requirements that we needed to pay the money and it will be paid soon. We apologise that it has been delayed.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What is the cause of the delay, honourable minister?

**MR BAHATI:** The cause was to do with verification because we wanted to make sure that the person who receives the funds is the one who is entitled, so that we do not have problems in the future.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Expedite the process. Hon. Kayemba-Ssolo?

3.09

**MR GEOFFREY KAYEMBA-SSOLO (NUP, Bukomansimbi South County, Bukomansimbi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, two weeks back, in my area of Kibinge Subcounty, which is in Bukomansimbi South County, some people came and said that they were Uganda Revenue Authority officials and they told the farmers that they are going to start taxing coffee plantations according to acreage.

I would like the ministry for finance to come and tell us if it is true that you are going to start taxing coffee plantations according to their acreage.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister for finance.

3.10

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi):** Mr Speaker, Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) is responsible for tax administration in this country, what we call collection of taxes. The policy aspects of taxation are spearheaded by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development through the tax laws that are passed by this House.

I have been a Member of Parliament for the last 14 years, responsible for reviewing tax laws on an annual basis. I, therefore, can competently tell which tax we have and which tax we do not have, in accordance with the tax laws.

Mr Speaker, in all our existing tax laws, we have no provision that requires coffee farmers to be levied a tax on an acreage basis or any other basis. Therefore, we regard those people who went to his constituency as masquerades. They are not from URA.

3.11

**MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Arua-Biliafe and Lia-Odramacaku road has flooded, despite being a national road with culverts installed. It has been flooding because of the recent heavy rains that we received in Arua City.

Mr Speaker, the face of regional cities should look like cities. If you go to Arua City, to this day, some of our roads still flood, and the city has no road equipment units. In the previous financial year and this one that is yet to end, Parliament passed money for the road equipment units but Arua City has not received any.

The Government keeps sending money; Shs 1 billion for maintenance. Arua City, having no road equipment unit, ends up hiring from the nearby districts at a very expensive rate. We end up even exchanging bitter words sometimes. It is very hard for us to absorb that money as the people of Arua City.

Therefore, I request that the minister for works should give us an answer. What happened when we passed the money? The other time you said you procured 80 per cent and the balance was 20 per cent. We gave you money again, but this time you only gave 14 districts. What happened to Arua City? Is it not a regional city? Can you give attention to Arua City, because we do not have road units and our roads have looked terrible for the last five years? We are here struggling – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable minister, you are about to cause me trouble.

3.13

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT) (Mr Fred Byamukama):** Mr Speaker, it is true that Parliament gave us money to procure equipment for the new districts, and the equipment we procured served 16 districts.

It was not the complete set; we actually need Shs 29 billion more to buy the rest of the equipment that we are supposed to give the district to complete their units.

For all the cities, this is the plan we have in the next financial year and I request the honourable colleague to be patient. Once we pay the Shs 29 billion for the other equipment we got, we shall be able to give the cities. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, you see, the minister has no money. He said there was a deficit in the money they were given. There is nothing you can do to him on the Floor for not implementing, because we never gave him money to help him implement.

I know the Government has taken note of this issue. The ministry for finance is here and they have taken note. Minister, did you want to add something?

**MR BYAMUKAMA:** Mr Speaker, in addition, because roads are needed by the local people to do business, there is the option to borrow equipment from the Ministry of Works and Transport, from our zonal centres. If the city has money, we can give them equipment so that they can work on the roads as they wait for their own.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable minister, link up with your substation managers for all the cities to help them for now as we get our road equipment.

Hon. Kimosho -

3.15

**MR DAN KIMOSHO (NRM, Kazo County, Kazo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My issue is that Kazo District was among the few districts that were considered to be given technical institutes. Indeed, they started construction in 2014 but there were delays. The institute took seven years to be completed. After it was completed, it was coded in 2023 but up to now, there is no wage.

The principal that was sent there worked for one and a half years without any pay. That one left and they sent another one. He has worked for five months without any pay.

There have been several correspondences between the district and ministries for education and public service. The education ministry sent them to the public service ministry, and the public service ministry told them that if they did not have the wage, they should send back the principal. There is already enrolment at the institute.

Mr Speaker, I request that the Ministry of Public Service comes out clearly. They can come and close it, it is okay if they wish so, and tell the people of Kazo that they do not matter. We can start keeping goats and cows there, if they do not mind. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister for education, this is your institute.

3.17

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (PRIMARY EDUCATION) (Dr Joyce Moriku):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank my colleague for raising that critical issue concerning the technical school.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can you be more audible?

**DR MORIKU:** Thank you. I have listened carefully to the issue of the technical school in Kazo. This is very important for skilling youth and the students, it has come at the right time of the budgeting process.

However, I would like to apologise for the time that it has been operating without a wage bill and staffing.

I pledge that we will try, during this period, if we can factor maybe some of the critical staff but not all, so that we can have the institute operational. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Committee on Education and Sports, take up this matter and ensure we have a wage bill. This is a government institution, we built it but it is just there being wasted instead of giving services. Hon. Nalukoola - Please, honourable, you are protected, it is a maiden speech.

3.18

**MRELIAS NALUKOOLA (NUP, Kawempe Division North, Kampala City):** Mr Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity. Honourable ministers from the sitting Government and honourable ministers from the alternative government - when you use "shadow", some people think that it is "ekisikirize" but "shadow" means "kalondoozi" - (Laughter)

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Nalukoola, we have a language we use here. That is number one.

**MR NALUKOOLA:** Yes, Mr Speaker -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Number two, do not respond to colleagues who are speaking when they are not on record because the *Hansard* will be confused on who you were responding to. Therefore, you are protected, it is your maiden speech.

**MR NALUKOOLA:** Much obliged. Mr Speaker, I thank you for that wonderful guidance. Honourable ministers in the sitting government and honourable ministers in the alternative government, Members of Parliament, thank you.

I take this opportunity to express my pleasure regarding the manner in which I was treated by your office when I was sworn in expeditiously after gazetting the results from Kawempe North constituency.

My name is Luyimbazi Nalukoola, who was voted after great violence. My election was decorated by brutality from the members of the armed forces and indeed, every time we approached the Electoral Commission, it would lament helplessly.

The Chairman of the Electoral Commission made a request to me that when an opportunity arises, we should make an amendment in the Electoral Commission Act to ensure that the Electoral Commission is in command of all constables. This is to avoid allowing the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) to interfere in the elections.

Under Article 2(12) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, it is the police to take the primary duty of protecting us and our properties but it can cooperate with the sister security organs.

Unfortunately, the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) invites itself before. It is a challenge, Mr Speaker. We are wondering, how could Uganda Police Force be overwhelmed by a mere by-election in Kawempe North, not general elections?

Kawempe North constituency has not had substantive representation for so long. Our Member of Parliament, now departed, hon. Ssegirinya represented us for a short while. Later, he was incarcerated and after his release, he battled a long sickness.

We have suffered a number of challenges and predicaments including but not limited to the following:

- (i) We have water shortage in the Kawempe North constituency.
- (ii) Inadequate health facilities. We have only one medical facility, that is at Komamboga, but its facilities are inadequate as compared to the corresponding growing population in the Kawempe North constituency.

Mr Speaker, we need intervention from the Ministry of Health and from the minister in charge of water.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, I am sorry for interrupting you. I know it is a maiden speech but you stood up on a matter of national importance. It ended up becoming a statement. As Members of Parliament, we do not have a provision in our rules for a Member to make a statement apart from a statement of personal explanation under rule 55.

Therefore, from rule 52 to rule 55, even a new Member - I tried to be - No, I have been accommodative and have been listening. I would like to guide that for matters which are related to Government services in your constituency, we are now starting to discuss ministerial policy statements where we are looking at the budgets and provisions for services across the country.

I can give you time, when we are on the statement from the Ministry of Health, to raise health-related issues because the minister will be here to respond and commit.

I can give you a chance on education, roads, infrastructure instead of you bringing them out here and we end up not capturing the issues. Honourable, I do not know how you will look at that.

**MR NALUKOOLA:** Mr Speaker, I am so grateful for that wise guidance. Now allow me to point out one matter of national importance. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, it is a violation of human rights, especially against those who participated in the by-election in Kawempe North constituency. A number of my supporters and voters from the National Unity Platform (NUP) are being persecuted, looked for by those in Government and police and something must be done.

To be sincere, we must practice tolerance in our politics. This is so important. If you allow me that opportunity, I can even appear before a committee. Should this matter be taken to it, I will appear and I will also call the victims of that persecution. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. I will ask the Minister for Internal Affairs - Hon. Nalukoola, we have a mechanism of following up these issues and Hon. Kivumbi has been helpful on several occasions. If action is not taken, then it can come back here. Now, honourable colleagues - Hon. Anifa.

3.26

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Anifa Kawooya):** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I would like to join the rest of the Members of this august House to welcome our new Member, hon. Nalukoola. When he came in, I was not here.

In line with your guidance, I would like to inform him that it is not true that the health services in Kawempe are not there and they cannot be to 100 per cent. Kawempe North has got a regional referral hospital.

The units of facilities in Kawempe are more than five and I am always there inaugurating. I would also prefer that since this has come in now, the district local government will help out to know where these health facilities are. My office is also open, as the minister in charge of hospitals, to help you out. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Hon. Nalukoola, I welcome you, once again. This is a House of comrades. We treat each other with respect. We also stand by each other. Please, ensure that you interact with your colleagues beyond your political party. Just interact – we meet in the canteen; we meet in the corridors. Feel at home; you are part of the family now. Next item.

## BILLS FIRST READING

### THE BUILDING CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

3.28

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT) (Mr Fred Byamukama):** Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled “The Building Control (Amendment) Bill, 2025” be read for the first time.

Equally, I beg to lay the Bill on the Table, accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implications. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Physical Infrastructure for processing as per Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

### THE BUILDING CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Atkins?

**MR KATUSABE:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I also join the rest of our colleagues in welcoming the honourable member for Kawempe South to the big family –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is Kawempe North.

**MR KATUSABE:** Oh, Kawempe North. Mr Speaker, Sir, in the last Sitting, the presiding officer gave clear instructions to the Minister of Works and Transport. I am glad that he is in the House.

The directive from the presiding officer was to the effect that on 7 December 2024, the President went and opened the Mpondwe-Kikorongo Road. It was commissioned in and before the public eye or before the world, with caterpillars, graders, backhoes, excavators and trucks.

As I speak, there is no truck, no grader –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You see, Hon. Atkins, the burden I get is for us to apply the point of procedure on matters that are not to do with today's Sitting. That is why rule 78 requires one, first, to state the rule on which they are standing to raise the point of procedure. Would it be bad, honourable member, for you to ask for space and I give it to you tomorrow during Prime Minister's Time or for you to raise it as a matter of national importance?

We need to remain in line with our rules.

**MR KATUSABE:** I appreciate it, Mr Speaker. This is not something that is newly introduced. It has everything to do with your directive. You directed, Mr Speaker. I cannot keep coming to your office all the time on the same point because of -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Raise the point of procedure.

**MR KATUSABE:** The procedural issue is: is it procedurally correct that the Speaker directs the minister to update the community that uses that international road – Mpondwe-Kikorongo – that is now literally impassable, six months down the road after the commissioning by the President himself, and there is no work whatsoever?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MR KATUSABE:** Honourable minister, can we, please, have a clear plan on when the work is going to begin and whether the contracts -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is no longer procedural. Procedure is for me to determine, not the minister responding to you, honourable member.

**MR KATUSABE:** Mr Speaker, I appreciate your leadership and guidance. Now that the minister is in the House, I think that the people of Kasese and the international traders owe it to him.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, I want to sort out this matter with Hon. Atkins, please. I hope you picked it.

**MR BYAMUKAMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honestly speaking, because of the complicated accent which my colleague is using, I have only heard three words. *(Laughter)* I have only had the words “community”, “Kikorongo-

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, it is about the Mpondwe-Kikorongo Road, which the President commissioned, but it is not being used. Hon. Sarah Opendi would have helped, but she has just moved out. *(Laughter)*

Honourable minister?

**MR BYAMUKAMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. If that is the case, let me get in touch with the honourable colleague and see how to sort out that problem. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please, tomorrow, you will give an oral answer on the Floor. I heard Hon. Susan from Buvuma, saying she had a procedural matter.

**MS SUSAN MUGABI:** Thank you very much, Mr speaker. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of January this year, the Government, through the Rt. Hon. Rukia Nakadama, committed that they would table the Fisheries and Aquaculture Regulations within one week, as a response to one of my prayers after I raised an issue of a boat that capsized with victims who were handcuffed.

It is two months now and we have not received any information or update – and the minister has been here; I do not know where she has gone. I thought it would be procedurally right for her to give us an update.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the minister give us an update tomorrow. Okay? Let us make it very easy. The Leader of the Opposition? Honourable colleagues, the Leader of the Opposition needs space. Hon. Solo, extend. *(Laughter)*

3.34

**MR MUHAMMAD MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala):** Mr Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity. I got leave of this Parliament, like a year ago,

to move a Private Member's Bill to amend the Public Finance Management Act. The amendment was popularly supported by this House, and I did everything. The Government failed to give me a Certificate of Financial Implications, and the 60 days passed a long time ago.

Mr Speaker, I beg that we get space and I do the needful. This is simply because we want to help the next Parliament, so that it can decisively deal with the cancer of supplementary budgeting. It is so critical that the Parliament finds space and we deal with this issue.

I beg your indulgence that you allocate us time to move that amendment to the Public Finance Management Act. I beg.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I will give Private Member's Bills space after the budgeting process because I want us to first concentrate on the budgeting process and then we can have issues from Members.

Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students of Acholi Makerere Students Association, Makerere University, Kampala.

They are represented by Hon. Bashir Kazibwe and Hon. Shamim Malende, plus the MPs of wherever they come from – who might include Hon. Ojara-Mapenduzi and the team. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them. You can stand up for recognition, our visitors. Thank you. *(Applause)*

In the public gallery this afternoon, we also have students of Political Science and Political Administration from Kyambogo University, Kampala. They are represented by Hon. Mohammad Nsereko and Hon. Shamim Malende. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them.

You can you stand up for recognition. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we also have students from Sited High School, Sironko. I hope I got it right. They are represented by Hon. Florence Nambozo Wamala and Hon. Nathan Nandala-Mafabi. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Honourable colleagues, while working on the Order Paper, there is an item I included which was not meant for this period. This is a period for budgeting, so item four shall be handled immediately after the budgeting process, so that we have enough time to look into it. Let us go to item five.

**MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE  
ANNUAL PROPOSED BUDGET FOR  
FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/2026**

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister for finance?

3.37

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi):** Mr Speaker, pursuant to Article 155 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, can I interrupt you a little bit? I am sorry. The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has come; I do not need to keep this matter pending.

Honourable minister, you promised to bring us regulations for the fisheries and aquaculture law. What happened?

3.39

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (FISHERIES) (Ms Hellen Adoa):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have done regional consultations and we are now left with Lake Kyoga. The report will be put together to hand over to Solicitor-General.



**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, how much time do you need, honourable minister, from your observation?

**MS ADOA:** We need two months again, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, it does not help for a minister to say, “I need two months”, and then we say, “No”, yet it is a consultative process. One of the advantages of me sitting in the Cabinet was knowing how ministers struggle to get space on the Cabinet agenda.

Since she has asked for two months, let us grant them to her but we know that is our deal with you, honourable minister, so that we do not come back here and rotate on this issue. You made us pass a law; it was your law. We just need your own regulations to implement your law. Honourable minister?

**MS ADOA:** Most obliged, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable minister for finance, kindly resume.

**MR MUSASIZI:** Mr Speaker, pursuant to Article 155 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Section 13 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, Cap 171 and, Rules 148 and 149 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, I beg to move a motion for approval of the annual budget for Financial Year 2025/2026. I beg to move.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is the motion seconded? Chairperson for Finance Committee – (*Hon. Oshabe rose*) - but you people, how do I allow procedure on this question? These questions for motions are very clear; procedure can come after.

Hon. Akol, Hon. Oguzu Lee is also supporting the motion – (*Laughter*) – Hon. Mpindi, Hon. Government Chief Whip, Hon. Kaberuka, Hon. Bahati, Hon. Anifa, Hon. Florence Akiiki, the honourable member for Tingey, Hon. Achayo, Hon. Angura, Hon. Aleper, okay, by the majority of the House.

Honourable minister, would you like to speak to your motion? (*Hon. Oshabe rose*) Since the minister is going to speak to his motion, can we allow him and then bring in procedural matters later?

**MR OSHABE:** Mr Speaker, if everything goes on, then it will be meaningless for me to stand up again. At this stage, we normally deal with reports on ministerial statements from the different sectors, but I am surprised at the way this motion is crafted.

At this stage, I do not know whether we are proceeding well, Mr Speaker, and whether that is the right motion because normally, we would have reports on our budget estimates on ministerial policy statements? Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, budgeting is a process. So, this motion will take us through the process of receiving reports from committees. Otherwise, each committee will now need to move its motion. This is how we always handle ministerial policy statements.

Let us receive this motion from the minister and then we receive all, until we conclude with the budgeting process. He will then move a new motion for the Committee of Supply and all that, and we conclude with the process. Hon. Oguzu Lee?

**MR OGUZU:** Thank you, for accepting to listen to us. Mr Speaker, this motion we are about to hear is premised on development frameworks that have been developed in this country, one of which is the NDP IV.

While processing that document here, the minister made a commitment that before we approve or process the budget, he would come with a clear document, specifying how the Government is investing in various parts of this country, so that we deal with the issue of disenfranchising some communities, once and for all. He is now here moving a motion to move us to approve the budget without us knowing what is in the development plan for the different parts of this country.

Would it be procedurally right that you first allow the minister to bring that document he committed to, before we move to approve this? Some Members here raised concerns about how the Government is allocating money to places that ideally should not be getting money from the Government, but he is deliberately, ignoring some communities that ought to get Government attention.

You can only be able to answer all these questions if we look at the NDP IV document, which the minister committed to bring.

I, therefore, invite you, that since this budget will be based on the National Development Plan IV, it is important we appreciate what the Government intends to do in different parts of this country. We already know areas like Northern Uganda are very poor – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the issues being handled in sectoral committees are those to do with this country. I do not think that the sectoral committees are handling issues of other countries. That is one.

Two, the consolidated budget is going to be handled in the Budget Committee, where the minister should be asked those questions, looking at all figures in detail, not at plenary level. The problem with this kind of motion is that it does not require approval at this stage. This is a motion under rule 148 that feeds into Rule 149 of our Rules of Procedure.

In the end, what will come under the report of the Budget Committee is the one which is critical. Therefore, at this level, we are still interacting. We interacted when we were handling the Budget Framework Paper but now, the sectoral committees should be asking the minister that “We raised the issues A, B, C and D in the Budget Framework Paper. Show us the ones you fulfilled, the ones you did not and why?”. After that, they will consolidate these into the budget and we will approve it.

If we had to ask the minister to come and give us an answer on the priority areas where he has

put money - this is what he has given in the draft estimates that were tabled here. Honourable minister, would you like to add? Please, honourable member, do not give yourself a microphone. Yes, honourable minister.

**MR MUSASIZI:** Mr Speaker, I wish to confirm that the National Development Plan (NDPIV) was laid before this House by Hon. Amos Lugolobi, the Minister of State for Planning. Therefore, the Members’ concerns are taken care of in the NDP IV, which this House approved.

We were also tasked to present a copy to this House within one month, which we complied with; the copy is with Parliament. I can undertake to give him a copy to satisfy and allay his fears that we are budgeting under the NDP IV and other frameworks, as required by the law.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, can we make some progress?

**MR OGUZU:** Yes, we are about to make progress. The document he is talking about was conditionally approved, and he was here when those commitments were being made; he made them. We asked him to bring a revised National Development Plan IV, which is going to be the basis for us to allocate money to different sectors. Without that principal document, the exercise we are about to move into - even in the committees, we cannot raise questions because we do not know if whatever is presented aligns with –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** But the minister says he brought it. Chairperson of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development - Hon. Oguzu Lee, these days, you have not been around. I do not know where you had gone.

3.49

**THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Amos Kankunda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As far as my memory serves me, the NDP IV was debated by Members of Parliament and those observations

and amendments that were provided were brought to the Floor of Parliament. The presiding officer guided that those suggestions be included. Later on, the final copy was laid here by the honourable minister, Hon. Amos Lugolobi, and approved by Parliament. That is what happened, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Musasizi, get a copy for Hon. Oguzu Lee for his satisfaction.

**MR MUSASIZI:** Much obliged, Mr Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Continue and justify the motion.

**MR MUSASIZI:** By close of business today, Hon. Oguzu Lee will have a copy of the approved NDP IV.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, let us make it easy. Give us a soft copy so that we can share it on Alfresco. It will make our work very easy. Other than you - but if you have enough copies, which I know you must have, you can bring for all Members of Parliament the final document, which was approved by this House.

**MR MUSASIZI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I now come to my justification of the motion. Briefly, the theme of this year's budget is: "*Full Monetisation of Uganda's Economy through Commercial Agriculture, Industrialisation, Expanding and Broadening Services, Digital Transformation, and Market Access.*" The total resource envelope is Shs 71,956,621,530,685.

The areas of focus in the budget are the ATMs, which means Agro-industrialisation, Tourism, Mineral-based industrial development, and Science, technology, innovation, including ICT and the creative art industry.

The key enablers are 10, which we have identified, and they are the following:

1. Maintaining peace, security, and the rule of law;

2. Human capital development, including health, education, water, and social protection;
3. Full monetisation of the economy through the Parish Development Model (PDM) and other wealth programmes;
4. Infrastructure development, including roads, railways, and electricity;
5. Regional integration;
6. Irrigation through bulk water to stabilise agriculture;
7. Manufacturing with a focus on industrial parks;
8. Eliminating corruption;
9. Environmental and natural resource conservation; and
10. Vertical and horizontal integration of the economy.

We have attended to crucial issues that were raised by Cabinet, Parliament, the NRM Parliamentary Caucus, and the Presidential Advisory Committee on Budget, and some of the recommendations of Parliament at the Budget Framework Paper stage have been taken care of.

We have also taken care of key policy commitments, mainly the domestic arrears in the areas of agriculture, health, education, including African Cup of Nations (AFCON), Electoral Commission, and the general election roadmap, the wage shortfalls in the local governments, unfinished infrastructure in the roads due to counterpart funding, among other things.

I appeal and invite colleagues to support this process. I also inform colleagues that this motion I am moving is basically for ushering us into receiving the ministerial policy statements. Afterwards, I will move another motion for supply, which will lead us into appropriation.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, and Members for listening to me. I submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Next Item?

COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND  
INTERNAL AFFAIRS

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, on this, you need 15 minutes to give us the highlights, and then we will have time for debate.

3.54

**THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Mr Wilson Kajwengye):** In line with the motion moved by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, I beg to present a report. First, I beg to lay on the Table, minutes of the committee meetings with the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the agencies thereunder. I beg to lay.

Because and as guided by the Speaker, let me present this report; it covers the following votes:

Vote 004: Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs;

Vote 009: Ministry of Internal Affairs;

Vote 120: National Citizenship and Immigration Control;

Vote 144: Uganda Police Force;

Vote 145: Uganda Prison Service;

Vote 135: Directorate of Government Analytical Laboratory; and

Vote 137: National Identification and Registration Authority.

We have interacted with the ministries and the agencies thereunder. We have received their ministerial policy statements. We have considered the Rules of Procedure, the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and the Vote allocations. My report has an executive summary on key vote allocations.

On Vote 004: Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs, it is important to note that the vote, important as it is, faces a reduction in its recurrent expenditure.

Vote 009: Ministry of Internal Affairs, includes Shs 54 billion for development over five years

and Shs 2 billion for anti-human trafficking.

I beg to now give a summary of the recommendations. Mr Speaker, under the Ministry of Defence – and this report has tables attached, which are descriptive and show the Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEF) and the approved budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025. This gives a basis for us to plan for the Financial Year 2025/2026. There is the MTEF budget and year-to-year percentage changes on pages 44 and 45 - committee allocations of the budget estimates for the Financial Year 2025/2026.

Permit me, Mr Speaker, to mention that under the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs, we note that the ministry carries out important operations, like “Operation *Salama Kwa Wote*”, “Operation *Shujaa*” and “Operation *Mlinzi Wa Kimya*.” We have made a provision for the success of that. We applaud the Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) for keeping us safe at home and away. We aim to strengthen our mighty UPDF.

We have also made an allocation for accommodation for our soldiers. We note that the wage bill of the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs (MoDVA) totalled to Shs633 billion compared to Shs 633.43 billion, leading to a 99.9 per cent absorption rate in the first half of the Financial Year 2024/2025. The non-absorption of Shs 0.212 billion stemmed from delays in processing Foreign Service allowances for our personnel abroad in December.

We have also made recommendations that MoDVA should enhance its planning for pension management to improve its procurement processes and optimise the resource use within the ministry. The ministry should expedite the review of the UPDF Act and the defence policy framework in the Financial Year 2025/2026.

The overall budget estimates for the Financial Year 2025/2026 as –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Procedure, Hon. Nsamba Oshabe?

**MR OSHABE:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As we go through this process, there are very many engagements that we must have here with the Government on matters dealing with these projections that we are handling. We are here on defence, but I am not seeing the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs. I do not know whether, after his presentation, the chairperson will be the one responding to matters within this sector that might come out from the Members around. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable colleagues, it is a shame that this is happening. The only challenge I have is that we have a statutory deadline. This is not a normal session where I can say - someone might frustrate you by not being here all the time. To me, since the committee has scrutinised and come up with recommendations, it would be in the interest of the minister, if they do not agree with the recommendations of the committee - to come here and explain. They would say, "No, I propose we don't take this recommendation."

If they are not here to defend themselves, I think we can continue doing our job and make our recommendations, as the House and finish our part. Honourable acting Leader of the Opposition?

4.02

**MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala):** Mr Speaker, whenever we go for the budget process, you literally suspend all other business of Parliament to ensure that special time is allocated to sectoral committees to process this.

This is a well-communicated programme. The Order Paper is very clear. This is not a day that the Cabinet sits, so it is a normal day. I think the Cabinet sits on Monday. Today is a Wednesday.

We are dealing with the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs, but none of the line ministers for defence and internal affairs is here - even the Government Chief Whip has disappeared -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** In fact, I assigned the Government Chief Whip to go out and communicate to these ministers over the same. I had seen the same concern.

**MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI:** Could you, Mr Speaker, for today permit it to proceed, but communicate to all ministers who are on the Order Paper to ensure they are around. Also, in this country, there is no ministry with a single minister. There are normally two, three or four - some have five. For all of them not to be around is to take the parliamentary process for granted. I think we can lay down a marker and say this is the only one we are dealing with, but for the rest, issue an order so that they can appear. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I totally agree with you, honourable colleagues. In order to save our time, tomorrow, I will not handle statements where the ministers are not present. Let us proceed.

**MR KAJWENGYE:** Thank you, Mr Speaker -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Okupa, if it is on the same, for goodness sake -

4.04

**MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere):** Mr Speaker, the country and Members, save for those who were in the committee, need the minister for defence to answer some questions. We are in Congo and South Sudan, there are issues, which we want to be clarified to the country when we are discussing this budget, such that when we approve this money, because we need stability in the region, everybody understands. Wherever we move, we are able to defend the Government, saying, we are there for A, B, C, D. That information is very useful.

Mr Speaker, you and I have travelled and seen how we get confronted. If you lack information - remember when we were in Mozambique, if we did not have information - for some information we had to call back to be briefed so we to defend the country. Otherwise, some

members from those countries were threatening to harass Members.

Mr Speaker, this is very important. I would plead with you to bite. At least for today, we say, "Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs, we are suspending the sitting. Tomorrow, you must be here." If they fail, then we can proceed. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** My challenge, honourable colleagues, is where I will get time from. I plan. We have a lot of obligations. The honourable colleagues want to go back to their constituencies, so I need the Committee on Budget to start scrutinising these reports deeply. Anyhow, we have taken note.

**MR OSHABE:** Mr Speaker, we appreciate the situation of the time. Remember, you promised that this time, you are going to give us time to debate, but we cannot debate in vain. I am requesting that if the minister is not available, we can receive their reports but not debate it. We will deal with them at the last minute when we are sure that this one did not appear. Probably, people might come. Otherwise, if we debate in vain, it may not add value.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let me do this. Let us receive the report on defence. We then go to finance because the finance minister is here and agriculture, whose minister is also here. We shall see how to manage the debate for the rest of the colleagues.

In the public gallery this afternoon, we have students from Divine Care Secondary School, Nakaseke District. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Luttaguzi Ssemakula and Hon. Najjuma Sarah. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. Yes, honourable chairperson.

**MR KAJWENGYE:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I can now move to recommendations with regard to what I had stated. We recommend that the planning and budgeting for the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) interventions under the newly created African Union Support

and Stabilisation Mission should replace the re-scoped ATMIS.

On the wage bill, we recommend provision of an additional wage of Shs 312.1 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026 for prioritising salaries for 10,000 trainees, which is Shs 97.5 billion, and to enhance the salary pay for lower cadre UPDF staff. This is a recommendation that we carried last financial year.

On pensions and gratuity, we recommend allocation of Shs 23.8 billion in pensions for the ministry for the Financial Year 2025/2026.

On the maintenance of equipment and aircrafts, we recommend an additional Shs 71.2 billion to be provided for the equipment maintenance and Shs 27.5 billion to be provided for aircrafts maintenance during the Financial Year 2025/2026.

On medical equipment, I report that the committee in its oversight visit looked at the military referral hospital, a monumental achievement of the Ministry of Defence that is going to be opened at the end of this month. We, therefore, recommend a provision of Shs 51.1 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026 for procuring medical equipment for the UPDF health facilities.

On subventions to NEC and Uganda Air Cargo Corporation, we recommend that Shs 6.1 billion be provided to National Enterprises Corporation during the Financial Year 2025/2026 to cover its operations and invest in research and development for whale industries.

The second recommendation is that Shs 381 billion should be provided to Uganda Air Cargo Corporation to procure new aircrafts so as to increase its revenue and our airlift capabilities, especially now that we have operations across borders.

On land compensation claims, we recommend an additional Shs 201.1 billion for land compensation to be provided in the Financial Year 2025/2026.

### Budget for consultancies

With the guidance of the Budget Call circular, the committee noted that the ministry allocated the funds for military operations, “*Shuja*” in DRC and “*Usalama Kwa Wote*” in Karamoja under consultant services. While the committee supports this intervention, the misclassification under consultancies needs to be addressed in the charter of accounts.

We, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development create items in the charter of accounts that relate to special military operations such as Operation “*Shuja*” and “*Usalama Kwa Wote.*”

On regulatory and legal framework, as I had said, in the Financial Year 2025/2026, we recommend that the ministry expedites reviewing the defence policy, the UPDF Act and the National Service Policy in 2025/2026.

On arrears for the utility, we note that the utility arrears for the ministry is Shs 6.2 billion for water consumption and Shs 1.1 billion for electricity consumption. We recommend that the ministry adheres to the commitment control system by not incurring new arrears during the Financial Year 2025/2026.

The previously incurred arrears should be prioritised in the year 2025/2026.

On UPDF water supply, we recommend that Shs 11.53 billion be provided for in the Financial Year 2025/2026 to help the UPDF develop its own water supply sources and reduce reliance but also on the water bills of the National Water and Sewerage Corporation.

### Vote 009 – Ministry of Internal Affairs

On budget performance, Annex one is on the report for honourable colleagues to see. We make a recommendation that the ministry should expedite capturing all human resources in the Human Capital Development System before the end of the year to avoid creating wage bill arrears.

We recommend the provision of a comprehensive policy direction on the payment of affected staff under the RAPEX policy. Another recommendation is that the Electronic Government Procurement System be reviewed to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness in improving service delivery and minimising leakages.

Further, the ministry should expedite upgrading the Trafficking-In-Persons(TIP) database online system in the Financial Year 2025/2026 to monitor workers’ migration activities effectively.

On the budget estimates, the overall budget for 2025/2026, we recommend that the Ministry prioritises and expedites the introduction of the Small Arms and Light Weapons Bill in the Financial Year 2025/2026.

On the development budget, we recommend that the Ministry of Internal Affairs develops other projects to implement multi-year investments that will enhance efficiency in service delivery.

On the trafficking in persons’ system, we recommend the provision of Shs 0.2 billion to be allocated in the Financial Year 2025/2026 to upgrade the TIP database into an online system to enhance the safety of migrant workers.

On reception centres for rescued trafficked persons, we recommend provision of Shs 0.2 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026 to initiate the establishment of reception centres for trafficked persons.

The implementation of the Explosives Act, Cap.319, the committee recommends an additional Shs 13.39 billion to be provided to regulate commercial explosives during the Financial Year 2025/2026.

On the Amnesty Commission, the committee recommends that an additional Shs 2.342 billion be provided for the demobilisation, reinsertion, rehabilitation, and reintegration of reporters and victims in the year 2025/2026.

Vote 120: National Citizenship and Immigration Control

On the budget performance for the year 2024/2025, the annexure is attached. On the expenditure performance, we recommend that the National Citizenship and Immigration Control (NCIC) expedites access of the newly recruited staff to the Human Capital Management System to improve wage bill absorption.

We also recommend that NCIC ensures the expeditious delivery of the outstanding passport booklets to avoid issuance disruptions. The overall budget for 2025/2026 is attached. Our recommendation to that effect is that the project cost for automating immigration citizenship services is adjusted in the multi-year commitments to reflect actual lifespan expenses.

On the porousness of our borders, the committee was informed that 336 illegal crossing points do exist on land and sea, and under the new staffing structure, 1,200 immigration officers are therefore required, with a wage requirement of Shs 4.578 billion for the Financial Year 2025/2026.

We therefore recommend as follows:

1. The NCIC collaborates with sister agencies for border control;
2. The provision of Shs 4,578,000,000 in the Financial Year 2025/2026 to recruit more immigration staff for the NCIC; and
3. That NCIC should equip border posts with advanced technology for medium-term border control.

On transport, logistics and equipment, we recommend an additional Shs 2.910 billion to be made to procure 10 motor vehicles for enhancing inspections, border patrols, and routine surveillance.

On border control management, we recommend an additional Shs 4.016 billion for the efficient traveller clearance at all border posts,

intelligence gathering, marine operations, snap checks, and routine maintenance.

Vote 144: Uganda Police Force

We have reviewed their performance for the first half of the year 2024/2025 budget, and the annexure is there. We have looked at the overall budget performance.

We recommend as follows:

1. Uganda Police Force should develop strategies to address attrition within the police force and enhance procurement planning to improve service delivery; and
2. Uganda Police Force should adhere to the commitment and control system of not incurring new arrears before clearing the previous ones.

On territorial policing, we recommend merging some departments in territorial policing to rationalise resources, as patrols and metropolitan policing are operationally indistinguishable.

On criminal investigations, Mr Speaker, we note that, currently, one detective manages 39 cases under criminal investigations, surpassing the ratio of 1:12 target. This shows that our detectives are overwhelmed, partly due to outdated technology. Therefore, recruiting, equipping and training more detectives is vital to reduce prosecution delays.

Additionally, a murder case requires Shs 15 million for investigation. Police registers 4,000 capital offence cases annually, totalling a need of Shs 60 billion against a Shs 10 billion provision.

We, therefore, recommend that an additional Shs 6 billion for CIID be provided to enhance investigation quality in the Financial Year 2025/2026, and the balance over the medium term.

On the budget estimates for the Financial Year 2025/2026, the annexure is there for you to see.



On the overall performance of the budget under the UPF, we recommend reallocating funds from the assistance to Uganda Police Force projects to critical UPF areas. Uganda Police Force must create a comprehensive successor project for nationwide investments.

The second recommendation is that the Uganda Police Force should expedite the preparation and approval processes of the CCTV Phase III Project to ensure its inclusion in the national plan budget.

We reviewed the traffic and road safety and, therefore, recommend as follows:

1. An additional Shs 7.577 billion for transport equipment be provided;
2. Shs 1 billion for an IOV inspection lane and certification centre to be provided;
3. Shs 18 billion for 10 mobile inspection stations for IOV to be provided;
4. Uganda Police Force should link the EPS to the NIRA database; and
5. Uganda's driver licensing system should be adjusted to capture details of foreigners who commit traffic offences.

On police accommodation and the ongoing construction projects, we note that 74 per cent of the police officers lack institutional accommodation. However, the Uganda Police Force is working on a police accommodation project. This project is excluded from PIP.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs plans to build 69,000 housing units for the Uganda Police Force and Uganda Prisons Service, and the DCIC, through a PPP arrangement.

We, therefore, recommend that the Uganda Police Force accelerates the completion of the accommodation project to comprehensively address police accommodation challenges in the year 2025/2026.

On the subcounty policing model – this is a flagship security solution to the country, initiated by His Excellency, the President, and it is now under implementation. The model aims to use limited resources in subcounties

to improve policing services for communities, including establishing a police station in each area, following:

1. Deployment of a minimum of 18 personnel;
2. Two motorcycles per police station;
3. A counter phone and radio communication;
4. An office; and
5. Staff accommodation for at least 18 personnel.

The Uganda Police Force has tested this model in Greater Masaka in the Financial Year 2023/2024, establishing 892, which is 41 per cent of the 2,190 subcounties, nationwide.

In the Financial Year 2025/2026, Shs 5 billion is allocated for the construction of 30 model police stations and completing 11 in greater Masaka, along with acquiring 333 motorcycles and communication equipment.

However, there is a funding gap of Shs 557 billion. We, therefore, recommend that Shs 587 billion be provided for the nationwide rollout of the subcounty policing model.

On crime management, we recommend that Shs 17 billion be provided for CIID investigations and Shs 2.3 billion for crime intelligence in the Financial Year 2025/2026.

On the Canine Unit, we see that expanding the Canine units to 36 locations of Budaka, Bukomansimbi, Butambala, Zombo, Adjumani, Madi-Okollo, Pakwach, Vurra, Kaberamaido, Koboko, Terego, Maracha, Moyo, Ayivuni, Buyende, Kaliro, Namutumba, Ngora, Hima, Namisindwa, Kwania, Agago, Nwoya, Amuru, Kyankwanzi, Apac, Kole, aerodromes and border points of Jinja, Soroti, Arua, Mbarara, Kisoro, Mpondwe, Katuna and Mirama Hills nationwide, requires an additional Shs 2.259 billion.

The unit faces challenges with unreliable transport for sniffer dogs to crime scenes. Reliable transport is needed at the district stations, requiring Shs 28.44 billion for equipment in 29 regions.

We recommend, therefore, as follows:

1. Shs 2.259 billion be provided to expand the K9 unit to 39 locations; and
2. Shs 10 billion be provided for the transport of sniper dogs to district stations in Financial Year 2025/2026, with the balance allocated over the medium term.

Mr Speaker, I now move to vote 145 – Uganda Prison Services. We have reviewed the budget performance for the first half of Financial Year 2024/2025. The annex is there to see.

We have looked at the overall budget performance and, therefore, recommend merging the units into one called “Operations”, excluding the anti-stock unit, which operates distinctly in the Financial Year 2025/2026. These savings will be reallocated to critical areas under the Uganda Police Force (UPF).

We move to page 30, Mr Speaker. There was a printing problem, but arrears payments, development budget, revitalisation of prison industries, enhancement of prisons reduction system, and value addition project on budget estimates were also reviewed for the Uganda Prisons Service. We also looked at prisoner accommodation, and the committee was informed that the prisoner population rises by 8 per cent annually, reaching 372 per cent occupancy, and straining food, sleeping quarters, maintenance, medical care and staffing.

Uganda Prisons Service plans to build 50 prison wards in the current prisons, to decongest existing wards but has a Shs 3.786 billion funding shortfall. We, therefore, recommend that Shs 18 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026 be provided for the construction of one minimax prison, and an additional Shs 3.78 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026 be provided to build 50 wards in existing prisons to decongest prison wards.

Mr Speaker, on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) development, we recommend an additional Shs 5 billion to be provided for phase two of the

prison’s management information system in the Financial Year 2025/2026, and additional funding of digital communication, virtual courts, and offender monitoring systems to spread over the medium term.

On staff accommodation, we note that there are no funds provided for 79 two-bedroom houses costing Shs 7.9 billion, and additionally, 3,000 low-cost staff houses need Shs 7.04 billion. The budget allocates for 800 houses at Shs 2.56 billion, leaving a funding gap of Shs 46.801 billion for staff accommodation.

Mr Speaker, we accordingly recommend that Shs 46.801 billion be provided to enhance the Uganda Prisons Service staff accommodation.

On the relocation of prison headquarters, Mr Speaker, this has remained outstanding throughout the Fiscal Year 2024/2025. Plans for relocation must be finalised in the Fiscal Year 2025/2026.

Moving from Parliamentary Avenue to create more office space for the Parliament of Uganda. Uganda Prisons Service needs Shs 43.56 billion for a new prison headquarters in Luzira. Shs 15 billion will be needed to start the project in one year. We, therefore, recommend, Mr Speaker, that Shs 43.56 billion be provided over the medium term for the Uganda Prisons Service to construct its headquarters in Luzira, and vacate the current headquarters at Parliamentary Avenue to provide the space for Uganda for honourable Members of Parliament, which remains outstanding.

On prisoners’ feeding, the committee was informed that the daily average of 88,829 prisoners at Shs 5,550 each cost Shs 21.825 billion, covering only 274 of the 366 days. This leaves a funding gap of Shs 44.99 billion. We, therefore, recommend that Shs 44.99 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026, be provided to feed our prisoners.

Prisoners’ uniforms

We recommend allocating an additional Shs 1.3 billion to procure uniforms for prisoners.

On prisoners' health care support, we recommend allocating Shs 6.5 billion over the medium term to fully equip the new staff.

On domestic arrears, we recommend that the Uganda Prisons Service strictly adheres to the commitment control system, and prioritises the clearance of areas before incurring new ones.

Vote 135: Directorate of Government Analytical Laboratory (DGAL)

Mr Speaker, we reviewed these. We looked at the budget performance and expenditures. We recommend that DGAL expedite recruitment clearance processes by the ministries of Internal Affairs and Public Service in the Financial Year 2024/2025.

We looked at the Non-Tax Revenue (NTR) performance and the overall budget and made the following recommendations: Shs 0.659 billion, in addition to the current wage bill estimate, be made to DGAL to fill 17 vacant positions at regional laboratories.

We also recommend that DGAL accelerates the National Data Bank Infrastructure Project as a standalone project to enhance transparency and accountability in the Financial Year 2025/2026.

We looked at the construction of the National Data Bank. We toured that. We recommended that it should be a standalone project for implementing the National Data Bank to facilitate project monitoring and supervision.

On the acquisition of motor vehicles, we recommend that Shs 0.973 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026 should be made available to purchase motor vehicles for regional forensic laboratories.

On the operationalisation of DGAL regional laboratories, we recommend that Shs 1 billion in the financial year be made available to construct a regional forensic laboratory in Hoima to operationalise the regional forensic labs over the medium term.

On the acquisition of modern scientific equipment, we recommend that Shs 5.4 billion is allocated for modern scientific equipment to enhance forensic services, support justice, and ensure public health and environmental safety in the Fiscal Year 2025/2026.

On Vote 139: National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA), and this is the last, Mr Speaker. We looked at their budget performance, and the details are there.

We recommend that NIRA expedites the recruitment of data processors and the procurement of National Identity materials.

On the budget estimate for the Financial Year 2025/2026, the annexure is attached, on the mass enrolment and renewal project. Mr Speaker, we were informed that there would be 6,096,674 new registrations and 5.26669 million identity card renewals in the Financial Year 2025/2026.

We already have 16,382,901 blank ID cards that will be procured at a cost of Shs 145.25 billion. Only Shs 24 billion is allocated, leaving a funding gap of Shs 120.72 billion. We therefore recommend that Shs 120.72 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026 Budget be provided to enable NIRA to complete the mass enrollment exercise before the 2026 general elections.

On civil registration services, Mr Speaker, we recommend allocating Shs 11.981 billion to NIRA over the medium term to fully support civil registration and certification services.

On the alien registration and alien card issuance. During the Financial Year 2025/2026, the focus will be on registering 30,000 aliens legally residing in Uganda. These individuals will receive alien cards from National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA). This activity remains unfunded though and it will require Shs 1.08 billion. We, therefore, recommend that Shs 1.08 billion be provided to NIRA during the Financial Year 2025/2026 to register and issue these aliens with IDs.

Strengthening birth and death registration in health facilities

We recommend that NIRA should facilitate accurate record keeping of birth and death in health facilities.

Payment of arrears

We recommend that NIRA should prioritise paying Shs 5 billion owed to Muelbauer to prevent litigation expenses.

Adequate staff

We recommend provision of Shs 6.89 billion to be allocated to reach the underserved districts in order to enhance efficiency in the delivery of the authority's mandate in the year 2025/2026.

Continuous identification and issuance of National ID card services

We recommend an additional Shs 1.1 billion for the continuous provision of IDs.

NIRA Headquarters

We recommend that NIRA should accelerate the development of a project to guide the construction of its headquarters during the Financial Year 2025/2026.

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs acknowledges that its institutions are vital for a peaceful and secure country. During the presentation of the ministerial policy statements, concerns were raised about the minimum funding for these institutions, which hinders their ability to fulfil their mandates. Supporting these institutions in the Financial Year 2025/2026 budget strategy is crucial for a successful execution. The committee amended the budget proposals as detailed in Annex 3 to promote effective use of resources.

Therefore, the committee recommends that this House adopts its report and approves the budget estimates with the committee's recommendation for 2025/2026 as proposed.

Mr Speaker, I beg to report.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, committee chairperson. We have the Minister of State for Internal Affairs in the House. We shall benefit from his presence here so that we can continue with the debate. For now, let me open the debate.

Hon. Muwuma and Hon. Linda.

4.38

**MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County, South, Iganga):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Allow me to thank the chair -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You have three minutes each, honourable members.

**MR MUWUMA:** Allow me to thank the chairperson of the committee for the good report. Mr Speaker, when it comes to salary enhancement of the police officers, allow me to thank the Government, the President and the leadership of the Uganda Police Force for considering the lower cadres in the Uganda Police Force with that enhancement that was done, most especially to the corporals up to the IPs.

Last weekend, I interacted with some of the beneficiaries of this enhancement. To my dismay, some received the package that was in view of the promotions that they attained and others have never got up to now. Therefore, I would like the minister to get interested in this; how some of the beneficiaries got the enhancement package against those that he did not get. I think we need to clarify this so that all police personnel are treated the same way.

When it comes to expansion of the prison wards for the inmates, it is good to have a minimax expanded or created here at Luzira, but I propose or wish that we have these wards constructed at the traditional or the regional headquarters.

For example, if we had one expanded in the east, another one in the north and another one

in the west, it would match some of the news circuits that were created by the Judiciary. Almost every three or four districts have had High Court sessions taking place, but you find that the suspects are again referred to Luzira. It is an inconvenience for someone to travel from Moroto to check on a suspect here in Luzira. Therefore, if we decentralise these new wards for inmates in a bit to decongest, it will help a lot.

Finally, on NIRA, the renewal of national IDs, we need to be clear. When are we having the national IDs renewed? Today, I am carrying an ID, but tomorrow it is supposed to expire. I do not know what happens. We will be going for nominations soon, and for this alone, somebody can deny you nomination because your ID expired. Can we be clear? When are our national IDs going to be renewed countrywide? I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Linda Irene then followed by Hon. Modoi.

4.42

**MS LINDA IRENE (NRM, Woman Representative, Fort Portal City):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would also like to thank the chairperson for the good report.

Mr Speaker, my issue is the lack of transport for the police officers. The greater Kabarole, before Fort Portal became a city, had one police station. With the creation of the city, three more police stations were created, but they are currently sharing only one vehicle. Therefore, the other three police stations do not have transport.

My prayer is that they should budget for transport for these police stations so that they are able to provide effective services to the people.

Lastly, these divisions, where they are, were given land, but they do not have a budget for development. I also request that in this budget, they should provide funds so that they can construct buildings for these police stations. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Isaac Modoi, followed by Hon. Dorcas Acen, Hon. Nsamba and Hon. Ssasaga.

4.43

**MR ISAAC MODOI (NRM, Lutseshe County, Bududa):** Mr Speaker, I thank the chairman for the presentation. It touches all of us and I am happy you guided that at a later stage, we should be given ample time to raise issues concerning the report. This is because the security of this country is very fundamental for the development of socio-economic development of this country.

In the report, the recommendations have been made, particularly on the welfare of our security people. It is upon their security and welfare that the security of this country will be guaranteed. I hope we shall discuss.

I am happy that the issue of equity has been raised because when you go down there in the field, there are some people whose salaries have been enhanced. We wondered what criteria was used because there are those on the same rank, where some people have been paid, and others have not. When you ask what the criteria was, they tell you to leave that alone - even the promotions. I think some even go out there - my colleagues may testify. Some ask us how they can be able to be elevated or even be posted to a better station.

On the question of the high numbers of prisoners, I think we used to have what we call, "visiting justice" in prisons, even at police station cells to establish how some people have overstayed in prisons. You may find some people have stayed there for so long on petty matters and those with serious issues are released.

On the question of deployment, I would like to thank the President. He said that in order to enhance the security at the subcounty, there will be deployment of policemen. Now, in the Elgon zone - maybe my colleagues will help me out - it seems the deployment at the subcounty has not been made. In the subcounty, we are supposed to have policemen with the police

commandant to ensure that those areas are covered.

Other than that, I thank the chairman for the report and I think this report needs to be discussed in detail because it touches on the internal and external deployment; the welfare of our men and women in uniform.

As if that is not enough, there is also an issue of professionalism. The question of professionalism needs to be addressed because we have invested in it heavily, but when you see some conduct, which is in our public, you question it; is this the professionalism that we have been yearning for? Could there be something that could be done? I thank the men and women in uniform for standing with this country and providing us security. Thank you very much, Mr speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Dorcas Acen, then Hon. Nsamba.

4.45

**MS DORCAS ACEN (NRM, Woman Representative, Alebtong):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for this report and specifically agree with the idea of additional Shs Billion that is supposed to support the National Citizenship and Immigration Control, especially on the issue of border control management.

However, Mr Speaker and the Minister in charge of this, I would like to raise the issue that Ugandans face, especially—you have raised the issue of border demarcation, particularly on the South Sudan border; Ugandans have faced challenges since we scrapped payment for visas.

There are several other fees which Ugandans are paying at the border, especially on the South Sudan side.

I urge the minister to interest himself and his team on what can be done, to support our Ugandan nationals, who cross to the other side, yet, they pay a lot of fees which are related to clearance of the travellers. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Nsamba.

4.47

**MR PATRICK NSAMBA (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. When I heard the Chairperson adding these billions- the entire story is about addition of billions.

It just sent me to think that maybe we need a rule that caps committees from requesting monies. We cannot have committees saying, add the money, add the money, that means, every committee is going to come here and say add the money, add the money; which scrutiny are we doing? If committees cannot achieve that, I think a rule should come that probably, when you are making adjustments and requests, you should not go beyond this. Otherwise, we will have a lot of wish lists, which means nothing at the end of the day.

Having said that, I needed to hear, in this committee report, matters to do with our deployment in South Sudan. I need to know who is going to pay.

Mr Chairperson, this is the stage when you are going to tell us; this is how much we are paying for this war, and this is what South Sudan is contributing, for our children, for our army to be in South Sudan.

Somehow, the Chairperson and the committee chooses to just keep silent about it. I want to hear that at this stage of budgeting; what is the estimated time for our army being in South Sudan at the time?

Mr Speaker, it is important for us also to hear, the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) in South Sudan, how much are they going to be compensated for being there? When they are here, they are sacrificing for their country. In the army, they sacrifice for their country and go for a little pay. How much is going to be added to them for being in South Sudan and who is paying that cost?

Mr Chairperson, I really need to hear those issues, but I think, now that the Minister of

Internal Affairs is around, he might have been briefed by the Minister who deployed our army in South Sudan. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Ssasaga.

4.49

**MR ISAIAS SSASAGA (FDC, Budadiri County East, Sironko):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Chairperson for the report, but I have two to four issues: One is about the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA). Moreover, the money used to be given for the registration exercise. You need to be very clear.

There are people who have Identification Cards (IDs) and they are expiring this year. Mine, personally is expiring in 2030. Also, there are children who were registered in schools, both in primary and secondary, sometime back but to date, they have not got their IDs.

Are they going to be part of the new registration to be given IDs? Or you are going to use the old ones—the money we first provided to register them?

The second one is about the prisons. I have continuously raised here, the issue of Mutufu Prison, which was constructed for 150 inmates, but currently has 350 inmates. I have been on this Floor of Parliament for some time about the same.

Let me hope, among the 50 units to be constructed, Mutufu Prison is among them.

I also wonder why the committee is more interested in recommending the amendment of the UPDF Act. Actually, I looked through the report, but I do not see a good reason for the amendment but they are interested in it. Maybe the minister can ably tell us which gaps are in the Act.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, Rule 80; anticipation. let us wait.

**MR SSASAGA:** Lastly, regarding the Police, I do not know which specific ones you are going to support with the expansion and construction, but we have Masaba Police Station, which is as old as the East African times. I remember them going to the community to support them with the construction. I do not know whether in your budget, you have captured, for example, Masaba Police Station. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Nyangweso, Hon. Kenny Auma, Hon. Paska Menya.

4.50

**MR DENNIS NYANGWESO, (Independent, Samia-Bugwe Central County, Busia):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. Allow me to thank the committee chairperson for the wonderful report.

I have two issues to raise: One is the issue of construction of police stations in the country, and I want to thank the ministry for prioritising this. However, when you look at the Busia Police Station, Busia is strategically located because it is at the border. We have been asking the police to prioritise the construction of Busia Police Station. When you move from Kenya to Uganda, you are served at Busia Police Station. It is very dilapidated, the opposite of the Kenyan side.

The Minister of Internal Affairs has been promising to prioritise the construction of this station, but this has not been put in the budget and I hope the minister has a comment about this.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I want to talk about the congestion in prisons. To curb congestion in the prisons, the Government introduced a community service and community service orders have been issued from time to time. Just like Hon. Mdoi has said, maybe, it is now time to do an audit on this community service, is it serving the purpose?

We have been funding it, but the issue of congestion in prisons is still increasing. So, honourable minister, you need to look at this,

report to us at an opportune time, and seek more support. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Kenny Auma.

4.54

**MS KENNY AUMA (UPC, Woman Representative, Kwania):** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I thank the Chairperson for the good report that he has presented. However, my concern is about the outposts that are going to be established in each and every subcounty.

Aware that we have several subcounties that have around 10 or seven parishes; when they put 18 police officers in one subcounty, what about other parishes that do not have the outpost?

We have seen a scenario where a sub county is very big and has many villages. In case of a problem somewhere, the police officers need to go from that sub county to that very place, yet sometimes, they tell you they do not have fuel for their motorcycles and ask you to send them money before reaching where there is a problem.

Mr Speaker, I request that outposts be placed in all parishes throughout the country if possible. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Paska Menya. Colleagues, I will not pick all of you because we have other statements where you will submit.

4.56

**MS PASKA MENYA (Independent, Woman Representative, Pader):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Chairperson of the committee for the report. My concern is about the police. As we look into providing transport means, I implore the Ministry to put into consideration supporting them with sufficient fuel.

In most cases, Mr Speaker, when the police are required to go to a crime scene, they are not able to because of the inadequacy of fuel.

In any case, they even request the people to help mobilise for fuel so that they can go and respond. When we look at the issue of transport, we must consider that transport goes together with fuel.

Secondly, I would like to address the issue of prisons. I support the issue of decongesting our prisons. To speak specifically about Pader District, Mr Speaker, it is alarming and disappointing that the district does not have enough space for inmates.

As I speak, Pader prison does not have electricity, and it is insecure for inmates to be in a dark place. By its own means, we are creating more insecurity. So, as we are looking at areas of improving our prisons, we are considering extending electricity to the prisons. Thank you.

4.57

**MS BRENDA NABUKENYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Luweero):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the chairperson for the report. I support the area where they want to procure two motorcycles for subcounty police stations. I also invite the minister to think about residential houses for police officers at subcounties. Most times, they have to look for places to stay and have to work throughout the night.

Honourable colleagues have raised the issue of fuel. Because we usually limit them because we do not provide money for fuel; goes to different things but it should be prioritised.

On the prisons budget, I never saw a provision for sanitary towels under logistical requirements for female prisoners.

There was a big debate here, where prisoners who have been in prison come out and say that they at times go for monthly periods but cannot access sanitary towels.

Not every prisoner has a family that is able to procure for them and deliver to the prisons. We need to think about the females because we have a lot of them, and the budget must include all their needs because they are in the custody of the Government in the prisons.



Mr Speaker, that issue is very important and the honourable minister needs to take note. If it is included in the budget, she should inform us. If not, then they should think about it. Thank you.

4.59

**DR GEORGE BHOKA (NRM, Obongi County, Obongi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I would like to thank the committee for the report. I have two issues that I would like to observe and pray for.

First, 23 years ago, gallant men and women who were fighting for their rights sat down and agreed with the Government to speak and sign peace. That is why on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April, His Excellency the President is going to West Nile to commemorate the 23 years of peace.

The ex-combatants, who laid down arms, were promised ex-gratia by this Government. but twenty-three years down the road, they have not been given their ex-gratia.

While the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs has been preparing with the West Nile Parliamentary Caucus to mark 23 years of peace, one of the messages that was passed to them was that on that day, they will be commissioning the payment of their ex-gratia, but it turns out that there is no budget provided for it.

We would like this committee to clarify to the House what happened because many of these are men and women who have aged. And they are in a desperate state.

The second issue is related to the new districts that have either no central police station or very small police stations. Others are operating under trees; a case in point is Obongi. We look forward, in the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to have a roadmap for the construction of befitting central police stations for these new districts that do not have them. Thank you.

5.02

**DR EMELY KUGONZA (NRM, Buyanja East County, Kibaale):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to applaud the chairperson and the committee for a very comprehensive report, and I am picking out two issues. One of them is the subcounty policing model.

I wish to thank the Government for this innovative approach but my concern is more about the planning. This morning, the chairperson of one of the subcounties in my constituency called Karama, where 12 police officers have been deployed, called me that this very subcounty does not have an office but also, the police itself does not have buildings.

The chairperson was calling to ask me to mobilise other leaders to accommodate these 12 officers in anticipation of another six being deployed. I am appealing to the Government to do thorough planning because we need the police officers spread across, but they also need to be catered for; otherwise, they will turn into a menace.

The second aspect concerns facilitating district police stations. For example, in Kibaale, we do not have a vehicle. The vehicle that was provided many years ago is grounded on the road when it moves for one kilometre.

Yet this vehicle is supposed to take care of hundreds of thousands of people in that place. We appeal to the Government to provide sufficient transport to the district so that we can monitor security in the area.

Many times, they rely on borrowing from us but we also have other priorities. Sometimes, the District Police Commander speaks to the Resident District Commissioner to provide the transport, yet the RDC also has other engagements. Therefore, I support the idea of providing for resources.

Somebody raised a matter here that the committee was saying that we need additional resources. I am glad that these issues came out because we need everybody, our property secured and this can only be by facilitating

the team that is responsible for that. I thank the committee and you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

5.04

**MR ROBERT WANDWASI (NRM, Bungokho County South, Mbale):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also join the rest in appreciating the report given to us by the chairperson of the committee. After listening to the budgetary allocations, in Uganda, we have a very active group of the auxiliary force, commonly known as the reserve force. Whenever there is a need for our country to offer security to our neighbours, the UPDF has always been deploying the auxiliary force to supplement on the security efforts during the missions.

However, there have been complaints that whenever these gallant men and women come back from their foreign missions, they are hardly paid their emoluments. How I wish that in these budget processes, the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs budgets for the auxiliary force because they do a lot of work.

Secondly, I appreciate the ministry for allocating police posts at subcounty levels. However, Mr Speaker, there is an accommodation gap. The police posts that are opened at the subcounty level are hardly provided with accommodation facilities.

As much as the Government has enhanced their salaries, if accommodation is not taken care of, I believe they will not perform. My request is for the ministry to make provisions for accommodation to take care of our gallant men and women in uniform at subcounty levels.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Frank Kabuye?

5.06

**MR FRANK KABUYE (NUP, Kassanda County South, Kassanda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson for the report that has tried to highlight the situation, especially on the welfare of our men in uniform. Many colleagues have spoken about the welfare

of our policemen or ladies in uniform, who try to keep peace and order in the communities. This remains a big challenge, looking at where they reside or the shelters they live in as well as the conditions under which they work.

When you go to Nalutuntu, a subcounty in my constituency – it is on the Mubende-Mityana Highway – it lacks a patrol car for emergency response. In case of accidents, we have to wait for a patrol car from Kassanda police headquarters.

Looking at transportation, I think it is high time we prioritised giving transport means and look at how they will be facilitated to keep them functional. Many of the motor vehicles or motorcycles that are given out lack repair budget allocations, to maintain them and keep them in good shape. It is mostly us, the leaders, that try to reach out to see that this equipment is kept operational to help the communities.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, when you look at the issue of congested prisons, I have seen the committee's resolutions and recommendations urging us to allocate more funds to build more prisons. How I wish this Parliament questions itself on how justice is denied or delayed to these individuals or inmates in these prisons. We have been advocating and crying out to the Government to come and let the justice ministry or the justice sector to provide justice to these young people who are held in prisons.

Most of them are on political cases. We believe that if their cases were ruled on or dismissed, we could reduce the congestion other than just looking at the aspect of giving money to build more prisons. We should look at capacitating the judicial services to be able to handle all the cases that have been submitted to their charge. We cannot only be looking at building more prisons to accommodate our people, mostly the young people.

I remember that we received a report here, and among the inmates, there was someone that was arrested and remanded even before I was born – (*Member timed out.*)

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, when you need more time, you request for it.

**MR KABUYE:** I request for one minute –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You request when you have already allocated it to yourself? *(Laughter)* Please, conclude.

**MR KABUYE:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was concluding on a point that I remember we received a report of one of the inmates being on remand for even a time beyond my age. I remember you requested for a comprehensive report about this remand, and I think it is high time we prioritised delivering justice rather than building more facilities to accommodate our people and reduce their productivity.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition? *(Members rose)* Honourable colleagues, we have more reports, which I will allow you to speak on.

5.10

**MR MUHAMMAD MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala):** Mr Speaker, let me start with the low-hanging one to the Minister of Internal Affairs. Hon. Nalukoola has been here with his maiden speech. He said that in Kawempe North, there are still continuing arrests and harassment of his voters – quite a number of them are being arrested and imprisoned. Could you give us a report on why police and other agencies continue to harass voters in Kawempe, when the elections have long ended?

I am seeing a common occurrence on all Votes – of arrears that are unfunded. I have looked at prisons, with Shs 120 billion in arrears. All of that money is for the service providers, and it is not budgeted for. I wonder how we can pass a budget when we consumed commodities – goods – of our business people, and we have not budgeted for them. I have seen it in the National Identification Registration Authority (NIRA), Defence and Veteran Affairs.

When I counted the arrears in Defence and Veteran Affairs, they are almost going to Shs 500 billion or thereabout. That is a huge sum of money in arrears and this is collapsing our businesses. Could we, as the committee, not have interrogated this matter to see that the agency continues to accumulate arrears, yet they cannot pay?

Also, I have seen here a project called the Solar Project in Nakasongola. A similar project was piloted in Kololo. We spent Shs 7 billion to build a solar system that would even go to the national grid, but since some five to seven years ago, not a single voltage – is it watt, voltage or megawatt? – is being generated at Kololo –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, they should not mislead you. A megawatt is very big. *(Laughter)* By the time the solar plant reaches a megawatt – you can say kilowatt.

**MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI:** There is not a single unit of kilowatt from Kololo to the national grid. I see us allocating an additional Shs 20 billion to this white elephant project, now in Nakasongola. The argument then – I was in internal affairs – was that the Kololo project was a pilot one – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition (LOP), please, switch on.

**MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI:** You are rolling over this. How do you roll out a failed project and allocate money to it? I do not know whether you had no institutional memory to ask them. They took a committee to China to see procurement that never came through. Shs 9 billion was taken in Kololo. All of you know Kololo. There is no solar being generated there. Now, you are saying we should give Nakasongola another Shs 20 billion.

I have also seen here an alarming figure, in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The number of people being trafficked has gone up by 185 per cent – from 180 to 2,000 and something human beings were being trafficked, and that report is for 2022. You seem not to have the figures for

this year. If you are to go by that trajectory, we are on the increase.

We have this number of people being trafficked and we continue to give money. What is the ministry doing when so many Ugandans – and I have seen the small amount of money that you are allocating for missions abroad for people who want to return back. It is a paltry sum of money. So, in this budget process, what are you doing to curb human trafficking?

You also put money into building new prisons and police stations, but there are police stations that still have asbestos across the country. The Minister of Health is here. It has been many years since we outlawed asbestos as a hazard to health. What is happening? That you are allocating money to build new prisons when you are causing cancer to some prison officers who are still staying in- This is a small amount of money. What will it take a country to eliminate that?

What will it also take a country to eliminate – I have seen in this report, you still have a bucket. Mr Speaker, you and I have been in the prison. We know how humiliating a bucket is. What will it take in terms of budget allocation for this country to say, there is no longer a bucket system in every prison?

For those who do not know the bucket system, it is where you - let me leave it at that – (*Laughter*) - However, how do we live in this century, you are talking about steady progress of a Government that has been there for 40 years and they still want to continue, and you are presiding over a bucket system in your prisons?

Lastly, the Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs is not here. We are going to spend a whopping Shs 5 trillion on our defence expenditure. A great deal of it is going to wage war or enforce peace across the border. How do we not start a debate of enhancing democracy in our neighbouring countries and reduce this cost? I do not see it being sustainable that we are the ones enforcing peace in the region. How are we getting dividends?

Today, we know that for America to supply Ukraine with the weapons, it gets minerals. How are we being paid? We cannot be so charitable with both our human and equipment to Sudan. They have oil. Where are the agreements that they will pay us back? Where is the agreement with the Congo? We cannot be just throwing money like that.

Countries have changed their approach. We give you security, pay us. If you do not have money, have the debt to pay. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable minister?

5.17

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will start with the last one from Hon. Kivumbi. If I can try to speak for ministry for defence, Shs 5 trillion, what is the cost to the country? By the flip side, Hon. Kivumbi, it is costlier.

If South Sudan imploded, I think you would pay more. For our security, trade and interests, I think we need to be there, if we can. Where we can, we need to be there. We need to be in Eastern Congo because of the security vacuum, which affords our enemies to plan and cause havoc here.

You also talked about the bucket system. May I request that I get an update on that one and then share with Parliament so that we know where we are on that aspect? It is not desirable, like Hon. Kivumbi said, to have buckets in our prisons at this point in time. I want to get a report and then share with Parliament.

Police stations in asbestos, we have been de-roofing asbestos countrywide. Some few remain but I think we need to expedite the process so that we remove this health hazard as far as it affects our service personnel.

Trafficking of persons' increase is a very topical issue. Unfortunately, in spite of the effort of Government, it most times has the complicity

of those trafficked. That is why you see these numbers going up. Either parents trafficking their children or our children going abroad to seek employment. I think we need to put our heads together, not just ministry for internal affairs, but even Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to see how to tackle this huge problem; and maybe, even create incentives here to deter these young people going to risky places abroad.

On utilities, Hon. Kivumbi, I want to say that there is power in Kololo. I do not have the statistics but that solar plant is working. Maybe, I will ask Hon. Oboth to get more concrete information and share with Parliament about that matter.

In Kawempe, you talked about arrests going on. I want to say I need more information about this because there are other offenders other than, maybe, political offenders. I would want to know before I make a specific response. There are arrests in Kawempe and also in other areas to the extent that people break the law. I want to have that substantiated so that we can answer authoritatively.

The other question was from Hon. Frank. He talked about the need for a comprehensive approach. I cannot agree more about case backlog. Even Hon. Kivumbi talked about it. Building more prisons is not the solution, I agree. It is a matter between us and Justice, Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and all those players. We need more innovative ways of addressing this backlog other than building more prisons.

Welfare of service personnel, shelter, working conditions; Hon. Frank talked about Nalutuntu transport. That is why we are here. The means of transport are too few and far between our stations and their maintenance costs. The other day in Cabinet, we talked about and passed the need to introduce electric motorcycles to offset the costs of fuel, which Members have mainly talked about.

Therefore, we are awake to the concerns of Members. With the support of Parliament, the

means - of course, it comes to that – we shall address these logistical challenges of our men in uniform.

Somebody talked about reservists and auxiliaries being called up for missions abroad, that they are not paid. What I want to acknowledge is that there may be delays in payment but there is no segregation between active people in the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) and those who are reservists. If they go to a mission in Somalia, they all get paid the same. I want to get more substantiation here so that I refer it to the Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs to give more directed answers to that concern.

Hon. Kugonza on subcounty policing model and accommodation lacking, I want to take it up with you. It is unfortunate that we send people without matching accommodation. Where we send people, we should provide uniports. This is a right and there is no roundabout about that matter. Hon. Kugonza, we shall take it up and ensure that our people in that area get accommodation.

Hon. Bhoka Didi, 23 years of peace there has been a backlog regarding the veterans of West Nile. It is always sensitive, especially around election time but that backlog has been addressed incrementally. We even had to set up the veteran docket under the ministry for defence to handle that matter dedicatedly. The backlog is reducing. There may be some outstanding people who are not paid but they will be paid. I want to promise.

The police station at Obongi, we shall examine that one. However, I want to suggest that we review plan for police posts countrywide so that we decide what is possible within the means available and what can be spread over the medium and long term.

Hon. Brenda Nabukenya asked about motorcycles for police stations, and residential places: It has been talked about.

On fuel and then specific requirements for female inmates, I will consult with the prisons

authorities. Indeed, like you said, there are some inmates who do not have family, and it is the duty of the State to provide for their specific requirements, which they cannot afford to cater for themselves.

The other one was from Hon. Nyangweso; construction of police stations in Busia. I think the comprehensive plan will provide an answer to this one.

Community service, congestion in prison, and an audit of community service. Yes, indeed, why not? What has it done?

However, I think in addition to community service, you need to be alive to the question of the gravity of the offence which matters, because it is mostly those with light offences that go for community service. Therefore, the gravity of offences also matters. We need to look at issues of remission, expediting court cases to ensure that – and the screening that Hon. Frank talked about; that we decongest in a meaningful way.

Hon. Auma said we should go down to the parish from the subcounty. If wishes were horses, beggars would ride. We are grappling with the problem of the subcounty; so I think we need to be dedicated at one level, before we trickle down to the parish. We need to start somewhere before we go in an ambitious way to the parish level.

Hon. Ssasaga talked about IDs. I think I need to present a comprehensive report on the matter of enrolment. I would like to announce that we are finally about to embark on enrolment within the month of May.

Our plan is to do a pilot on some government persons, starting with the ministry and National Identification and Registration Authority maybe, and then we launch it nationally. We have tested all the things; equipment came and all the requirements that we received through the funding you provided, are all in place. Data and software issues have been sorted.

Finally, we are going to start, although I need to give you a more comprehensive report

because as parliamentarians, you are key in the communication regarding this very important exercise.

Students who are registered and their IDs have not been issued; I think we also need to address this. However, if their IDs are still valid, they will still get the old IDs, unless they elect to enrol and get the new ones, which, of course, have more enhanced features, including the iris.

On Mutufu Prison construction, I think we need to look at this in the comprehensive plan for construction of prisons and then give a more authoritative answer.

Somebody spoke – but I think the Speaker said that we should not talk about the UPDF Bill. It will come because Cabinet passed it, and when it does, Members will be at liberty to comment about the scope and contents of the amendments that are planned in that very important Bill.

Hon. Nsamba talked about the capstone on additions in the budget by committees. That one is a question addressed to Hon. Wilson Kajwengye and I think he will answer that one. However, for me as a beneficiary, I am glad that Hon. Kajwengye and his committee, in their wisdom, saw the logic of making additions to our budgets.

The other one was from Hon. Muwuma on salary enhancement – That some people get it and others do not. That one is not acceptable. Salary is even property, as decided by court – I hope everybody knows that. Therefore, we shall investigate it and ensure that those, for whom the enhancements were done, get their dues. If it is arrears, they must get their dues. There is no way around that one. I will need some substantiation from Hon. Muwuma for me to follow up with the police leadership.

Expansion of accommodation for prisoners; minimax at Luzira, wards at regional headquarters, preferably to match the court circuits. I think this is important for us to work as the entire Government, instead of working in silos. I will interrogate the idea of the prison

and how it fits into the new court circuit system. Hon. Muwuma, that is a very important and innovative idea.

On the lack of transport for the Police, I think this has been well-spoken about and we have answered it.

DCIC; Uganda nationals challenged in South Sudan. Some of these arrangements are reciprocal within the EAC and some are bilateral. When it comes to South Sudan, I think we need to talk to the foreign affairs ministry and the other players. We need to verify why our citizens are discriminated against and pay higher fees, and then interrogate our colleagues across the border so that we give a more authoritative position on the matter to alleviate the life of our people across the border, who go for trade and other activities.

Mr Speaker, that is what I had and I hope it answers some or most of your questions.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable chairperson, do you have some answers?

**MR KAJWENGYE:** Thank you. Mr Speaker, I think there were three specific questions that I wish to address, and speaking after the minister makes me feel uneasy, but you gave me permission.

The first one was: As a committee, why are we interested in amending the UPDF Act? That question came from Hon. Ssasaga, I guess –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** But honourable member, I ruled on that.

**MR KAJWENGYE:** Thank you. Gone.

Secondly, Hon. Nsamba Oshabe asked the committee why we are adding – but, Mr Speaker, we are actually recommending and that is as far as our powers are concerned.

Lastly, this is from the acting Leader of the Opposition (LOP). This will concern the whole House as we prepare our budget for 2025/2026.

Firstly, we have – and it is a fact – unfunded priorities. Secondly, we have accumulated arrears. So, what are we going to do? In our committee, my honourable colleagues and I recommended to the accounting officers that there shall be no further funding if they cannot control arrears. I think if all committee chairpersons do that, we shall have managed our budgeting. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on the Ministerial Policy Statements and Budget Estimates for Financial Year 2025/2026 be adopted.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

*Report adopted.*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, the recommendations are referred to the Committee on Budget for consideration and harmonisation so that we can continue with the budgeting process and we finish it in line with Rule 149(2) of the Rules of Procedure. Next item?

#### COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Chairperson? Point of procedure, Hon. Lee Oguzu?

**MR OGUZU:** Mr Speaker, Uganda made some commitments during the Paris Climate Agreement. And we came and domesticated some of the commitments here by passing the climate law. That law requires all MDAs to integrate climate programming in everything they do. We just received the policy statement from defence. We do not know how they are contributing to or helping Uganda meet that target.

Now we are going to get another ministerial statement. I would like to invite you to help us appreciate how each MDA is scoring in that and contributing to meeting that target so that we know we are on course. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Kivumbi?

**MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI:** Mr Speaker, this Parliament passed a dress code for this House, and we were very specific on how MPs should dress up. I see a minister dressed in a safari suit. He is very smart, but this Parliament made a decision. I see my senior colleagues dressed in another attire for some funeral – *(Laughter)* Is it in order for honourable colleagues to –?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. No, please. Honourable member, I take note, but the amended rules are not yet gazetted. We are working on that. Honourable member, please.

Honourable minister of finance, we received the certificate of climate change compliance for the whole budget. So, it should be up to each committee looking at the performance of their sector. Where a Member feels that has not been well captured, they can ask the chairperson about that. I think you will put it to the chairperson of the committee as far as compliance is concerned.

You have 15 minutes, honourable chairperson.

5.37

**THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Ojara Mapenduzi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

In line with the motion moved by the honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, permit me to present the report of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government on the Ministerial Policy Statements and Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2025/2026.

Before I embark on that journey, permit me to lay on Table the minutes of the meetings that the committee conducted with the different entities; I beg to lay, together with the report.

Mr Speaker, as you guided and in the interest of time, this committee is responsible for the

following entities: Vote 011: Ministry of Local Government, Vote 147: Local Government Finance Commission, Votes 500, 601 to 935: Local Governments, Vote 005: Ministry of Public Service and Vote 146: Public Service Commission.

On page 4, I give you the background and methodology. Permit me to take you to page 5, that is number 3.0, on compliance to the relevant provisions of the law and cross-cutting issues, including what you just stated.

On page 6, we provided details on compliance to National Development Plan IV and on the same page, compliance to gender and equity issues. Number 3.3 is compliance of the ministerial policy statement. I will request that Members look through those details up to page 8. I would only like to note, on page 8, we provided a table detailing compliance with PFMA for Financial Year 2025/2026.

On page 9, we provided details on overview of the programme performance. I request Members to look through. That is 4.0 and 4.1 talk about the public sector transformation programme. We also provided details and that takes us to page 10.

Mr Speaker, I will just note one or two important things.

Number one, from the analysis in the Financial Year 2024/2025, the public sector transformation programme had an allocated amount of Shs 200,413,000,000 of which only Shs 44.219 billion had been spent by end of September 2024, representing 22.06 per cent absorption.

I take you to page 11. I also would like to note that from number (a) there is a reduction in the Government of Uganda development budget and the reduction is by Shs 4.66 billion. Again, there is also a reduction – that is (b) – in the external financing and the reduction is by Shs 62.435 billion.

Again, on the same page, 4.2 is regional balance development programme. I request Members to look through.



I am just giving a summary. That takes us to the next page on page 12.

On page 12, where we provided a table, that is Table 3 – overview of the performance and draft estimates for the regional development for the Financial Year 2025/2026 in billions of shillings. We have provided the details; Members can look through.

However, it is important to note that in the Financial Year 2024/2025 the regional development programme was allocated Shs 1,454.20 billion, of which only Shs 313.844 billion was spent by end of September 2024, representing 21.58 per cent absorption. The budget has been revised in the draft estimates to Shs 1,442.19 billion representing reduction of 1 per cent from the approved budget of the previous Financial Year 2024/2025.

However, the budget of the local governments has increased by 31.66 per cent from Shs 1,232.43 billion to Shs 1,622.63 billion while the budget of the Ministry of Local Government has reduced by 20.34 per cent from Shs 191.222 billion to Shs 152.04 billion in the draft estimates. Overall, the budget of the local government sector increased by 24.68 per cent under the regional development programme.

Mr Speaker, permit me now to take you through the votes, vote by vote. Vote 4.3 is 601 to 935 and those are the local governments. We have provided a table which gives an overview of the budget allocation to local governments by programme for the Financial Year 2025/2026 and I request that Members look through.

On page 14, I will take you through the specific overview and permit me to take you directly to observations and recommendations.

Our observations are on page 19. However, it is important to note, before I look at the observations, that Members look through the challenges and achievements of the entity.

Mr Speaker on observations;

A. Post-Rationalisation of Government Agencies and Expenditure (RAPEX)

The Government has been rationalising its agencies as part of a strategic effort to enhance efficiency, eliminate duplication and optimise the use of public resources.

The Ministry of Public Service plays a pivotal role in ensuring that Uganda's public sector operates effectively and efficiently. To support post-RAPEX activities, the ministry requires Shs 3.5 billion for initiatives including – I have indicated four different activities that the ministry intends to carry out.

The committee observes that these initiatives are essential for aligning with ongoing rationalisation efforts, enhancing efficiency, eliminating redundancies in the Public Service structure and ensuring effective service delivery.

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development provides Shs 3.5 billion for post-RAPEX activities and the activities are outlined as I indicated.

B. On page 20, we look at salary enhancement.

Permit me to take you straight to – just briefly, the first salary enhancement reflects the Government of Uganda's commitment to improving public servants' welfare and addressing salary disparities across sectors. Due to budget constraints, a gradual approach has been adopted, prioritising teachers, health workers, scientists and other essential service providers.

In the Financial Year 2025/2026, the Ministry of Public Service plans to continue with this initiative, requiring Shs 688.9 billion to close existing gaps in key sectors. However, this funding has not been allocated in the budget.

The committee observes that while the first salary enhancement reflects Government's commitment to improving public servants' welfare, the lack of budgetary allocation required in the Financial Year 2025/2026 raises concerns about its feasibility.

Without dedicated funding, salary disparities may persist, affecting morale, service delivery and productivity in critical areas.

The committee has provided recommendations:

- (i) The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Service, should secure the required Shs 688.9 billion for salary enhancement to the national budget for the Financial Year 2025/2026.
- (ii) Salary enhancement should be implemented fairly and equally across the board, to prevent demotivation and disparities among public servants.
- (iii) The Ministry of Public Service should ensure that the first implementation of salary is realistic, equitable and adequately funded, avoiding over-commitment and under-delivery.

C. Establishment and operationalisation of the National Emoluments Review Board.

Mr Speaker, permit me to take you straight to recommendations. The committee recommends that;

- (i) The ongoing amendments of the Public Service Act should be fast-tracked to incorporate the necessary provision for the establishment of the National Emoluments Review Board.
- (ii) The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should provide Shs 1.860 billion in the budget for the Financial Year 2025/2026, for the establishment and operationalisation of the National Emoluments Review Board.

D. On page 22, vehicles for former leaders: The Ministry of Public Service requires Shs 7.2 billion for vehicles for former leaders. This is an obligation which is provided for under the Emoluments and Benefits of the President, Vice President and Prime Minister.

The committee observes that some retired leaders-

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, these are direct issues. I do not know the observation you want to make here. It is a statutory requirement. The money is either provided or not. I request that you go on to recommendations.

**MR MAPENDUZI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The committee made an observation, especially in relation to conflicting laws and recommended that the required money be provided for these vehicles, but also steps be taken to review and harmonise the different laws to avoid duplication in benefits.

E. Recognition of former heroes. Permit me to go to recommendations.

Recommendation one, the Ministry of Public Service should develop a clear framework to guide the identification and selection of national heroes.

Two, Ministry of Public Service should work closely with local governments and other stakeholders to ensure participation, fairness and credibility in identification, selection and recognition of the heroes.

Three, a report detailing the selected beneficiaries, the nature of awards and any other benefit should be submitted to Parliament for consideration.

F. Civil Service College

Recommendations:

- (i) The ministry should proactively build partnerships and coordinate with other ministries such as the Ministry of Local Government, to align training goals and streamline resource allocation. This would help avoid silos, increase synergies, and improve the overall impact of training programmes.

(ii) The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should provide Shs 137 billion for the expansion of the Civil Service College Uganda facilities, under phase two construction.

#### G. Establish and operationalise Uganda Service Centres

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development together with the Ministry of Public Service should secure funding and ensure that resources are allocated not only for the initial setup of the service centres but also for long-term sustainability; including maintenance, technology upgrades and staff training.

H. Rolling out of the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) to ministries departments and agencies (MDAs) and local governments.

#### Recommendation

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should provide Shs 800 million for the rollout of EDRMS, as it will help reduce red tape, operational costs and improve service delivery.

On page 27, permit me to take you through Vote 146: Public Service Commission. I request to go straight to observations and recommendations. We have provided details and tables that Members will look through; challenges, achievements and recommendations are as follows:

Under half-year financial performance for Financial Year 2024/2025, we recommend that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development provides the Public Service Commission with all funds required for RAPEX activities in time, to facilitate satisfactory handling of cases without infringing on the benefits for other activities.

Two, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should always

ensure timely release of funds to avoid work stagnation.

#### Rollout of e-recruitment system

The recommendations are:

1. The roll-out of the e-recruitment system should be expedited beyond the pilot phase, to enhance efficiency, reduce administrative costs and minimise human interference in the recruitment processes.
2. The Public Service Commission should prioritise the training and sensitisation of district and city service commissions to ensure they can effectively implement the new system.

#### Issues of district and city service commissions

#### Recommendations:

One, the districts should provide budget lines for the activities of these commissions as priority since they are crucial to the human resource management of the districts.

Two, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, in funding the Public Service Commission, should extend support to the District Service Commission since their functions directly influence resource management at the district level.

In light of the issues of commissions, it is recommended that;

- (i) The funding gap of Shs 390 million for integrity and performance checks should be prioritised among the key plan outputs.
- (ii) The Public Service Commission should investigate errant district and city service commissions and take immediate action.
- (iii) The committee also recommends that remuneration of members of the District Service Commissions be streamlined into government expenditure and charged on the Consolidated Fund in accordance with the law.

Mr Speaker, on page 36, the committee recommends that the Public Service Commission, together with the Ministry of Local Government, should harmonise with the Engineers Registration Board to ease registration requirements for district engineers in order to address the staffing gap.

On vehicles, we have also provided recommendations.

The committee recommends that the transport fleet of the commission needs to be replaced to support the increased number of local governments and also ensure the safety of the Public Service Commission's officials while travelling on duty.

#### Vote 011: Ministry of Local Government

It is on page 37. I request, Mr Speaker, that I take you straight to observations and recommendations.

We have provided the rest of the details and I believe that the honourable members will have time to look through them.

It is also important to indicate the serious aspects that need to be indicated;

- (i) The reduction in the external financing and the reduction is by Shs 48.71 billion. That needs to be taken note of.
- (ii) We also have the aspect of unmet counterpart funding for local climate adaptive living facilities, where the Government of Uganda is supposed to provide some funding and it is not provided for in the budget. That puts a big risk on the funding. We are likely to lose it if we do not put our part.
- (iii) We also have an ability to address arrears and financial obligations – and we have provided those details.

Mr Speaker, permit me to take you to Votes 601–935: All Local Governments. It is on page 42.

On page 43, Mr Speaker, we have provided details of the achievements. We have also

provided an overview of the draft budget allocations to the local governments for the Financial Year 2025/2026. You can look through.

Mr Speaker, it is important to note that the overall budget allocation to all local governments is projected to increase by 8.35 per cent, from Shs 5,655.17 billion to Shs 6,127.29 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026. This is due to the projected increase in the wage budget by 5.58 per cent and the payment of pensions and gratuity arrears. We have also indicated the figures and the relevant documents attached.

Mr Speaker, there are challenges that we have indicated, but permit me to take you through the recommendations.

The committee recommends that additional funds are provided in each financial year for programme-coordination activities.

Mr Speaker, under inductions of leaders, the committee recommends that the shortfall of Shs 840 million be provided to facilitate preparatory activities for the induction of leaders who will be elected in the next general elections.

Under the amendment of the Local Government Act, Cap. 138, the committee recommends that the Government should prioritise amendment of the Local Government Act. Mr Speaker, this is in line with the process to review the decentralisation policy in Uganda.

Review of the decentralisation policy framework

We recommend that Shs 2 billion be provided to facilitate the Ministry of Local Government to carry out a thorough review of the decentralisation policy framework.

On sustainable development, waste management and resilience in local governments, the committee provides the following recommendations;

1. The Government should provide Shs 21 billion for urban local governments that missed out on road funds.
2. The Government should provide road equipment for each of the 10 cities and 31 municipalities, while town councils should be given tractors for garbage collection.
3. Shs 1 billion be provided to fast-track physical development planning in urban local governments.

Markets and Agriculture Trade Improvements Programme (MATIP III). In the interest of time, permit me to take you through the recommendations.

The committee recommends that the Government fast-tracks consideration of approval for MATIP III projects and the Ministry of Local Government follows up the said approval to enable commencement of construction of the proposed modern markets.

Mr Speaker, in the previous report, we had indicated the markets to be constructed under MATIP III.

#### Counterpart funding

The committee recommends that the Government should provide Shs 8.8 billion as counterpart funding in fulfilment of its obligation.

#### Arrears and financial obligation

The committee recommends that the ministry of finance should provide Shs 18.189 billion to settle the above mentioned areas.

#### Functionality of district and city service commission

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Local Government, in consultation with the Ministry of Public Service and ministry of finance, should urgently determine the salaries, allowances and emoluments for the members of the district and city service commissions, ensuring that they are fair and commensurate with the current rates.

Mr Speaker, on page 50, we have the National Oil Seed Project (NOSP) Roads

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Local Government should realign and reinstate Karenga District in the intervention areas for the National Oil Seed Project. This is because at the time Karenga was created, it was considered part of Kaabong District.

#### Cross-cutting issues

The committee recommends, on page 51, that the Government fulfils its commitment to availing counterpart funding of Shs 1.55 billion for the local project.

#### Vote 147: Local Government Finance Commission

I request that Members read through, since they have the details.

Mr Speaker, permit me to take you through the recommendations on page 53.

The committee recommends that the remuneration for the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the Local Government Finance Commission be harmonised with the remuneration of members of similar constitutionally-established commissions.

Mr Speaker, we have put this because the chairperson and the deputy are the least facilitated, compared to other entities and we think this is unfair.

#### Inadequate wage allocation

The committee recommends that the Local Government Finance Commission should recruit, using the funds available in the budget.

#### Inadequate funding for operational activities

The committee recommends that an additional Shs 3 billion be provided to the Local Government Finance Commission for operational activities.

On page 55 right, we have revenue generation.

The committee recommends that the Local Government Finance Commission prioritises the full roll-out of IRAS in all local governments to address challenges in local government revenue collection and management and maximise the benefits of automation.

Finally, Mr Speaker, permit me to look at key unfunded or underfunded priorities for the Financial Year 2025/2026. The committee identified the critical, yet unfunded priorities, as attached in Annex 1.

We have provided the details in the annex and I request that Members would have the opportunity to look through.

Appropriation figures for the Financial Year 2025/2026

Based on the aforementioned observations and recommendations, the committee recommends that the House approve the budget of the Votes under its jurisdiction as follows: We have provided it in the table. In the interest of time, Members can look through the details. Mr Speaker, I thank you. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, committee chairperson. Thank you. Well done. I appreciate it. I am going to open up the debate, starting with the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), Democratic Party (DP) and Independent, Old Boy of Forum for Democratic Change.

6.05

**MR VINCENT OBONG (Independent, Lira West Division, Lira City):** Thank you very much, Mr speaker. Allow me to start by thanking the committee chairperson –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Three minutes each.

**MR OBONG:** ... for the wonderful report that he has presented. I also commend so much, the committee members for a job well done. I commend the committee, more especially on

the issue of road equipment which they have recommended.

I also commend them because, it is on record that – I will give you the experience that we have had in Lira City, for example. What people are doing is that since the cities and the districts without the road equipment are taking advantage of this lack of equipment, some of them cost a kilometre of doing a road at Shs 30 million.

I got this experience when, one time, I lobbied through the Ministry of Works and Transport. They gave me 5.2 kilometres of roads, but each kilometre was done at Shs 12 million. These cities and local Governments without equipment are inflating the cost simply because the excuse they have at the end of the day is that they do not have the equipment.

Something should be done to put things right to save the situation because every year, Parliament has been appropriating Shs 1 billion that these cities have been getting. However, when you go to the ground, there is nothing which is tangible.

Number two, I also commend the committee on the issue of the creation of new parishes. The Minister of Local Government on the Floor of Parliament here did make a commitment that come this Financial Year 2025/2026, the ministry would be in a position to create new administrative units.

This has not been provided for in the report that we have just received. There was a commitment made on this Floor of Parliament here, that this would be done.

I am bringing up this issue because of the population size of some of these places. Like in the case of Lira City, I have four parishes where the population is so big that the impact of the Parish Development Model (PDM), which is being given at Shs 100 million per year, is not being felt, simply because of the population.

I think it would be imperative – and I beg the committee that if possible, let that one be pondered upon. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. DP?

6.08

**MR PETER OKOT (DP, Tochi County, Omoro):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the good report they have presented. I want to speak on two areas: One, we thank the Government that there are many projects that have gone to the districts. There is PDM, there's *Emyooga*, the Generating Growth Opportunities and Productivity for Women Enterprises (GROW) and several others. All these projects are undertaken by the population and in different enterprises.

Minus supervision and extension support, we may not realise much with this project. Looking into the report, we have very few extension workers, which are very critical staff in terms of providing support to the farmers and other interventions. For example, in Omoro District, we have one extension staff for three subcounties. In the end, they may not do much, and the results of the works, may not come.

Secondly, when you visit schools, there is complete disparity in terms of the arts teachers and the science teachers. There are even caucuses in schools. There is a caucus of science teachers, and there is a caucus of arts teachers. When, in the report, the ministry commits that they are going to close the gap by progressively increasing the salaries of those whose salaries are low, but with that commitment, you still see a gap of Shs 600 billion not provided for.

How then do we get to believe that this commitment is going to be realised? I think this is an area that we have to look into, because of that, and emphasis on science, if you look at admission and the preferences of students these days, every other student now wants to go for a science combination in A-Level.

We are yet to see what that will result into when it comes to examination. Are they going because that is what they want or they are going because that is where the emphasis is and that is where the money is, or is it where everyone now has to go? Something needs to be done. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Okupa, then Hon. Kanyike.

6.11

**MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere):** Thank you, Mr Speaker and I thank the committee and the committee chairperson.

For purposes of planning and for our budget to be meaningful, we must have data. We must have the statistics. I had thought by this time, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), would have released a comprehensive and detailed population data. I am very disappointed with that organisation. Up to date, there is no data. The Electoral Commission is still using data from 2014. Now, you have heard from the report – from local government – It is the same thing. We are talking about administrative units. They have been waiting to receive information from UBOS, but to date, nothing has come out.

In February, I wrote to UBOS saying that: "Can you please give me the data of the population per district, per constituency and per county?" After one month, they wrote to me that they would provide this data at the end of March. Today we are in April and they have not responded. How can we continue in such a manner? How can we be planning with the data of 10 years ago? Without data – the minister of finance, you are here – I do not know how you can be planning 10 years backward.

We should be projecting what the population would be, how these parties are located, for us to allocate funds equitably. No wonder we have a skewed allocation of resources and development in this country.

Mr Speaker, I want you to put to task the Minister of Finance to ask UBOS to produce the report and we see whether it is in fake form or whatever form. Can we have that information?

I thank the committee for bringing up this issue of the Local Government Finance Commission. This is a statutory body which should be treated like the others, but they have not been treated

at the same level. Why? Can the minister of finance bring this up to the same level on this matter?

The committee, year in, year out, has been bringing up this matter. The chairperson – each of the chairpersons, and the vice-chairperson should be treated in a fair way.

Finally, Mr Speaker, the issue of the Uganda Road Fund not availing funds to the town councils, those urban councils which were established. Up to date, we have six, five years down the road, that have not been benefitting.

I have seen here; they fall under unfunded priorities. Can the Local Government and the minister of finance, this coming financial year, provide resources such that these town councils can be able to move at the same level like the others? Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Evans Kanyike and Hon. Auma Linda.

6.14

**MR EVANS KANYIKE (NUP, Bukoto County East, Masaka):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I thank the chairperson for the report.

My concern goes to the unfunded priorities. They have indicated the review of the decentralisation policy, which has taken 30 years, and Shs 2 billion is needed to review this policy.

Mr Speaker, in my district, Masaka City was carved out of Masaka District but the district headquarters is in Masaka City. Here in Parliament, we appropriated Shs 1 billion to new districts and in Masaka District, the council took a decision and allocated land where the district headquarters is going to be built.

To our dismay, the Minister of Local Government came and overturned the decision which was taken by the district council. Not to review the decentralisation policy, it gives powers to those from the ministry to override

the decision of the council.

Secondly, I am also concerned about domestic arrears. The people who supply the Government need to be given priority, especially our local people. In this financial year, Shs 200 billion was allocated for domestic arrears, yet they are demanding over Shs 10 trillion. We need to reconsider this. For the local government, they are demanding Shs 22 billion but the provision is Shs 4 billion, leaving a gap of Shs 18 billion. It needs to be given priority.

Lastly, there is the induction of the newly elected leaders.

Mr Speaker, we are given induction as Parliament and we are always called upon to be inducted, especially those who are new in Parliament. If we do not induct newly elected councillors, local leaders, chairpersons and mayors, then we shall leave a gap and they will not be able to provide the leadership we require from them.

6.17

**MS LINDA AUMA (Independent, Woman Representative, Lira):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to commend the committee for their good report. My concern is on the unfunded priorities, especially on the administrative units that we already have in existence – the subcounties and town councils.

Up to now – this is the fourth year – there is no provision for construction of these administrative units. In this financial year, there was a provision for it and I expected it to be back, but I am now seeing it under unfunded priorities.

The second issue is also on the district administrative units, especially those that were mothering the cities. Provision of funds has been made and construction is ongoing, but I am seeing in the coming financial year, there is no provision for that; it is under unfunded priorities.

It is my humble request – because I am a victim in this; our district headquarters are in the city and it is causing a lot of tension between



the district and the city. This is countrywide, especially in the newly created cities. It is prudent for the Government to prioritise this so that the district leaves the city and we avoid this tension that we currently have.

Finally, on the Uganda Road Fund, I am the chairperson for the Roads Committee of my district but every time there is a release, we always get a lot of tension. Up to now, the Ministry of Local Government has not yet removed the new subcounties from their mother subcounties. Once money is released to the old subcounties, they do not share it with the new subcounties and town councils.

The local people do not understand this; they blame the Government, yet the roads are in a bad state. It has now forced districts to use the Shs 1 billion that is given to them to bridge that gap, which is again becoming insufficient.

Mr Speaker, during this process, we have to take this as a serious matter, other than putting it as an unfunded priority. It no longer becomes a priority if it is not funded. Thank you.

6.19

**MS FLORENCE ASIIMWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Masindi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I wish to thank the committee and the chairperson for the good report. I would like to address myself to the issue of the Civil Service College.

One Member has already commented on the capacity of his councillors and civil servants to handle some of the activities at the local level. I am happy to hear that this Civil Service College is being given a chance again because I remember in 2021, this was one of the colleges that was scrapped. It was not given money but I think it is a very important college that should be equipped so that we have training of these civil servants.

The second one is the issue of road equipment for urban areas, cities and municipalities. Members, we are giving Shs 1 billion to municipalities, cities and local governments. I am seeing sort of a cash bonanza for those

urban areas that do not have equipment. They are spending money. You go to the municipality and wonder where the Shs 1 billion is. They just scrape around small roads and the Shs 1 billion is gone – at least for Masindi Municipality. This is from my observation. Where is the Shs 1 billion?

For starters, as we wait for the equipment, let us borrow from the Ministry of Works and Transport; it is cheaper. I have ever done it; I have borrowed from the Ministry of Works, we got that machine and did a lot of work. Therefore, it is a cash bonanza because they know they do not have the equipment and they can hire at a high price but who is benefitting?

We have talked about the issue of domestic arrears for a long time. It is Shs 10 trillion but you give Shs 200 billion. The private sector is suffering; the private sector is crying. I do not know what we are going to do, Mr Speaker. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, honestly, these people provide a service to us; something must be done.

Lastly, on the review of the decentralisation framework, I remember it is an old policy that needs to be reviewed. A lot has changed – *(Member timed out.)*

6.22

**MR NATHAN BYANYIMA (NRM, Bukanga North County, Isingiro):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to add my voice to thank the chairperson, but I think the Committee on Local Government needs to get out of this House and move upcountry to know which administrative units are bigger than others. We cannot continue relying on Members of Parliament or local governments coming over – we want to create this.

There are some big districts, I can tell you – when you look at the statistics now – like Tororo, Kasese, Ntungamo and Isingiro; there are even more. When you get Shs 1 billion, give it to one of these young districts that have about four or eight subcounties, you will find that there is one which has about 38 or 40 parishes like in Tororo and many others.

It is high time that we gave money equitably, so that people can have services. It is true we have had two rounds so far. We should actually look at the districts. Instead of creating more, we would rather give people two or three units or give them Shs 3 billion, instead of Shs 1 billion, so that we can move.

For the Uganda Road Fund, honourable colleagues, do not lament. You killed the Uganda Road Fund here when we were all seeing.

I warned you. I said road maintenance is very key in this country. When you look at Kampala, you have floods. Why do you have floods? It is because the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) used to have a department for cleaning all these drainages but you killed it. Here we are lamenting.

Honourable colleagues, we had these agencies after well thought out arguments. All of a sudden, one person comes and says, "Wipe them out". We all accepted. Therefore, let us bear the suffering. We shall go through it but I appeal to the local government committee to go out and look at some of these administrative units so that we can have the size of each and not lament.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Oloru Mourine and hon. Christine from Kumi.

6.25

**MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to thank the chairperson of this committee and its members for having considered the cities and municipalities that do not have road equipment units. Arua City will at least smile. Finally, this is what we have been battling with.

Secondly, my concern is about local revenue collection by all local governments in this country. We all know that there are complaints everywhere. If you are to move to the councils, they always complain about sending local revenue to the Consolidated Fund and yet sometimes, they will have a big issue and

would want to use their money within the local governments but unfortunately, the Public Finance Management Act does not permit them to use money at source.

I request the honourable minister to bring this Act so that we can amend it because it is what we have been battling with. A city like Arua collects a lot of revenue and sends it to the Consolidated Fund but it is very hard for us to get this money back. We are struggling yet we are sending a lot of money to the Consolidated Fund so why don't we amend the Public Finance Management Act in order to cater for that?

That is my observation and I want to tell the chairperson that your committee is doing very well, especially on issues of the city and the road equipment. I think I will sleep well today because of that.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, then followed by hon. Sowedit Kitanywa, hon. Stephen Kagwera, and then hon. Nyanzi.

6.27

**MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the chairperson and members of the committee for a very detailed report. Allow me to begin with the issue of administrative units. Even as we are aware that there is a ban on the creation of more administrative units, we still have villages and parishes that are too big, and they have been complaining, especially about the impact of the Parish Development Model (PDM). In my district, I have Kajamaka Village and parish. It is like a subcounty. I have Kalapata in Nyero, it is like a subcounty. My plea is that in the budget of 2025/2026, there should be a provision to cater for those very big parishes.

Secondly, it is not the first time that the Committee of Public Service and Local Government is coming up with a recommendation to provide Shs 2 billion for the review of decentralisation. When you look at what is on the ground at the moment, decentralisation is thinning. People do not understand its impact. I plead with the

Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development that this time, this Shs 2 billion is provided so that the Government can have another clear way forward on what should follow after this policy.

For purposes of updating the public, the chairperson will give us assurance and clarification on consideration of honoraria for all the councillors at subcounty and district level because it has been an issue that we summarise arrears to be provided, but every other time, we are not giving this little money. Can we have that clarification so that the councillors can have hope?

Finally, the Shs 688.9 billion, which was not provided for, and yet it would close the gap in salary disparities. Mr Speaker, as an arts teacher, I feel bad. If I am feeling it when I am a Member of Parliament, what about that arts teacher who is doing the Government job of teaching and there is no consideration? The Minister of Public Service has been giving us hope that this is going to be handled in a phased manner. Let something be done in the budget of 2025/2026 otherwise, if we do not, the demotivation of the arts teachers will continue. I rest my case.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Kitanywa Sowedi, hon. Kagwera, hon. Nyanzi and Hon. Kwizera.

6.30

**MR SOWEDI KITANYWA (NRM, Busongora County North, Kasese):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I begin by thanking the committee for the good report. I want to speak to two issues. One is the issue of counterpart funding. In the report, you indicated that the Government is not able to meet counterpart funding for some of the projects in the Ministry of Local Government, for example, the project on Local Climate Adaptive Living (LoCAL). My district happens to be one of the beneficiaries of this project, and I am worried that we can get a partner who is willing to give us US\$ 2.1 million and as the beneficiaries, we are not able to contribute US\$ 500,000.

My prayer is that in this budget, we should include counterpart funding so that we do not lose these projects that are very important, particularly the project of LoCAL that deals with climate change. The districts that are benefiting from this project are those districts that have suffered from disasters.

The second issue is the Road Fund for urban local governments. The urban councils that were created between 2016 and 2018 have continued suffering without funds for their roads. The subcounties where they are covered are better in terms of having good roads than the town councils themselves.

My prayer is that in this budget, we should look for ways of providing funds for these urban local governments, even if it means cutting part of the funding for the subcounties where they came from so that they can continue benefiting rather than leaving them when they are operating. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, hon. Sowedi. Hon. Kagwera Stephen.

6.32

**MR STEPHEN KASAIJA (NRM, Burahya County, Kabarole):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. All these things we are talking about are because of poor planning. We have created so many districts and town councils without proper planning. Therefore, the whole thing rotates around poor planning in this country. For instance, what is the essence of creating a town council from a subcounty and you do not provide funds? The issue is that we do not have the funds in most cases. You cannot give what you do not have.

Therefore, we should wait for a time when we have that money and put a town council in place. We have so many of them that have not received a coin other than getting money from the old subcounties for the four years we have been here.

Mr Speaker, we have increased districts, town councils, subcounties and cities, but what is the quality? As a boy, in those days, I used to

see extension workers - One of the colleagues talked about them teaching people how to dig terraces and everything. Do you see them today? In the extension service, we are worse off than in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

Therefore, planning in this country is wanting. As Parliament, we should take a stand to say, "No." While asking for a district, it is not mandatory that you will get it. There is a procedure. This is why hon. Byanyima said that there are bigger districts and smaller ones. Why? We do not consider population or size.

Someone wakes up and says, "I am going to eat a rat if you do not give me a district," at times in the presence of the President or any other important person in this country. The following day, there is a consideration. When we come here crying, this is where some of us are getting tired and ask, what are we doing? As leaders, we must stand and say, "No." People will want a district but we are leaders who should provide leadership.

I was here in the Eighth Parliament and I think Gen. Kahinda Otafiire was the minister then. I asked, why are we giving more districts? This was yet to come and it has come. Actually, we should not lament. This is what we have given this country and we are going to suffer if we continue moving in this direction. This is why some of us keep quiet and look on these days because we have talked and talked but do not see anything coming. We must plan better and give this country and our people better or else – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Stephen Kagwera, what you are saying is in line with what hon. Byanyima said. The problem is simple. Service delivery is based on units of administration; every district, a hospital; every sub-county, a secondary school and every parish, a primary school. In the end, people clamour for services because the channel provided. You have a district like Ntungamo or if you divide a county like Ruhaama -

When you go to a big district like Ntungamo and you are using the same criteria of the road

unit for a district of one constituency, what will people of Ntungamo do? They will clamour saying, divide and give us four districts so that we can have four road units.

Therefore, after this budgeting process, maybe we should have an honest discussion in relation to service delivery – *(Applause)* - how do we allocate service delivery? This will even make it easier for the Executive and everyone. We have data, we have done a census. We can say that for every population or geographical area of this magnitude, let us have a road unit.

I think that will be the only solution and it is high time we put our heads together and discussed it openly or else, service delivery in this country will remain down.

6.37

**MR PATRICK BINGI (NRM, Butemba County, Kyankwanzi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee chairperson and the committee members for the report. I associate myself with most of the recommendations but I have two pick-ups. One is about the national oil seed roads.

The committee made good observations and I can see that somewhere, they even talked about the cost of these roads but did not make any recommendation to that effect. My constituency is a beneficiary of this project and just for the consumption of this House, there was already an existing road, which was simply to be rehabilitated. It is 6.6 kilometres but the cost is going to be about Shs 800 million. On average, a kilometre is taking Shs 120 million.

Mr Speaker, the day we launched this road, I decided to abstain from food and all the drinks because I could not imagine looking at just a kilometre –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Why did you abstain from the simplest things if you had so much faith? *(Laughter)*

**MR BINGI:** Mr Speaker, I could not imagine a kilometre costing a Ugandan taxpayer Shs 120 million when the road was already

existing. I thought the committee should have recommended a review of these rates. I am not an engineer but this cannot just be taken for granted at a time when we are grappling with resources everywhere and we talk of Shs 120 million for a kilometre. This cannot be.

I would also like to address myself to the inadequacy of wage at both central and local governments. Let me take the example of local governments. From the time I became a Member of Parliament in 2021, senior local government positions at Kyankwanzi Local Government are held by people in acting capacity. Reason? There is no wage. You find a Chief Finance Officer, Internal Auditor, District Agricultural Officer, district engineer and District Education Officer all acting for that long.

One time, I was following up a report. It was an address by the Minister of Public Service and it was saying, somebody cannot act for more than six months – *(Member timed out.)*

6.41

**MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimbiri County, Kisoro):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I do not know if talking in Parliament is a ritual because we can talk this year and the same issue the next year. Minister of Local Government, when you take an oath by this Constitution, you come here and create 10 cities and districts -

The First Schedule of the Constitution of Uganda on page 216 knows only 75 districts and yet now, Uganda has 135 districts, 10 cities and one capital city. Why is the Government not amending the Constitution?

Why is it that the committee has not known that they are deliberating on some entities that do not exist in the Constitution, and you even give them a budget? That is one thing I want the minister and the committee to tell me.

Another issue is that in Article 21 of the Constitution, there is equality of all Ugandans. I have three town councils in my constituency, legally formed but they are not facilitated.

My young brother here, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, says that when they were creating the town councils, there was no certificate of financial implications. Who committed a crime? Do we have an Act of Parliament creating those town councils? Are we committing a crime by having entities on ground that are not known in the Ministry of Local Government?

On that note, the Government should be more coordinated.

When you go to the Ministry of Local Government, you have a whole department headed by a commissioner called Urban Policy. However, the Government urban policy instrument is in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. How do you budget for funds in the Ministry of Local Government when they have no policy to implement? Is it not the high time we removed the budget for policy and took it where the policy document is?

Mr Speaker, there is also another issue in the Constitution which the Ministry of Local Government should have dealt with. Article 178 says regional governments shall commence on 1 July 2006, and here you have a Government with ministers, but the Constitution is not being implemented. I, therefore, do not know why the committee did not find time or pleasure to find whether that is okay.

When we come to salary disparities – salary disparities have a relationship with corruption - *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** *(Member rose)* Just wait. Hon. Kwizera asked a very important question and once you leave it here, yet it is very critical, someone outside there might say, “Do you mean the only recognised districts are the ones in the Schedule?”

I think updating of the schedule is very important. Districts are provided for under Article 177 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. Under Article 179 (1), Parliament has powers to create new districts.

Therefore, not updating a Schedule does not mean that a district is not efficient or legally in place. That needs to be put clearly because a Schedule is a list, which needs to be updated. What is critical is a clause – and Parliament was given the power to create districts, under Article 179(1) of the Constitution. So, when you are waving the Constitution, wave it in its entirety, not in bits.

I had allowed the Member for Busia. I will then allow two more people; Hon. Kyooma and Hon. Lee.

Hon. Noeline, you will be the first on the next item.

6.46

**MS HELLEN WANDERA (NRM, Woman Representative, Busia):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have two observations.

First, I am going to talk about recruitment processes. Mr Speaker, I do not understand how we recruit workers in this country. For example, in Busia district, we have many workers in acting capacity in our offices.

When we apply for jobs – For example, many of the people who are working in our district local government do not come from Busia but rather from different districts. I keep on wondering about the criteria they use.

Secondly, I would like to talk about education. Last month, during my district tour - just like our President is doing his PDM country tour (*Laughter*) - I came to realise that we have an inadequate number of teachers in Government schools. When some teachers are transferred, there is a delay in replacing them.

I was in a Government primary school where I found only two teachers. Imagine two teachers in a primary school teaching from P.1 to P.7. What kind of education is that? I have been sitting in schools and having meetings of PDM and other things. I will update the Speaker – I will table it in his office because I do not have it off the top of my head.

Finally, we should do things after we have planned. We need to plan because we are the light and leaders of this country and the young people are always watching Parliament. We should not just come here and talk. I like how Ugandans or Africans like talking a lot and expressing ourselves too much in English, but we do not want to act. We need to plan ahead. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Kyooma?

6.49

**MR XAVIER KYOOMA (NRM, Ibanda County North, Ibanda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to join colleagues in thanking the chairperson and the committee for the informative report. I have picked out just one programme: the public sector transformation programme – the table is on page 10. When you look at the Vote where this programme falls, it is only Vote 11 – Ministry of Local Government, whose budget has been slashed and this is where we have PDM, Emyooga and other programmes.

This is where a lot of supervision, monitoring, capacity building and others are needed. What could be the logic here? I need to be educated.

Related to that, on page 40, where we have the budget for the Ministry of Local Government, it has also been slashed from Shs 220 billion to Shs 201 billion under the National Budget Framework Papers and then to Shs 174 billion under the estimates.

Honourable chairperson and the committee, you have spoken well because on page 47, you have made serious recommendations, which I associate myself with.

We are slashing the budget but we have town councils and these other local governments, which we have created and they have not received the Road Fund up to now. They do not have road equipment, tractors and the like, yet we want them to advance. We are creating them for service delivery. Mr Chairman and

your committee, I would like to thank you but we need an explanation to this effect.

It is my request that we wake up and mean what we do. If we create town councils, districts, municipalities and cities, let them be so. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Atima?

6.51

**MR JACKSON ATIMA (NRM, Arua Central Division, Arua City):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues in thanking the committee for the wonderful report. I would like to add my voice to what my Woman MP raised over the equipment for the cities.

From the time these cities were created, I think we are now in the fourth year. I want to talk about Arua City, which was a combination of Arua Municipality and Ayivu County, which had seven sub-counties, making nine subcounties that are all depending on the road equipment that was being used by Arua Municipality, which had two divisions. This tells you that the city actually has no road equipment.

This also makes technical officers take advantage; to inflate figures by saying that they are hiring road equipment. Since the two financial years when we received Shs 1 billion – in 2023/2024 and 2024/2025, which is about to end – roads in Arua City have never been worked upon. Figures are cooked up on paper for accountability that, “we worked on these roads”.

Last year, in November, we sat for a roads committee meeting. The engineer and the town clerk said that in October, they worked on the roads in Ayivu and central divisions, which I represent. When I called my councillors and other local council leaders, they said that in October, there was no grader that went on ground and the roads remained the same.

This means that these monies are just being swindled and they end up in the pockets of

these people. Therefore, budgeting for road equipment for these cities is very paramount and I want to thank the committee for that.

Secondly, the committee went ahead to plan for garbage trucks for municipal and town councils, leaving out the cities. I will also add my voice that the committee should incorporate garbage equipment for the cities so that the cities can be kept clean.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I want to talk about support to former leaders. Support in the area of burials and the rest are good, but when it comes to buying of vehicles, for example, I might have served as a Speaker, after that I served as a Prime Minister, after that I served in another big portfolio, and I will be considered for benefit in all those. I think we need to amend our laws to cater for one position when the person is still alive because it will be a waste of resources for this country. Yet we have other needs in other sectors. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Okot Amos?

6.54

**MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago):** Thank you, Mr Speaker -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I had wanted Okot Amos to speak on the next, but I found out that he is a member of the committee, so he cannot.

**MR AMOS OKOT:** Thank you for giving me this small opportunity to represent my people. Mr Speaker, I want to speak on equity and balancing of our resources. It is true, the only area where we can get these resources is through budget appropriation. When you see the little money that we are giving – For example, when you see the geographical coverage of Agago and the Shs 1 billion that we send, the place is too huge. The number of parishes and subcounties can be small but still, the geographical coverage is too big.

I do not know whether it is still possible for this Shs 1 billion to be apportioned by

constituencies instead of districts. This is because by constituencies, it would cover. For example, in Agago, we have three counties and 26 subcounties.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, you are a member of the roads committee. Don't you handle it? You are the ones who are supposed to handle that at your level to see equitable distribution.

**MR AMOS OKOT:** Yes, Mr Speaker. That is why I am talking about equity and balancing of this. When you subdivide this Shs 1 billion in a district with more than two counties, like in mine, it is supposed to be about Shs 300 million, or something like that. When you compare a district with the one county and with small geographical coverage – That is why I am saying, if we can consider the equity and balancing of that resource –

The same thing applies to PDM. We have parishes which are too big, like in Northern Uganda where you go and it is even bigger than a subcounty. The Shs 100 million that you give is just peanuts. The subcounty itself, the villages, the parishes are as big as – In Agago, we have about 1,200 villages in a district and the parties are as huge as that.

I would like to find out from the committee, and especially the ministers, the level of the staffing. What percentage are we now in the local government? What is the coverage? How are our civil servants? You will find that this is where we have to supervise and follow up even these little resources. However, if the employment level is below 50 per cent in a district then I consider that we have to increase the wage amount for this.

Finally, I have an appeal to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. We should not conclude this term and then find that the newly created subcounties and town councils are not getting the money, which is supposed to be given to them for these smaller roadworks. At least we should change it in this financial year so that as we are going for the new campaigns and forming another

Government, we do not keep carrying the same burden and questions.

Let us identify these subcounties which are not getting their little money for the small road works. The Ministry of Local Government should come up with a full list covering the country and then we immediately create – without going more than five months after the passing of the Budget. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable colleagues, research has shown that sitting is more dangerous to your health than smoking. Therefore, I request that we have a health break of three minutes to stretch our legs. The House is suspended for three minutes.

*(The House was suspended at 6.59 p.m.)*

*(On resumption at 7.02 p.m., the Deputy Speaker presiding\_)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable ministers, I will start with the Minister of State for Local Government. Let us be brief.

7.02

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Ms Victoria Busingye):**

Thank you, Mr Speaker. We had already discussed most of the things here and we updated the House. For example, on garbage, I wonder why the Member brought it up yet when he hosted me in Arua, I found two brand new garbage trucks. Is he around? He should explain why he is lying to the House.

Two, Hon. Florence Asiimwe talks of reviewing the decentralisation framework. We are on it, Mr Speaker. We have presented it twice to the Cabinet and we are taking on the corrections that we were meant to do then we shall bring it to Parliament.

On huge parishes, Mr Speaker, we have explained that the gist of the problem is the high numbers. We have failed to get numbers from the Uganda National Bureau of Statistic (UBOS) but we are now practically doing it



as the Ministry of Local Government, going down using our Commissioner in Charge of Local Council Development to establish our own numbers. We shall base on those to advise the ministry for finance to increase the funding. Subdividing the parishes will not help because the numbers are the reason why we need more money.

Hon. Asiimwe talks of a cash bonanza. I wish to express my anger over such a comment from a Member of Parliament. When we see these people eating money, we should take action there and then. If you see them in bonanzas and giving you fake documents, we should work very hard to ensure we curb thieving of government funds in our constituencies.

Mr Speaker, we have been advising that the mother district, out of which the city was curved, should lend the machines to the city. Most cities are doing that, as we work out their own road equipment, having supplied 15 new sets of road equipment to the newly created districts.

Local revenue collection. During our visit – I am the one who covered northern Uganda. I was in Kole, Arua, and others - Yes, there are delays but I want to confirm that the money will come. However, when the money comes, the problem is the district. The Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) - I went to Kole and found a very big scandal. The money was coming back but it was not being given out. Check on your CAOs. The money may come late and the ministry for finance has an explanation, but giving out money should be supervised by all of us.

On the roads that hon. Patrick Bingi brought up, we have decided to supervise the Uganda Support to Municipal Infrastructure Development Program (USMID) funded roads. However, the nature of the roads is not ordinary. They install culverts and they make pavers. The quality and the amount of murrum put is not just a matter of mere scattering. Hon. Bingi, you should go, look at the bills of quantities, and then come and bravely say 120 is too much because the quality of the work is

bad. If it is bad, we shall reprimand them and make them repeat it.

For Hon. Kwizera, the Speaker has answered you ably. I do not need to go through that again.

I am touched by Hon. Hellen Auma's comments. How do they recruit? Why recruit people outside Busia? We should avoid tribalism. We recruit considering qualification, suitability of the work, and expressing that physically in the interviews. These days, they do written and oral interviews. You are free to work in Kabarole, and my people are free to work in Busia, if they meet the qualification demands.

For only two teachers, I do not think it is true. For local government, the district service commissions are open and the CAO's duty is to give information and submit the vacant positions. The Minister of Public Service will allude to that but I know our CAOs submit. Where they do not submit, bring arguments and then we will hold them responsible.

Regarding reduction of our budget, we are complaining to Mr Musasizi. Honestly, when you reduce the money, you reduce the services and it means our people will not get the required services.

For Hon. Amos Okot of Agago, we are compiling the list and the Speaker gave me time to present. My turn is coming next Tuesday. I will provide the list, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Before the public service minister comes, let me allow the Leader of the Opposition, two minutes.

7.08

**MR MUHAMMAD MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala):** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

One, as part of Rationalisation of Government Agencies and Expenditure (RAPEX), we were promised Shs 2 trillion dividends. In this year's budget, I want the public service ministry to show us where the Shs 2 trillion dividends you

promised this country are. If it is not there, what are we doing?

Secondly, Mr Speaker, there is a policy the Government undertook to award contracts of over Shs 500 billion in every city, exclusively to the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF). What has happened in most districts is that the UPDF lacks capacity to execute those works in real time. The consequence of that is that at the end of the financial year, the UPDF gets money. It is part of the Shs 222 billion letters of credit that are lying in the Bank of Uganda not utilised. This is established by the Auditor-General.

A big chunk of it is money that belongs to the local government ministry that should have done real work like building schools and health centres in a given financial year, but is not utilised. It is left there for two years without utilisation.

There is need to urge the Government to come up with a policy that gives exclusive rights for every job in a district to the UPDF, because it has no strategic depth and capacity to do the needful.

The other aspect that I would love to talk about, honourable colleagues, is projects. For all committees and sectors where there are projects, I make a special appeal; please pay maximum attention. Our discoveries in the public accounts committees are telling of the extent - I do not want to call it rot, because we shall present a report here.

For example, regarding this project you talked about, look at the time when it was initiated and when it was signed. It is five years down the road. Look at projects and take keen interest in them.

This problem of rationalisation - since you have made a parish a core centre of service delivery, the Government has no option but to go for equity and fairness. You cannot have any rationale to argue otherwise.

There is no way - I have studied the numbers in some districts. You are going to give Shs 100 million to a parish somewhere in Karamoja - sorry, I am not quoting Karamoja for bad reasons - that has got 200 homesteads and then you go to a parish that has got 2,000 homesteads, and you give them the same amount of money. It is not only rooted in it is common sense; that defies common sense.

Therefore, any minister seated there overseeing this kind of distribution is in denial. My appeal to you is that now that you have the latest census data, let us take advantage of it. Let us, for once, rationalise.

I do not believe in the policy that every district should have a secondary school. This is because I studied in a district with twenty-two subcounties but with nine first grades. Now, where are the students to fill a secondary school in such a district? How can you have a policy that no matter what, every subcounty must have a secondary school, yet in one district you have nine first grades. Why are you building a school in every subcounty out of the 29? It does not make sense. Therefore, some of these things where we are investing money really begs to be-

Allow me to conclude, Mr Speaker. I happen to be the Chairperson of the Buganda Parliamentary Caucus, save for my being the Leader of the Opposition (LOP) today. For how long shall we continue to be cheated? You have put a ban on the creation of local governments, subcounties and parishes. When it comes to the distribution of the Parish Development Module funds, we have the biggest population, but we get the least amount of money.

The question is, they told us that the money was supposed to be for the poorest of the poor, that the people in the central region are not the poorest of the poor. Yes, but the region with the highest bit of wealth is Western Uganda. It has *-(Interjection)-* yes, it has more parishes than any other district. Therefore, my appeal to you, and I am saying this patriotically. Come urgently to the central region and rationalise the

creation of parishes. If you are going to make them the core nerve centre of development. I beg to submit, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, LOP. Honourable Minister for Public Service?

7.14

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE (Ms Grace Mugasa):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I thank the Committee of Public Service and Local Government and the Chairman for articulating our issues.

Acting positions in local government. Members have shown concern that some people remain acting forever. Some act for years, and indeed it is true. We are supposed to have an acting position for six months and are renewed once. It is supposed to be one year, then you advertise the position.

Mr Speaker, the problem is that some of these people who occupy these positions do not want to leave them. Some of them go ahead even to bribe those people who are supposed to declare their positions, and they remain acting forever.

Secondly, some of our people in the local government do not want to advertise these positions. They want their children or relatives to finish school. They keep postponing advertisements.

What are we doing as the Ministry of Public Service? We have decided to go and do technical backstopping in local governments so that we can check who has been acting. If it is a critical position, why are you not advertising it? Now, at the Ministry of Public Service, we are not going to allow any recruitment without critical positions first.

Secondly, the honourable Member of Parliament from Busia said that she sees employees who are not born in Busia. Busia is at the border. It is a district for everybody-

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, sorry for the interruption, but I wanted to put it the way I understood her point.

Kindly allow me a minute. I want to give you an example. My district Mitooma, especially my constituency for colleagues who have visited it, is one of the hard-to-reach areas. What situation am I getting?

Teachers and some of the schools use it as an opportunity to get on the payroll but immediately move out. We are a stepping ground. I was in the constituency last week. You find schools and all teachers have been taken away. They just came and lobbied because there were gaps. We pushed and recruited, but people find their way and go out.

Parish chiefs. Now, you get a parish chief from a district which is a hundred miles away to come and be a parish chief in a parish deep in my area, where he will need a house and transport to work, yet the money they earn is little. What do you end up having? You end up having people who are moving around and looking for small deals and all that, to top up what they get.

Therefore, to me, what I understood was that some of the jobs in local government should be taken by the locals who understand the local situation. *(Applause)* I do not think that if you have schools in my constituency and you gave them teachers from Mitooma District, they would run away from the conditions of Mitooma. That is where they are going to be buried, and that is where their homes are, and they work while developing their area. *(Applause)*

Therefore, I do not want us to look at it from an angle of saying that the honourable member for Busia is saying they do not want people from other districts to work in Busia. No, why did we decentralise recruitment? I thought it was to make sure that locals in the area are given an opportunity because;

- (i) The pay is low.
- (ii) They easily adapt to the conditions in the area.

However, now, you bring people who do not even understand the language of the area, and they move around looking for interpreters. That

is how I understood it, honourable minister. I would really appreciate it if you are facing challenges in that area.

**MS MUGASA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I also wanted to comment on that because when I went to Otuke, it was the same scenario as you have elaborated on. They are called the “Matooke eaters.” When the “Matooke eaters” go to Otuke, they access the payroll, spend maybe three months there, and then run away.

Therefore, the people of Otuke also proposed that we should at least recruit people from the neighbouring districts who understand the terrain and the food and can easily adapt to the place.

Therefore, I think it should be a policy issue, and we will escalate it further to ensure our people do not face difficult times while they serve.

We also must look at the issue of the hard-to-reach allowances. Some time back, the Ministry of Public Service did this, but due to the shortage of funds, they have not added more districts. I feel we must roll it out, review and evaluate the other hard-to-reach areas, and make sure this money is provided for.

The two teachers work in the whole school. I think we need to talk to the area Member of Parliament. We can probably discuss the details and make sure this school gets teachers. I have very few remaining.

The former leaders; we should rationalise the benefits. Yes, it is still under discussion because we noticed some people got cars at Parliament and other cars from the Ministry of Public Service.

You find one person with the double or maybe triple benefits.

We therefore need to rationalise this. One should benefit from the latest former employment, not all the benefits, because some people are very lucky to have spent years in Parliament and served in several offices.

Some staffing levels in local governments are still below 50; it is true - some are even at 30. We have agreed, that those who have recruited and are at least up to 80 per cent, should first hold on, we pick money from the budget and allocate to those still lagging and at least pull them up to 68 or 70 per cent, so that they can also serve their people well after recruiting human resource. I think I am done. I thank-

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MS MUGASA:** No, there is a big question from Hon. Muwanga-Kivumbi. He said that we told them that we had Shs 2 trillion dividends after RAPEX. It is not correct. It was an estimate of about Shs 980, but we said about Shs 1 trillion.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Tell us where Shs 500 billion is, let us give you a discount. *(Laughter)*

**MS MUGASA:** I am coming to that, Mr Speaker. RAPEX is still a work in progress. Right now, if you check on our roadmap, we are recruiting, and work is still ongoing. So, we cannot establish now how much money we have as savings because we do not know how many people will be re-recruited, and we do not even know at the moment who will not take our offer.

Therefore, we need to estimate to get the actual package after recruitment because some will take the severance package, but others will not. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the Report of the Committee the Public Service and Local Government in the Ministerial Policy Statements and budget estimates for the Financial Year 2025/2026 be adopted.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

*Report adopted.*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The report is referred to the Committee on Budget as per

Rule 149 (2) for consideration, harmonisation, and ensuring that all the figures are put together into reconciliation so that we can continue the budget process.

I would like to thank you, Mr Chairperson and your team for the job well done and congratulations. Thank you, Honourable minister. *(Applause)* Next. Hon. Oguzu Lee first.

**MR OGUZU:** I am seeking your indulgence so that the Minister for Public Service can respond to this query.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, honourable member, I have not allowed any query. Finance-

**MR OGUZU:** I would raise it if you-

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please, no. I am not going back. It is already done, and you know they had already questioned your dressing. *(Laughter)*

7.25

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Moses Aleper):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take this opportunity to present the report of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development on the Ministerial Policy Statement and Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2025/2026.

However, before I do the presentation, I beg to lay on the Table copies of the minutes of the interactions that the committee had with the Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) and the submissions that fall under the committee.

Mr Speaker, this presentation is structured as follows: There is an introduction, methodology, equity and compliance, Resource Envelope, half-year performance for 2024/2025, the budget estimate, committee observations, and recommendations.

In the interest of time, most of this has been uploaded and is in the report. I wish to go, through your guidance, straight to the committee observations and recommendations, if you so allow.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please go ahead.

**MR ALEPER:** Thank you. We go to page 18-

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hansard team, ensure that the whole report and the previous ones are captured.

**MR MOSES ALEPER:** Page 18. Committee Observations and Recommendations

Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Item 1. Implementation of RAPEX.

The committee observed that following the RAPEX, the Ministry did not illustrate what steps they had taken to absorb the extra workload, both legally and physically, absorb the former employees of rationalised entities, and compensate the employees to be laid off as a result of rationalisation.

For instance, the organogram of the ministry did not reflect the Department of Microfinance regulation.

The committee recommends, therefore, that the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development expedite the legal process, including modifying the respective regulations and formalising the absorption of the former staff of the rationalised entities to avoid an operational and regulatory vacuum.

National Planning Authority, off-budget support

The National Planning Authority projects to get Shs 2.24 billion in off-budget support for the Financial Year 2025/2026 from the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), Shs 1.24 billion, and then GIZ Shs 1.0 billion.

The committee recommends that such funds be incorporated into the medium-term expenditure framework to ensure proper planning and avoid duplication of activities.

Treasury operations. Debt commitment fees

The committee observed that the debt commitment fees are projected to rise to Shs 63 billion in the Financial Year 2026 from Shs 45 billion in the Financial Year 2024/2025, as indicated in Table 2 above.

The Auditor-General also noted, with concern, that undisbursed loans increased to Shs 16.49 trillion in the Financial Year 2023/2024 from Shs 14.6 trillion in the Financial Year 2022/2023, and therefore recommends as follows:

That before the Government procures a loan for any project, feasibility studies and other preliminary activities should first be conducted to avoid paying unnecessary commitment fees because of not being able to utilise the procured loans.

Another item under Treasury Operations is the Contingency Fund

Section 25 of the Public Finance Management Act, CAP 171, provides that the contingency fund shall be replenished every financial year with an amount equivalent to 0.5 per cent of the appropriated annual budget of the Government of the previous financial year.

The committee observed that the appropriated annual budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025 was Shs 34,318.1 billion. Therefore, the contingency fund for the Financial Year 2025/2026 is expected to be Shs 171.1 billion.

However, the Government has allocated Uganda Shs 169.0 billion, which is less than the expected amount and reflects a deficit of Shs 2.1 billion. The committee recommends that the Government adheres to Section 25 of the PFMA, CAP 171 of the laws of Uganda, by providing the expected amount to the contingency fund.

Another item under treasurer operations is Domestic Borrowing.

According to the Preliminary Fiscal Framework, domestic borrowing is projected to rise from Shs 8,967.96 billion in the Financial Year 2024/2025 to Shs 11,381.35 billion in the Financial Year 2025/2026.

This is contrary to the Government's commitment in the budget framework paper for Financial Year 2025/2026 to reduce domestic borrowing to Shs 411.3 billion.

Increased domestic borrowing could lead to crowding out the private sector, potentially driving interest rates up and raising the cost of doing business.

The committee recommends that the Government limits domestic borrowing to only development projects and also implement fiscal consolidation to cap spending.

Domestic arrears

According to the Auditor-General, domestic arrears increased from Shs 10.5 trillion in the Financial Year 2022/2023 to Shs 13.81 trillion by the end of the Financial Year 2023/2024.

The committee observed that the Government has provided Shs 1.12 trillion for domestic areas for the Financial Year 2025/2026. This is an improvement from the previous year, when only Shs 200 billion was provided. Even at this rate, if no new arrears are accumulated, it will take the Government over 12 years to clear all the domestic arrears.

The committee recommends that the minister in charge of finance provides a comprehensive and effective plan on how to clear domestic arrears in the medium and long term, as non-payment of domestic arrears cripples the private sector and undermines economic growth.

Over expenditure

According to the Semi-Annual Budget Performance Report for Financial Year

2024/2025, Treasury Operations had a total approved budget of Shs 34,589.16 billion, of which Shs 12,412.99 billion was released in the first half of Financial Year 2024/2025.

The committee observed that Treasury Operations spent Shs 19,891.50 billion, which is 160.2 percent of the money released. This is Shs 7.74 billion spent over and above what was released. By the time of writing this report, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and Treasury Operations had not submitted the conditions under which this happened.

The committee recommends that the minister in charge of finance provide a detailed response to Parliament explaining the conditions under which this over-expenditure occurred.

#### 7.4. Vote 123 – National Lotteries and Gaming Regulatory Board

##### 7.4.1. Revenue collection

The committee noted that the annual revenue collections have grown from Shs 17.4 billion in Financial Year 2015/2016, when the institution was established, to Shs 194 billion in 2023/2024, which is above the target of Shs 140 billion.

As of 28 February 2025, the total revenue collected was Shs 189 billion against an annual budget of Shs 240 billion. This growth is attributed to improved compliance and stakeholder collaboration. The graph in the report shows the revenue growth since the entity's establishment.

- i. The committee recommends that the board intensify enforcement and compliance efforts, such as licensing, inspection of gaming premises, and dispute resolution, to collect more revenue.
- ii. The committee further recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should develop a policy that will minimise the adverse effects of betting on the population.

##### 1.1.2. Staff recruitment

The committee noted that the Ministry of Public Service has approved a new organisational structure for the board, increasing the number of staff from 51 to 81. This paves the way for staff recruitment, enabling the agency to increase its footprint and exercise the mandate more effectively.

The committee recommends that the board should expedite the process of recruiting additional staff to enable the entity to achieve its targets for the next financial year.

##### 1.1.3. Automation of Business Processes

The committee observed that the development of the following electronic systems was completed during the previous financial year and the first half of the current financial year:

- i. The National Central Electronic Monitoring System (NCEMS);
- ii. E-licensing system; and
- iii. Electronic register for gaming equipment.

The rollout and use of the above systems have commenced and will enhance regulatory oversight and efficiency.

The committee commends the board for automating its business processes.

#### 1.4. Vote 131 – Office of the Auditor-General

##### 1.1.1. Funding Gap

Over the years, the office has experienced significant funding gaps, which have adversely affected the implementation of activities. The funding gaps for the last three years were Shs 48.7 billion in Financial Year 2022/2023, Shs 77.89 billion in Financial Year 2023/2024, and Shs 128.18 billion in Financial Year 2024/2025.

This implies that the office's budget has been below the required annual performance targets to deliver on her mandate. This situation has been exacerbated by budget cuts and under-releases.

### 1.1.2. Widened audit scope

The committee observed that the Office of the Auditor-General has an expanded scope due to a growing number of administrative units such as PDM, local governments and schools –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, I referred the Auditor-General to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs. So, how did you process it under the Finance Committee? You came to ask me, and I clarified to you why—because the Auditor-General is an officer of Parliament.

**MR MOSES ALEPER:** Among the entities that were to appear before us was the OAG, and we deemed it so because we thought –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, when I make a pronouncement on the Floor, it is final. If you want to change anything – isn't that a coup? (*Laughter*) That is Vote grabbing; you went and grabbed a Vote from somewhere.

**MR MOSES ALEPER:** Mr Speaker, I seek your guidance on this particular item.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You see, what is confusing is that I pronounced myself on the matter. I remember - was it you, Hon. Aleper? It was you - you came here and asked me, and I gave you a reason. You disregarded my reasoning and went ahead and grabbed the Vote. I do not think it is good for the committee to do that without authorisation. It now means we have to go back to the *Hansard* and refer it.

Anyway, let us receive it for now and move on. If I find that the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs did not consider it, then we will allow it to be considered under the finance committee.

**MR MOSES ALEPER:** Much obliged, Mr Speaker. Let me continue.

The expanded mandate requires a sufficient number of staff, fleet of vehicles and requisite facilitation. However, out of the 1,890 staff

established, only 593 positions are filled, representing a 31 per cent staffing level. In addition, of the available fleet, 65 per cent is due for disposal, while an additional 20 per cent is due for replacement.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the budget of the Office of the Auditor-General should be protected, as required or as provided for by law.

### 1.5. Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority

#### Corporate governance of the entity

The committee noted that the authority does not have a fully constituted board, since four out of the seven board members were removed by the order of the High Court. The ruling prohibited four of the board members from performing their respective duties, hence creating a vacuum in the quorum of the board and impairing the strategic corporate decision-making process.

Important to note is that the position of Chief Executive Officer is vacant, yet the High Court prohibited the person appointed as acting CEO from performing the CEO roles, thus creating a vacuum in the day-to-day operations of URBRA.

It was noted that URBRA has an accounting officer who was appointed by the PS/ST to be responsible for Vote 163, in accordance with Section 43 of the Public Finance Management Act, Cap. 171. Applications for stay of execution and appeal against the orders of the trial judge were filed in the Court of Appeal through Civil Application No. 60 of 2025 arising from Civil Appeal No. 72 of 2025.

### 8.0 Conclusion

The Committee on Finance, Planning, and Economic Development appreciates that the institutions under its jurisdiction are critical in achieving socio-economic transformation, fulfilling the NDP IV, and achieving Vision 2024 and the 10-fold growth strategy.



During the consideration of the ministerial policy statements, there was a shared concern that these institutions continue to attract very limited funding, which has made it extremely difficult to fulfil their respective mandates. The budget strategy for the Financial Year 2025/2026 will be better achieved if the above institutions are supported in executing their mandates.

In light of the above, the committee prays that this House adopt this report and approve the budget estimates that incorporate the committee's recommendation for the respective Votes for the Financial Year 2025/2026, as detailed in the appendices. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, chairperson and team, for the job well done. I will start with Hon. Noeline Kisembo.

7.43

**MS NOELINE KISEMBO (NRM, Woman Representative, Kibaale):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I thank the chairperson of the committee for the good report. My attention has been drawn to the submission on domestic arrears that have accumulated to a level of Shs 10.5 trillion. I think this is an alarming proportion.

We well know that this directly affects the private sector. The private sector is suffocating, and yet our economy is private sector-led. Where are we heading? No wonder many of our businesses in the country are collapsing because the money is here. Why don't we prioritise the payment of these domestic arrears? The chairperson of the committee has presented it very clearly that going by this rate of provision of Shs 1.2 trillion, it would take us 12 years to clear the existing domestic arrears, assuming there is no accumulation.

I have a few questions. Who are these accounting officers who commit the Government to making undertakings when they know that we do not have money in the coffers to pay these commitments? What has the ministry done to discipline these accounting officers? I

know it is the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development that appoints the accounting officers in all these MDAs. Therefore, it is an alarming position, and I would want an explanation from the minister on where they put their priorities.

The second one, and probably the last one, is in line with the Rationalisation of Government Expenditure and Agencies (RAPEX). We have challenges arising from RAPEX, the absorption of staff, and those who are supposed to be compensated who were affected by it.

We were made to believe as a House that all was set because all these Bills had certificates of financial implications, meaning that we were prepared as a Government to handle the implementation of RAPEX to its logical conclusion. Why is this not happening? Were we not able to foresee this? and what was the purpose of the certificate of financial implications that were attached to all these Bills. I think it goes back to the planning aspect that was alluded to in the earlier discussion, that we need to plan better as a country.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Okot, then Hon. Balimwezo.

7.46

**MR PETER OKOT (DP, Tochi County, Omoro):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. There is what we call a work plan, and one wonders if all our agencies, at the start of any programme, produce a work plan attached with activities, and activities are tagged with the amount to be spent on. Then I wonder how the domestic arrears come in because some time back I had the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development warning accounting officers not to commit Government where they know very well that there is no money.

When I hear in the report that domestic arrears are likely to increase, what does that show? Does it mean that the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development has failed to supervise the accounting officers?

The same goes for the service fees that we pay on the loans. If we are not sure that we are going to undertake a certain project in time, why should we negotiate the loan and have it lying there when we are not prepared? I think some of these things we are entering into the problems well knowing ourselves. We need to revise and see that we do not involve ourselves in something that we are not ready to undertake.

7.48

**MR RONALD BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division East, Kampala City):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate that Hon. Kisembo has commented on domestic arrears that have reached an alarming level. These arrears have not only crippled the economy of this country but also they have made our Government institution lose credibility and that is very pertinent. If you consider the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA), last year, it had debts that accrued an interest of Shs 390 million every day; so the Shs 10 trillion has been as a result of non-payment, and that is all interest that has accrued.

Therefore, it is important that we should have, as a matter of urgency, our first or second call should be the payment of the arrears. Otherwise, we are continuing to lose lots of money because of the interest that accrues.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Dr Batuwa, then Hon. Chemonges?

7.49

**DR TIMOTHY BATUWA (FDC, Jinja South Division West, Jinja City):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I address myself to the point where you mentioned over-expenditure to the extent of 160 per cent on the Treasury Operations Account that is Vote 130, an account that is managing our debt obligations and other statutory requirements.

An over-expenditure on this account cannot arise by mistake; it only and simply means they are spending money that Parliament never allocated. If you are going beyond what Parliament allocated, if you are allocating yourself money, I believe that is the only

way an over-expenditure can arise on such an account.

This is something that should be looked at deeply and it should be well understood so that we see how we can address the challenges that we have that are very real to our people, especially that one of the domestic arrears where people have worked and served the Government or they have done projects for years, they have never received payment. Is there a way we can get a cure by addressing that over expenditure on that Vote?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Chemonges?

7.51

**MR WILLIAM CHEMONGES (NRM, Kween County, Kween):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I begin by thanking Hon. Kisembo for talking about the arrears. This is actually money for our own people. At least I know many of them around town who are dying of debts, are even in hiding and whose property has been auctioned. This is simply because the Government has delayed the pay.

If you bring the Shs 10 trillion back to these businessmen, the economy itself will change. We will not be borrowing what we borrow now.

The second thing is about the budget we pass. I would like to remind the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development that in the Financial Year 2023/2024 budget, we had water for Kween District, actually my constituency, which covers about six subcounties. It had a budget of about Shs 8 billion. It was very clear in the budget. The financial year is almost ending, there is totally nothing on the ground, and now we are in another budgeting process.

When I visited the minister recently, I was told that there is only about Shs 3 billion or Shs 2 billion. That is not enough to give the contractor even the first payment, which is only 30 per cent advance. Mr Speaker, I was shocked. How do we budget and run almost the entire financial year when we have not secured money for an item that was passed and everybody saw? This

would be the first and biggest water project in our district. It has never happened like that.

Mr Speaker, I would like the minister for finance to help the people of Kween and this House to answer that one. Tell us, what could have caused this? Otherwise, we are almost losing track. We fail when we come to process another budget when the other is not delivered.

Some of us have tried to tell the people we represent that we do not have money as a country. We cannot ask for a school here. I like the way you said it, Mr Speaker. The creation of many administration units is not what has caused us problems in financing. The problem is how we create them. For example, in my district, many subcounties were created in 2020. However, the biggest subcounties, like Kaptoyoy Subcounty from my constituency, which had over 10,000 people, was not divided. It would have created about three other subcounties.

There is another one called Kitawoi, which was the biggest. You find that in the whole country, the small ones were subdivided because of interest of some people and the big ones left out. We are now saying the ministry for finance should find money to subdivide these big ones. If we fail, then we should amalgamate some and subdivide others – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. I think another thing we need to ask ourselves on the issue of domestic arrears is, what is the cost of sustaining domestic arrears on the Government? Most of these contracts, especially for roads, are penalties, interest given to companies. I do not know at what rate, for example, if you got an infrastructure bond and cleared them off, compared to being looked at as a bad client, yet you are paying interest. Like Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) was saying every day, it was incurring around Shs 290 million.

Also, what is painful is that the big companies, at least, are protected with interest. However, for the small companies, which supply at district level, by the time you are paid, if you

had borrowed in a bank - and some of them go to money lenders - the money cannot even cover the interest that you incurred. You see a business, the more contracts they get, the poorer they become. You ask yourself what is going on.

However, I am impressed to see that it is an improvement from Shs billion to Shs 1.2 trillion, although we can really get more. Honourable colleagues, we need to look at it seriously.

7.57

**MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me start from where you have just stopped. Economically speaking, we should not even be reaching this level because we know the ministry for finance is full of all those economists and statisticians. They know what holding this money in domestic arrears means to the economy.

We are talking about domestic revenue mobilisation. If there is no money in circulation, where do you expect to get taxes from? The businesses will not be able to move. I do not know whether these domestic arrears include the money you asked the Bank of Uganda to borrow under treasury bills. Mr Speaker, remember last time in the Appointments Committee, the new leadership was talking about Shs 6 trillion -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, but they said they cleared that.

**MR OKUPA:** If we cleared that, it is fine. However, this Shs 13.8 is almost 21 per cent of the national budget in domestic arrears. If you looked at Shs 13.8 of the Shs 71 or so trillion of our budget, how can we have something like 20 per cent of the national budget in domestic arrears?

Therefore, we want to appeal to the minister for finance not to let the economy to collapse because without money in circulation, you cannot get money for taxes. The economy will not grow. *(Applause)*

Two of our colleagues who did work for the Government - I am not surprised that they are not here. Their property was advertised in February. One of them, the company had done work under the Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development. Eighteen billion shillings has not been paid. His equipment, home and property were advertised last month.

Another one who had also done work for the Government had his property also advertised. Do you want to see people collapse because their property has been taken away? The Government must take this seriously because if we fail to do that, we are just going to see our economy collapse.

Mr Speaker, our unutilised loans have increased from Shs 14 to 16 trillion. Possibly, this is where the issues of arrears come from. Why don't you pay off this money? I guess this is in the infrastructure development where we expected to have people pay. What is the problem? Is it counterpart funding by the Government, that they are not able to spend this? The minister for finance must be able to tell us what is causing this problem.

Day in, day out, we are borrowing money. Now, we have undisbursed loans to a tune of Shs 16 trillion. The interest on these loans is occurring day and out.

The final one, where we need the minister to explain again, is on treasury operations. I just want to agree with the committee. Can the minister today explain to us what this over expenditure was in treasury operations. Since you failed to explain to the committee, can you give the reasons to the Committee of the whole House. Failure to do that, we shall be moved to reject to approve the budget of the ministry for finance. How can you not explain that? You make yourself suspicious. You spent the money so you should be able to explain how you spent it.

8.00

**MR ISAIAS SSASAGA (FDC, Budadiri County East, Sironko):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I do appreciate the committee for

trying to protect the budget of the Auditor-General because the money we appropriate as Parliament, always goes in the ministries and agencies for the implementation. The only competent authority, which can help us, as a country, know how best the money is being utilised and audited is the Office of the Auditor-General.

Surprisingly to me, I wonder why the ministry of finance could, year in, year out, try to frustrate, especially the budget for the Office of the Auditor-General. And you may discover that some of the beneficiaries of the kickbacks of the monies we appropriate are actually officers from the ministry of finance. I thank the committee for having protected the budget, but I am also asking the minister -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** How did they protect the budget?

**MR SSASAGA:** Of course, in their recommendation -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Because, honourable member, if you listen to my argument, the Auditor-General is part of Parliament. The budget of Parliament is statutory. So, it is more protected here and that is why we said that the Auditor-General should come and be part of Parliament because he is an officer of Parliament.

That is why I also referred that budget to the Committee on Legal, not finance, but we will harmonise it and make a clarification. And, in Parliament, we can easily have two votes. We have the vote of Parliament and that of the Auditor-General so that the Auditor-General remains an accounting officer. His vote is more protected that way. But to the ministry of finance, I must put it also clearly - especially to you, Hon. Musasizi. They have tried their level best to support the Auditor-General despite the challenges of underfunding; I have shared with the Auditor-General.

It is not in any way that it has come to our attention that the ministry of finance frustrates the Auditor-General. So, I must also make that very clear and on record.

**MR SSASAGA:** Mr Speaker, now with your guidance, I think it is prudent that we move that vote back from where you had put it in finance to the legal committee so that they can scrutinise its budget to that effect. I think that will be better.

We appreciate the work of the Attorney-General and the appropriation without them having effective audits – they will tell you that, out of the 30 agencies, they looked at only one or two. The challenge is the budget constraint, which made them fail to do so. Therefore, with your guidance, we can move that vote back to the legal committee. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. I had selected Hon. Frank Kabuye, Hon. Linda and then Hon. Nsaba Buturo.

8.04

**MR FRANK KABUYE (NUP, Kassanda County South, Kassanda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson for the good report and further thank the colleagues who have already spoken to the issues that have been put forward in this report.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to comment about the debt commitment fee and the undisbursed loans. Actually, if we read- and you are among the people to be told that a country has over Shs 16 trillion undisbursed loans and we are paying the commitment fees and - we do not know, maybe we should request the minister to come and provide to us the project list to which these monies were supposed to be committed, so that we see where the failure is.

Is the project abandoned and it is no longer going to be operational in the country, or is it out of the development plan of the country? Otherwise, we are making our country and the economy look very bad.

On the issue of domestic arrears, Mr Speaker, our people are crying out. The economy is crippling, businesses are failing and people are trying to look for a livelihood. In these contracts that they get from the Government, they expect to make a living and to boost their businesses.

The report indicates that Shs 13.8 trillion is held by the Government from the public. Even if we took the Parish Development Model to village level and gave them the Shs 100 million each, we would never revamp the economy if we still take hold of these trillions of monies.

How I wish that this Government and the ministry prioritise paying these people to clear and support the local investments and businesses so that people can live a sustainable and a self-sustaining life, without depending on borrowing and the blacklist because when they borrow and they are not receiving anything and their investments are held somewhere, they will be blacklisted and will face some financial penalties from the institutions they borrowed from.

How I wish the ministers would take this as a priority to see that we revamp the economy by giving back what belongs to the people. We are not helping them, but they are demanding from us, and so we should act with responsibility.

Lastly, I would like to request the minister, just as the committee requested, to explain the over-expenditure. In the report, there was an over-expenditure of Shs 7.7 billion that was spent in the first half of 2024. I wish the minister can clarify that and how they spent more than what they released to make us better understand the operations of the ministry, but also, to let us know clearly and be sure that our duties and operations are not overruled by the interests of the ministers or those in charge of the Treasury. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Auma Linda and then Hon. Dr Nsaba Buturo.

8.06

**MS LINDA AUMA (Independent, Woman Representative, Lira):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to commend the Committee of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for the effort put into bringing out the reality as per the financial situation of the country.

I would also like to draw your attention to the issue of domestic arrears. This is becoming a

shame to us as a nation and its leaders. Two days ago, two gentlemen came to my office. They have their arrears under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), and their outcry was so painful.

The children have dropped out of school - those who are just finalising their doctorate course, one has cancer with no treatment because of the situation, and all their properties have been taken by the banks. These are citizens of this country, and they worked when the Government advertised. If these activities were budgeted for, where did this money go?

As a chairperson of a committee, I know that all Government activities are budgeted for, but I have realised one problem, which is to do with the way releases are made. We budget like this, but finance does not release money, or they release it halfway, and make these ministries and agencies commit these contractors to do their work.

I would like to give one reference. Right now, under the Dairy Department, there is already construction going on in Mbale for a milk factory to support the eastern region. It is in its first phase. The contractor has already been committed, but in this current budget, there is nothing. That contractor will sue the Government.

In Kasese, there is a construction of a laboratory for coffee. It is now halfway done, but in this current budget, there is nothing. This is how we are making the Government lose a lot of funds – *(Interjection)* - I will give you space to provide information.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should be serious. We are blaming MDAs for nothing. Finance should prioritise its releases. Ongoing projects should be funded in time so that we meet the deadline and even for our domestic - we are rushing to clear other arrears, but we are crippling our citizens yet this money will come back to our economy.

These people and their children will be useless in the future, crying out our names. They are dying, crying with our names as Government. We have to take this as a serious matter, and we want the minister for finance to commit himself and also prioritise these allocations of Shs 13.8 trillion for arrears, because you will find that those who are able are the ones going to be paid. Those who are badly off are left out - Information is allowed. *(Hon. Balimwezo rose)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. There is no time to donate here, please. Yes, Hon. Dr Nsaba Buturo?

8.11

**MR JAMES NSABA BUTURO (NRM, Bufumbira County East, Kisoro):** Mr Speaker, I do not know whether honourable members do appreciate the gravity of the state of lawlessness that we are beginning to see capturing our nation. I do not know if members appreciate that we have a problem in our hands, caused largely by our own people.

I would like to suggest that we dedicate some time and critically analyse this internal enemy that is seeking to sink all of us. If we do not, we are clearly in trouble.

I have taken a bit of time to find out what exactly is going wrong and have come up with four factors that are propelling this state of affairs, which if we do not arrest, we are in trouble, including those who are benefiting now. Foolishly, they are not aware that they are digging a grave that will sink all of us.

Mr Speaker, the issue of incompetence; those who are in charge of managing our national purse, I want to suggest that some of them are not up to the task. That is one, incompetence.

The second is the I-don't-care attitude because of the way the national economy is being managed; if it were your own resources, certainly that would not be happening. In other words, it is the I-don't-care attitude that is harming us. How do we arrest it? It is rampant.

The other clear one is that we have a situation where there are networks now that are clearly ravaging our opportunities across the nation and they are very well entrenched. You find them everywhere and if you attempt to touch them, they will finish you before you finish them.

Mr Speaker, how do we deal with this calamity that is in the making and clearly being perpetuated by some of our own people? And they have the audacity to even ignore warnings from the highest level of Government.

They do not care - they know that some of our institutions that are mandated to keep law and order in the way we manage our resources do not function well; they have been infiltrated.

So, we are talking about a serious situation that we really need to find time and dedicate tools to so that we arrest this matter before it goes out of hand.

Otherwise, I do commend the committee. They have spoken well. But clearly, we are in trouble and if we do not do anything, history will condemn us. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, we are a prayerful nation. We shall not allow the devil to take charge. We shall continue praying for our country. Hon. Sara Opendi and Hon. Dorcas.

8.15

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for its report. However, it disturbs me when an entity is given funds to recruit, money is even released and they do not recruit on flimsy grounds.

I am talking about the Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority (URBRA). From this report, for the current financial year, this entity received Shs 6 billion and out of this, they utilised 77 per cent of what they had actually been given.

The under-performance being stated was because - while the wage was released, there was a corresponding non-wage. And because of that, they could not recruit. We have many unemployed youths. If even one or two people are employed in an entity, it helps not just to support that individual but to support the family and the siblings who may be unemployed.

I hope that in this financial year that we are moving towards, the UBRA should utilise the wage provided to recruit, because what is there in non-wage? Tea? You have a salary.

The committee does not even tell us how much of the Shs 4.66 billion that was provided under non-wage, was actually utilised. I think that information should have been provided so that the report is complete.

Secondly, is the challenge of domestic arrears. There are clear laws under the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) that no institution must commit Government without funds.

However, most of the institutions still incur these domestic arrears yet they do little to settle the previous domestic arrears.

It is very sad, Mr Speaker, for the Parliament of Uganda to provide tax holidays, taking away money from people who should be paying taxes.

Then the money that should have been collected to pay off some of our domestic arrears, instead, because of the non-payment of these domestic arrears, most institutions and organisations, and companies are closing.

Many people are crying, and it is worse when they borrow this money to supply the Government, and at the end of the day, the Government does not pay. Most of them lose their properties.

Therefore, there must be a deliberate effort by this Parliament to remove wasteful expenditure and tackle the issue of domestic arrears. This report states that we shall take 12 years at the current rate to clear the domestic arrears.

Something more must be done; we have waited for the oil, but it is not coming. I do not know – hopefully we can be told that oil will be coming in the next financial year, so that we can clear this and companies get back to doing business.

How are these institutions going to employ Ugandans? Because these companies employ some people. The jobs are not there, so people get into business so that, in doing their businesses, they can sustain themselves and their families and also pay taxes.

However, if we are killing our own institutions by not paying them, what are we actually doing? And do not say there is no revenue. It is worse when we sit here and give a single company Shs 500 or 200 billion, when other smaller companies are asking for very little money. The big ones can even impose interest.

You talked about the example of UNRA, the companies that are earning interest on every unpaid certificate, but they are not.

As we get to the end of this process, let us ensure that these domestic arrears are drastically reduced. How I wish we could reduce by even 50 per cent. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Yes, Hon. Acen.

8.20

**MS DORCAS ACEN (NRM, Woman Representative, Alebtong):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for a very elaborate report. However, it is also very worrying to note that the ministry has failed to demonstrate the steps that they can take to absorb the extra workload, which is created as a result of the Rationalisation of Government Agencies and Expenditure (RAPEX).

It is worrying to the extent that the organogram of the ministry does not consider or show some of the critical departments, for example, the department on microfinance regulation.

It is very worrying for our country to know that the ministries of the Government are being very complacent. The previous minister, under

public service, even indicated that we do not know how many staff are going to be absorbed, and how many are going to be recruited.

I implore the minister and other ministries that it is important to operate based on clear recruitment plans, so that we know from the staff who are already laid off how many can be absorbed, and whether those positions are clearly defined. That is when we shall be able to know the savings.

Mr Speaker, on domestic arrears, about two weeks ago, I was in the constituency with the Government Chief Whip, and we found a very alarming issue about the contractors. They spoke openly to the public about a meeting, which they held, as contractors, with the ministry for finance. In their words, the ministry's staff were very arrogant.

Even when we talk about domestic arrears, the contractors know. I implore you - I know that Members have already alluded to it - that as you work out ways of paying them, find a better way of responding and explaining to them. You should also take concrete actions, so that they know that the Government is not delaying to pay them in bad faith. I thank you.

8.23

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

Mr Speaker, this report demands a lot from us, as a country. First of all, when you look at the first statement that “by the time of writing the report, the ministry for finance had not provided the details in terms of revenues”, that was already a very big problem.

Today, the minister told us that the Shs 71 trillion was the figure that we were going to look into. Possibly, if that information had been given at that time, the committee would have given us detailed information about how the picture is going to be for the entire country.

Mr Speaker, I also expected a statement on the state of the Consolidated Fund, because many times we have debated it here. As we



are planning for the Financial Year 2025/2026, what is the status of the Consolidated Fund? What picture does the ministry for finance give about this money that comes back to the Consolidated Fund, so that we make the Ugandans understand how this money is?

This business of giving money to local governments late, when the year is concluding, is a very big challenge. Mr Speaker, our interest is to see that services are provided to the people at the right time. So, when that information is lacking, it leaves us with a very big gap.

Also, the issue of giving money to the local governments late, when the financial year is concluding, is disturbing. Our interest is to see that services are provided to the people at the right time.

On revenue, Mr Speaker, I also expected a statement on the Integrated Revenue Administration System (IRAS). We have the Uganda Revenue Authority. How is it performing? We have this new system called IRAS, can we have a summary from the finance ministry on how local governments are performing, and how they are contributing to the national economy, so that this Parliament can still see the validity of having it continuously enrolled on the various local governments? Thank you.

8.25

**MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the presentation.

The money that we borrow, whether domestically or from outside our country, as the minister, you should know that it affects the economy negatively. When a country borrows more than its GDP's worth, that country is automatically affected.

Honourable minister, can you tell us why, year in, year out, borrowings have never stopped? You keep coming here to ask for money. Make us understand, as Parliament, what is happening in the finance ministry that we do not know.

We may be here castigating the ministry for finance, yet something else is happening that we are not aware of.

Secondly, honourable minister, do you have any plans, as a ministry, for debt management? Members talked about domestic arrears, but do you have a particular plan? If you keep coming here and we keep giving you money, it is our children who will pay in the future. That is where my interest is.

If you do not have a plan, why do you come to Parliament to keep borrowing money?

Those contractors that our colleague talked about here, at the end of the day, keep coming to us. In Arua City, most of the work has been abandoned because they have not been paid. They just have half-baked work, which is a waste of money. We must have value for money. Why do you bring in contractors to do certain work if you know you do not have money? That alludes to what Hon. Sarah Opendi was saying. We should stop committing the Government when there is no money.

Please, this is Parliament, where every business is supposed to be held with seriousness. People outside there take us to be very unserious. Even I, who represents Arua City, look very unserious like this ministry of *-(Laughter)* - please, help us.

8.26

**MR SOWEDI KITANYWA (NRM, Busongora County North, Kasese):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the good report.

I want to specifically address myself, Mr Speaker, to one issue - the Contingencies Fund. Section 25 of the Public Finance Management Act commands us to plan for 0.5 per cent of the funds that we appropriated the previous financial year, for the following year. In this case, it means that we are supposed to have allocated Shs 171.1 billion.

However, when you look at the report, you realise that the finance ministry has instead

allocated Shs 169 billion. Can we hear from the ministry why they allocated less than what is required by the Public Finance Management Act?

8.29

**MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimbi County, Kisoro):** Mr Speaker, I thank you even for this extra time that you have put in. You are now a nationalist. I thank all of these Members of Parliament who are here; they deserve a medal.

Honourable colleagues, there are issues that we should really be focusing on. The structure and mandate of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is so big that at times there are institutional conflicts between it and other entities, which the Government should be able to address.

There are two ministries in the Government, which are more important than other ministries. The Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is called the "chief accounting officer of other ministries and agencies". Then, in the Ministry of Public Service, the PS is called a responsible permanent secretary. Unfortunately, the ministry for finance takes time to get some of these projects and manage them themselves, and find that that is a conflict of interest because they should not be managing, but they should be facilitating and supporting agencies.

Therefore, when we are debating like this, the ministers take notes. When they go back to the Cabinet, you should know that these ministries, when you have organisational and institutional conflicts, undermine each other.

Honourable minister, that is a very important issue; your structure needs to be reviewed. Why should the ministry of finance be responsible for looking for funds to give to agencies of the Government, and then you are giving money to yourself? That is a very dangerous practice.

Another issue that we should be looking at is the issue of bringing politically driven financial implications. You come here because you want

a loan, you bring a letter, a paper, actually. That should be an instrument, not a paper. Evidence is that this Parliament, Mr Speaker, passed a scale-up loan from the World Bank of \$338 million for three years.

Up to now, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, where I am a member of the natural resource committee, has appealed to the ministry for finance, using our daily friend here, Hon. Musasizi, to bring it Shs 21 billion only to unlock \$636 million. You think that you are going to come back.

Members of Parliament are here complaining about poles without wires or wires without power. Unless we insist that the ministry for finance must provide the Shs 21 billion only to unlock \$638 million for the scale-up project.

Whereas, the power we generate cannot be sold because it is not being bought, we have already started paying \$144 million on Karuma power that is not being sold. We should be realistic.

When you go to domestic arrears, you notice that the ministry for finance does not show how - or what liability is faced by the Government. They show foreign, they do not show all domestic but our shops have closed. Can we be realistic in our budgets? Can we stop waving off some taxes?

Gold was being exported. People are willing to pay, but the ministry for finance, because of some undisclosed interests, said "No taxes on gold exports." We have lost money. The same money we are losing in gold exports could be the one to be in energy because more than Shs 200 billion was verified and was supposed to be paid. However, the ministry for finance, dealing with the ministry for energy, stopped revenue collection of over Shs 200 billion. Yet here we want Shs 21 billion. What mathematics was that one?

Another thing is that me, in my place, they mine iron ore. They gave Devick to export one million metric tons of iron ore. The ministry for finance said they have waived taxes. If you have resources, which you are exporting but

you do not want to receive tax, where will you support for your budget from?

I would think that, as I said earlier, should it be a ritual that Members of Parliament should come here to talk and go?

What is the follow-up? When I see Mr Speaker or any presiding officer giving directions, when we finish, it ends in the chamber and the newspapers. I would think that we should be - there must be a follow-up mechanism.

As I conclude, Mr Speaker, I do not want to challenge you, but this Parliament is created under Article 77 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. Same as the Auditor-General is created under Article 163, and the (6) says, "*Subject to clause 7 of this Article, in the performance of his function, that is the Auditor-General, shall not be under any direction or control of an authority*".

I believe that the Auditor-General is not a member of staff of Parliament, because of this constitutional provision. They are supposed to be independent and the capacity of the policy body of the Auditor-General, that is why the Auditor-General does not perform with the standards. I want to mark the word "*Standards*" because we should have had a National Audit Board, but when the Parliament says a committee of Parliament will be a board of the Auditor-General, in what capacity?

This is because you are looking at the Auditor-General with competent capacity. The board should be better qualified in performance and qualification than the Auditor-General - *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable, I totally agree with you that the Auditor-General must report somewhere; I get it. This means that his report is not final. This must be housed somewhere. He cannot be in the air. Okay? Being housed somewhere does not mean you are under control. No, we do not. Have you got it?

Therefore, in the implementation of our oversight function provided for under the Constitution, that same Constitution is the one which puts the Auditor-General under us, and we must process his reports and approve them. We have them implemented and receive action-taken reports.

There is nowhere that the Auditor-General can have in his country. He will have a country in the country and a government in a government. No way! That is why he is even appointed by someone and not created by God, okay? Please, on that one, I do not want us to mislead the public.

Honourable colleagues, you know, we have worked closely. I know many areas have not been, maybe, sorted and all that. On several occasions, we have engaged the ministry, especially using our leverage as presiding officers, and we have achieved a lot. Only that sometimes we do not come here, whenever we have engaged the Executive, we have achieved a lot for this country.

I do not want to say that all our directives are just been laughed at, no, we have worked together, and we can do better.

Me, that is what I can look at. Okay? We can do better. [*Hon. Kyooma rose*] No, you are a member of the committee, Hon. Kyooma. No, you would have clarified on your committee.

Hon. Akiiki, you are the last.

8.38

**MS FLORENCE ASIIMWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Masindi):** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I am addressing myself to the Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority. The report left the issue of the board hanging. That the board is not full, some members were either legally removed, and therefore, there is no quorum. I did not hear any recommendation in that regard. What is happening to URBRA?

I was keenly interested in knowing who the staff of URBRA was. I came to know that most of these staff were formerly staff of the

ministry for finance. There is a lot of conflict of interest. If you keenly audit URBRA, you will find out more.

Secondly, is the Auditor-General being underemployed? We are supposed to have 1,000 people, but only 500 are employed. What is the way forward? I did not hear the recommendations.

Thirdly, the counterpart funding - we are taking on projects, but then we are not able to counter-fund them, as the scaling-up project has already alluded to, and we lose out. You are expected to give little but attract more, but then you do not do it. Sometimes, I question myself whether we still have - are we nationalistic? What is going on here? Honestly, sometimes I keep quiet here, not because I do not have anything to say, but because I just see a circus; comedy.

Therefore, there is no counterpart funding for the scaling up project yet we all need electricity because that is the engine of development. Honestly, are we serious?

For instance, when you look at ATMS, those are the areas we are going to fund as we agreed - like Hon. Henry said; that is agriculture, trade, minerals, science and technology. But without power, where are we going?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Akiiki, I just want your record to be captured well here. Here, we do not engage in circus. You might disagree with what we do but here, we do not do comedy and circus.

I need you to clarify what you meant because the language we use here is clearly provided for under our rules. Honourable colleague, I am giving you an opportunity to clarify because the language we use here and the work we do here is statutory.

**MS FLORENCE ASIMWE:** What I meant, Mr Speaker, is: Are we being serious? Are we serious about what we discuss? I wish to withdraw the words “comedy” and “circus” and just ask: are we serious with what we talk about in this Parliament?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable colleagues, what we do here is to play our part. If you bring a loan and we approve it, before approving that loan, we even ask for confirmation of the availability of counterpart funding.

The minister brought a confirmation here saying, “Yes, approve the loan.” We, therefore, did our part. Through accountability, we can ask the minister, “What did you tell the House? What did you mean by saying you have money for counterpart funding and you are going to provide it?” I think once we engage from that aspect, we shall be okay.

Hon. Kanyike is acting as the Leader of the Opposition. Honourable colleagues, I am not allowing points of procedure because we are procedurally moving well. *(Laughter)*

8.43

**MR EVANS KANYIKE (NUP, Bukoto County East, Masaka):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As the acting Leader of the Opposition, allow me to note the following -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Three minutes, honourable.

**MR KANYIKE:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee chairperson for the report and the honourable members for their submissions.

Mr Speaker, a lot has been said about domestic arrears, but allow me to point out the issue of unemployment. Most of the people in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development are economists. Therefore, we ask ourselves as a country, and I ask myself as a member of Parliament, why don't we still allocate enough funds to domestic areas?

Our people supply the Government in different capacities, and we end up not paying them. They end up losing their property, and even those who are employed in their businesses end up losing their jobs. It is a serious matter that needs to be addressed by us, as Parliament, and by the country. Some are prioritised, and

we need to ask: “Are there kickbacks?” Some people have been supplying the Government for some good time, but they have not been paid.

We have an elephant in the House, and we sometimes shy away from talking about it: the issue of corruption. The ministry for finance and the country, as a whole, are grappling with inadequate finances, but we have an elephant in the room, which we shy away from talking about; that is corruption.

The report from the Office of the Inspectorate of Government pointed out that as a country, we lose more than Shs 10 trillion. We are looking for money to pay - *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Go on.

**MR KANYIKE:** Thank You, Mr Speaker. We are looking for money to pay these domestic arrears, but a lot is lost to corruption. How I wish that as a country, we could come out with plans and commitments to curb corruption.

The other day, as the Opposition, we unveiled our alternative budget priorities and our theme is: “Combating Corruption; a sure way to effective service delivery.” How I wish the Government would take note of combating corruption so that we can deliver services to our country.

On the overspending on treasury operations, the Government commits itself to paying for our treasury operations, but we need to ask, do we do the auditing? Remember, as the Opposition, we went to Lubowa. As the Deputy Speaker, you also promised to go to the Lubowa Specialised Hospital, which is a ghost project.

I say this because I was with the substantial Leader of the Opposition when we went there. If it is not a ghost project, why are they not allowing Members of Parliament to visit that project?

Actually, even the Minister of Health and her permanent secretary were refused access to the hospital site. I heard the President directing the

Prime Minister to supervise that project, but the person who has the experience the expertise is the Minister of Health. Therefore, we spend a lot of money on these treasury operations, yet some of the projects are not in operation.

On the monies we allocated to UBOS, the Shs 490 billion - *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Conclude.

**MR KANYIKE:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As a country, we have not received a complete census report. How I wish the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development could table that concrete report in this august House. This is because we cannot spend all this much, and the Government entity, UBOS, comes out with only scanty statistics.

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

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable colleague. I want to put it on record - and I had already put it on record here - that I visited Lubowa Hospital –*(Applause)*- and the progress is good. In fact, you no longer need to visit; simply stand at Zzana.

The building is already causing darkness on that road because of being big. I can only speak on civil works. I went there and saw it, and I am told that by the end of May, they will be handing over the building for civil works, awaiting installation- No, please, because you said I promised, as if I did not go; I went there. I think there is a committee which visited; the Committee on National Economy and even the Committee on Presidential Affairs. It is accessible; if you want to visit, you can go there and see it.

Honourable colleagues, let the Minister of Finance give us responses.

8.45

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES)**

**(Mr Henry Musasizi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to use this opportunity to appreciate you and honourable colleagues for

the analysis and comments you have made on our ministerial policy statement.

I would like to respond to the issues as have been chronologically raised by Members. Beginning with the committee chairperson, he makes an observation on the Contingency Fund, pursuant to Section 25 of the Public Finance Management Act.

Mr Speaker, I agree with the chairperson that the law provides that the Contingency Fund shall be 0.5 per cent of the approved annual budget of the previous period. In the year under review, Shs 169 billion, if brought to the nearest, is substantially 0.5 per cent – Shs 171 billion and Shs 169 billion.

You can say that at the time of making this calculation, we were intentional and we knew what the law provides, because it is about 98.8 per cent. Therefore, the number is consistent with the provisions of the law.

He also makes an observation on domestic borrowing. Domestic borrowing is in two categories. One, we borrow to pay redemptions by the Bank of Uganda and we also borrow to finance the budget. I agree with the committee. This definitely poses a risk to the interest rates of private sector credit and also the risk that the MP from Arua City was concerned about.

However, I wish to correct her that it is not normal for Government debt to exceed GDP. Apparently, our Government debt is 48.9 per cent of the GDP and we are always cautious to keep it within the IMF Convergence Criteria and also the Charter of Fiscal Responsibility, which requires us to always keep our debt within the 50 per cent ceiling.

Mr Speaker, on where the Office of the Auditor-General reports, I think the bottom line is to ensure that this office is supported and is independent, in as far as executing its mandate is concerned. Whether it is in Parliament, under the Parliamentary Commission or –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, this is not your problem because as the

Speaker, I referred the MPS to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs. Let it not disturb you; we shall handle it administratively.

**MR MUSASIZI:** Much obliged. However, my problem, which we can also discuss further, is the definition of statutory expenditure. Statutory comes after the budget has been approved. A statutory vote means you cannot spend. You have an assurance that what has been provided to you will be there. But before it is there, we need to have a conversation.

On domestic arrears, from our side, we need to do further verification on this figure of Shs 10.8 trillion. Some people have Shs 13 trillion; others have Shs 10 trillion. There is also a Shs 5.7 trillion somewhere. Depending on the audit report you are looking at, if it is for 2023/2024, this figure keeps changing.

Bottom line, Mr Speaker, the movement from Shs 200 billion to now Shs 1.4 trillion is a welcome move and we have committed that verified domestic arrears shall be planned for in three years, beginning next financial year. If we are paying in 2025/2026, we shall pay the rest in the next two years, so by three years, we should have concluded.

I also wish to inform you, honourable colleagues, that domestic arrears under the former Uganda National Roads Authority, now in the Ministry of Works and Transport, have substantially been provided for. We moved the money for UNRA; we added another Shs 500 billion.

There is also another figure which I need to check. I know they now have about Shs 2 trillion to clear some of these obligations, which should substantially clear the arrears which have been affecting them. We are prioritising utilities under the rest of the Shs 1.4 trillion arrears, especially under National Water. We are prioritising supplies of food under police, Defence, UPDF and other areas in electricity. So, the commitment is there. We share the same concerns you share and we shall as much as practicable – *(Interjection)* – Yes, the heart is willing.

Hon. Okot talked about work plans, activity and cost plans. Thank you very much for reading what I read. This is good planning. He is concerned that if we are spending as per the work plan, how do some of these things arise? One, indiscipline by accounting officers should also be thought about.

Two, where you have multi-year commitments and there are resource challenges, sometimes the contractor continues with the work and the budget is not available to meet the payments as they fall due.

I am now looking for something else which is outside the arrears, the overpayment by 160 per cent. I think this is mainly an interpretation issue and timing because when our debts fall due, Bank of Uganda immediately pays, sends the fee note, sends the report to us. Assuming Bank of Uganda has paid today and finance pays next week.

Today, it will reflect in the statement that the vote has been overcharged. Normally, I bring a supplementary to clear all these issues when they arise. So, I think the expenditure arose between the timing for bringing a supplementary here and when BOU paid. Otherwise, overpayment in Government does not arise because everything is according to appropriation.

Hon. Chemonges is on the arrears. This one I have already answered. Hon. Okupa has two concerns. The first concern was the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS). I picked it up from the previous report.

The Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Ronald and also Hon Ronald raised it; the UBOS report is here. The final was presented and laid in Parliament and the records can confirm. I know that you want statistics about your constituency for planning very well, those statistics are available and we know numbers up to your village.

**MR OKUPA:** I did write to UBOS, and I copied it to you. They replied by saying they needed time to get those statistics, because for

you to come out with a final report, you must have the primary record.

So, I am wondering, what you are telling me is different from what is written. I can get that letter, which they responded to me. It is something which you can sort with them, if you get a copy of that letter.

**MR MUSASIZI:** Mr Speaker, I insist that about statistics of the census, we have all the numbers but getting up to the village and give you a full report requires time. However, that does not mean that the information is not available with us. As we get there, I will give you, do not worry. The rest is concerned about domestic arrears, which I have explained.

Unutilised loans have increased, this is largely on account of a lack of counterpart funding, and it is lacking because of budgetary constraints but we are trying to address because we do not want to present a situation which misrepresents what we do on the ground.

This is Hon. Ssasaga, budget for – Auditor-General not protected – Auditor-General's budget is always protected and where we have encountered issues, we have discussed with him and addressed them.

Hon. Chemonges is asking us to answer about the Water for Kween Gravity Flow Scheme approved in the 2023/2024 budget, but up to now, nothing on the ground. Confirm when work shall start. The 2023/24 Financial Year is closed. Meaning that this funding, if you are factual, is no longer available –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, he said that it was this financial year, but his concern is that it is coming to an end before-

**MR MUSASIZI:** Mr Speaker, I need to know the Vote under which this funding was appropriated. Colleagues, there is a difference between budget and cash. You can budget and then not get the cash. *(Laughter)* I need to know the circumstances –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** How from what Hon. Chemonges said, I think it is the ministry being sleepy because you said that around Shs 3 billion has already been released out of eight. That is 30 per cent. So, they should start work.

**MR MUSASIZI:** Let us get the detail and then – Hon. Auma, there is a mismatch between the releases and the budget. This is the same thing: budget and cash. You give me a budget every quarter, I do quarterly projections, look at what Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) will bring, what auctions from the domestic market will bring, and what I will receive externally, total up together and distribute.

And if it is sufficient, I will give as per budget. If it is not sufficient, we ration. Say this one do now, this one wait, this one like that.

So, cash flow management, after we have approved the budget, the rest is done in accordance with the available cash but there are Votes which take first call. Statutory Votes and protected Votes to mention but a few. Local governments are not normally affected by cash flow issues.

Before I go to Hon. Nsaba Buturo, Hon. Linda Auma said that Finance should get serious. I wish to state that finance is managed by very serious people.

We have a serious team managing the economy. Hon. Nsaba Buturo was rotating around something, around integrity and corruption.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is it; integrity and corruption affecting our country.

**MR MUSASIZI:** I take note of Dr Nsaba Buturo's concerns.

Hon. Sarah is saying wage not supported by corresponding non-wage. We are going to look at and address it in the future. This is good feedback for us to improve.

Hon. Acen, on Uganda Microfinance Regulatory Authority (UMRA) issue. was referring to the structure within the ministry. This issue has

been addressed within our structure. We have given UMRA a semi-autonomous status to enable it to continue performing its functions when it was independent of the ministry.

Mr Speaker, Uganda Microfinance Regulatory Authority (UMRA) is responsible for regulating all the SACCOs in Uganda, right from licensing to everything. We do not want to lose this core function because some of the SACCOs do not want to be licensed and regulated by Bank of Uganda, especially Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) – Wazalendo – and our SACCO here in Parliament. We have created a semi-autonomous structure, which will take care of the concerns that these big stakeholders have been raising.

Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has been arrogant to service providers – Mr Speaker, sometimes, from my personal experience, when you tell people the truth, they say you are arrogant. Sometimes we tell people “we do not have money; wait” and they say these people are very arrogant. This is in relation to domestic arrears, to which I have committed that in three years, we shall have substantially cleared the outstanding arrears.

We are also very explicit on accounting officers who continue to commit the Government without resources. In this budget, we have adequately provided for those areas, which have been causing us domestic arrears issues.

Hon. Christine would like to know the status of the Consolidated Fund in respect of returned funds at the end of the financial year. Mr Speaker, when we changed the Public Finance Management Act, we created a Treasury Single Account, where all funds of the Government must be collected and deposited on the Consolidated Fund.

The funds are spent from Treasury on what we call the Treasury Single Account. This means that when you go to a district like Mitooma this evening – we have reconciled – there is no money there. Even for this Parliament, there are no funds that have stayed on the account. You can only initiate an invoice and we pay. We no



longer send money. We only send warrants and then you invoice.

What does this mean to your concern, Hon. Christine? It means that in actual sense, there are no returned funds. When the financial year closes, we reconcile the Consolidated Fund. In most cases, this account closes in negatives because at the end of year, in most cases, we would have overdrawn this account because of our obligations with Bank of Uganda (BoU) – *(Mr Amos Okot rose)* - I do not need any clarification here. I am well-schooled in this.

Mr Speaker, the next concern was from Hon. Mourine. I think I have answered her issue, on borrowing and domestic arrears.

Then, there was Hon. Sowedi on the Contingencies Fund. I have also answered this one.

Then, there is Hon. Kwizera on the structure and mandate. I think these are policy matters, which we can look at in the Cabinet. He says the structure and mandate of ministry for finance is very wide.

Lastly, on the Shs 21 billion counterpart funding, as we finalise the budget, I did not know that this outstanding issue had - we have provided funds under the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development to take care of some of the concerns that we have been getting in regard to extension of electricity to the rural areas. I need to check whether this has been provided for and, if not, we shall look within and provide because it is very urgent.

Hon. Akiiki raised the issue of the court ruling in respect of the governance issues at Uganda Retirements Benefits Regulatory Authority (URBRA) – and the staffing. These matters have reached the level of His Excellency the President. His guidance was that we form a committee comprising the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Attorney-General and the Permanent Secretary/Secretary to the Treasury (PS/ST), to look into the circumstances and resolve the issues.

On the issue of the executive director, the guidance was that we engage Public Service Commission to reconsider the decision of the former URBRA Board and see whether the chief executive officer in question deserves or qualifies to be reappointed or not. These matters are being handled. When we conclude our engagements, we shall inform Parliament, through the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development, about the steps that we will have taken to resolve the current issues at URBRA.

On counterpart funding, I have answered. I now come to the issue raised by Hon. Kanyike, the acting Leader of the Opposition. His first concern was on domestic arrears, which I have responded to. Why are some companies prioritised in the settlement of domestic arrears? I do not know about this one. All I know is that in the past two or three years, all our suppliers have been having challenges in respect of settling their bills.

On the Opposition alternative budget, this was not presented to me. However, I have interest in it. When I clear this busy schedule of mine, I want to look at some of the things that you highlighted. I intend to find time, Mr Speaker, and read the alternative budget and see whether there is one or two — I believe in continuous learning. Another eye, sometimes, can see what I have not seen and it can improve my work going forward.

About the census report, I have answered. The report is in the House.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, I wish to once again thank you for availing me ample time to respond to Members' issues – *(Interjections)* – Treasury Operations? I think I answered it.

I wish to thank all the Members who have stayed all this – *(Dr Batuwa rose)* – no, we have finished. *(Laughter)* Through the Speaker.

I thank all the Members who have stayed this long to clear the ministerial policy statements. I also thank the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development, where I rose

from. I thank them for the good report and the cooperation during the process of considering these statements. Thank you, Mr Speaker. I submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development on the ministerial policy statements and Budget estimates for Financial Year 2025/2026 be adopted.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

*Report adopted.*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I would like to thank you, committee chairperson and your team, for a job well done. This report is referred to the Committee on Budget for reconciliation, harmonisation and consolidation as per Rule 149(2) of our Rules of Procedure.

Honourable colleagues, I really want to thank you for all you do because instead of giving you 5 or 10 minutes, I want us to work overtime. We do not need to be many - the few who are here – *(Laughter)* – will be given an opportunity; we work and proceed.

Since we are starting at 10.00 a.m. tomorrow, you need to go home a bit early to relax and do some little exercise because you have sat for a long time.

Sitting like this without exercise; you are killing yourself. Therefore, from here, go and exercise a little. Wake up early, do some little exercise and then you will be fit enough to come and sit for over 10 hours. The House is adjourned to tomorrow at 10.00 a.m.

*(The House rose at 9.22 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 10 April 2025 at 10.00 a.m.)*